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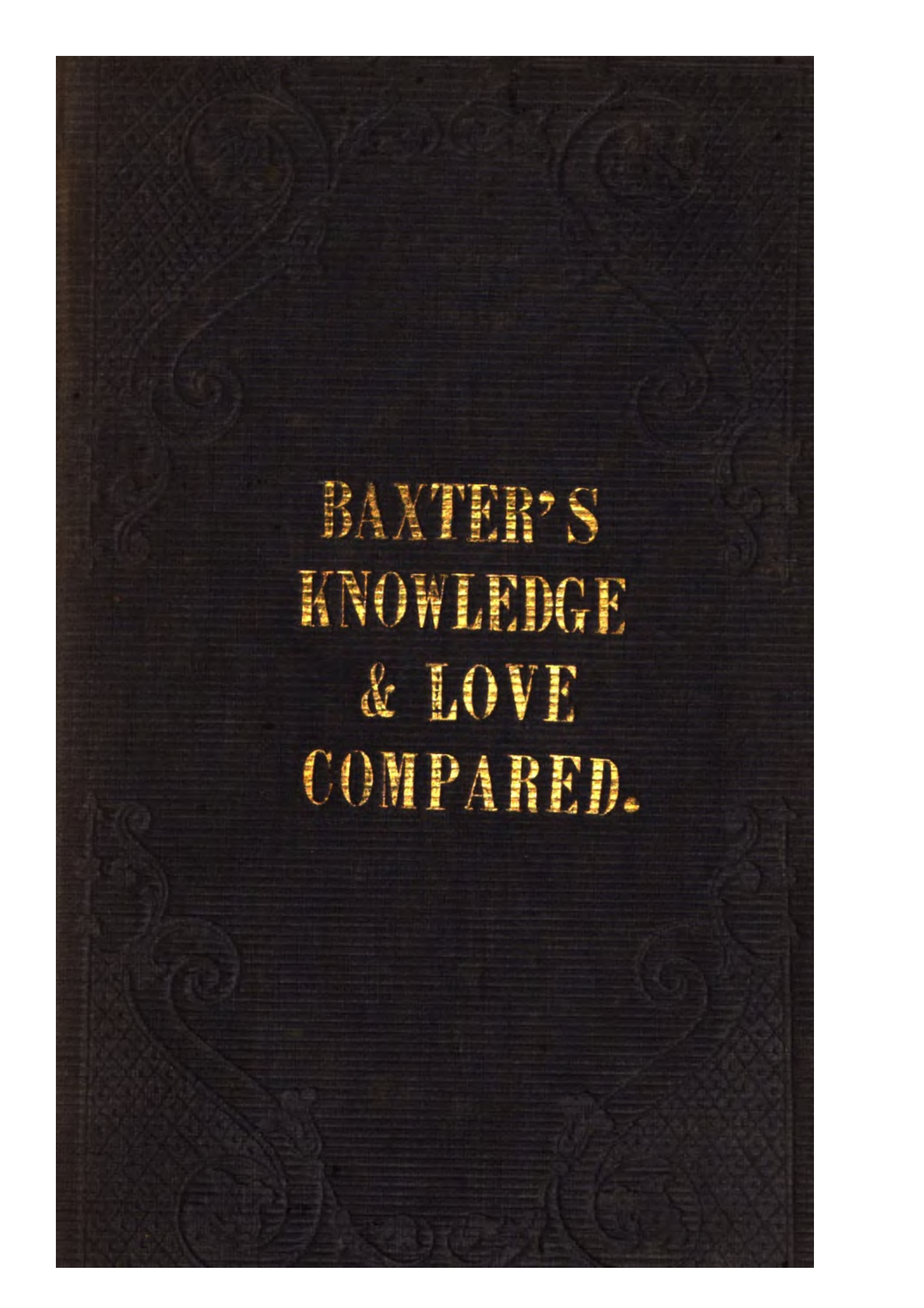
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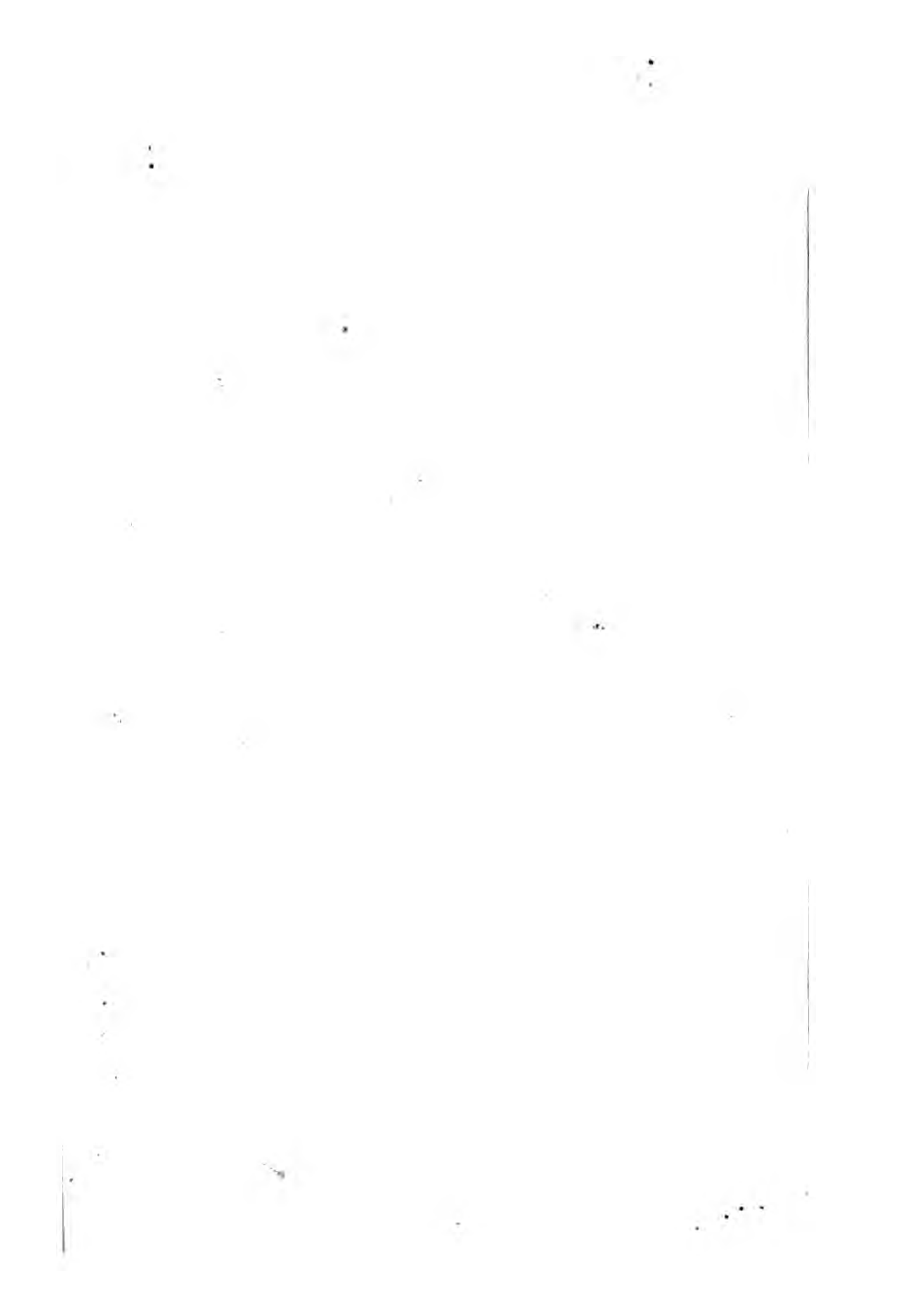
BAXTER'S
KNOWLEDGE
& LOVE
COMPARED.

1840.

25.







KNOWLEDGE AND LOVE!

COMPARED.

IN TWO PARTS:

- I. OF FALSELY PRETENDED KNOWLEDGE.
- II. OF TRUE SAVING KNOWLEDGE AND LOVE.

WRITTEN AS GREATLY NEEDFUL TO THE SAFETY AND
PEACE OF EVERY CHRISTIAN, AND OF THE CHURCH :
THE ONLY CERTAIN WAY TO ESCAPE FALSE RE-
LIGIONS, HERESIES, SECTS, AND MALIGNANT
PREJUDICES, PERSECUTIONS AND SINFUL
WARS: ALL CAUSED BY FALSELY PRE-
TENDED KNOWLEDGE, AND HASTY
JUDGING, BY PROUD, IGNORANT
MEN, WHO KNOW NOT THEIR
OWN IGNORANCE.

BY THE REV. RICHARD BAXTER,
Author of 'The Saint's Everlasting Rest,' &c.

WITH
A LIFE AND CHARACTER OF THE AUTHOR,
BY DR. ADAM CLARKE.

LONDON:—S. CORNISH AND Co.
126, NEWGATE STREET;
J. CORNISH, 37, NEW STREET, BIRMINGHAM,
35, LORD STREET, LIVERPOOL, AND
18, GRAFTON STREET, DUBLIN.

MDCCCXL.

“A wise man feareth and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth and is confident.”—PROV. xiv. 16.

“The foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? We speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world.”—1 COR. i. 25, 20; ii. 6.

“Cum ista quærentur, et ea sicut potest quisque conjectat, non inutiliter exercentur ingenia, si adhibeatur disceptantia moderata, et absit error opinantium se scire quod nesciunt. Quid enim opus est ut hæc et hujusmodi affirmentur, vel negentur, vel definiantur cum discrimine, quando sine crimine nesciantur?”—AUGUST, ENCHIRID. Cap. 59. (De Corporibus Angelorum.



LONDON :—W. BRACE, PRINTER,
10 Johnson's-court, Fleet-street.

LIFE AND CHARACTER

OF THE AUTHOR,

BY DR. ADAM CLARKE.

RICHARD BAXTER was born at Rowton in Shropshire, in 1615. He was a nonconformist divine, and distinguished himself by his pious and exemplary life, his moderate and pacific principles, and his numerous theological writings. That *grace of God*, which shone with so much splendour in the whole course of his useful life, dawned forth in his heart at a very early period, so that he was a pattern of piety, even when very young. At the commencement of the *long Parliament*, he was chosen Vicar of Kidderminster; but in the heat of the civil wars, he withdrew to Coventry, and preached to the garrison and inhabitants of that city. When Oliver Cromwell was made Protector, Mr. Baxter refused to comply with his measures, and therefore had no employment under the Protectorate, though he preached *once* before Cromwell. A little before Richard Cromwell resigned, Mr. Baxter came to London, and preached before the Parliament the day before they voted the

return of Charles II., who on his Restoration made him one of his chaplains in ordinary. The king, conscious of his extraordinary merit, offered him the bishopric of Hereford, but he refused it, preferring his humble situation at Kidderminster to all other ecclesiastical dignities.

It must appear strange to the reader, that this very situation, which his pious modesty preferred to a bishopric, he was not permitted to enjoy, for he was suffered to preach only two or three times in it after the Restoration! Baxter's doctrine was too pure, and his life and ethical system too strict, to be long a court favourite in those times of irreligion and dissipation. Being prevented from feeding his flock at Kidderminster, he went to London, and preached in different parts of the city, till the *Act of Uniformity* took place. During the plague, in 1665, he went into Buckinghamshire, but afterwards returned to Acton. When the act against conventicles expired, his audience became so large that his house could not contain them. Many were reformed, and many profited; but as the worthless and the wicked soon began to envy him, he was seized and put in prison, but procuring a *habeas corpus*, was discharged. He afterwards returned to London, and in 1682 was imprisoned again for the awful offence of *coming within five miles of a corporate town!* Had Mr. Baxter relaxed in his piety, the rod of the wicked would have ceased from his inheritance; but as he followed Christ in purity and righteousness, this was a crime in the sight of the world which could never be forgiven. In 1684 he was seized again, and in the reign of James II. was committed

prisoner to the King's Bench, and tried before the infamous and bloody judge *Jeffries* for his Paraphrase on the New Testament, which that ignorant tyrant called a *scandalous* and *seditions* book against the government. He continued in prison for two years; from which he was at last discharged, and had his fine remitted by the king. Having endured much persecution, passed through many sufferings, and glorified God in every fire which he permitted his enemies to kindle around him, he died in the salvation which he had so long, and so successfully witnessed, in 1691, aged seventy-six years, and is buried in Christ's Church, London.

Mr. Baxter, as to his person, is said to have been tall and slender, and stooped much. His countenance was grave and composed, with a cheerful predominant smile. He had a very piercing eye, and spoke with great distinctness. Learned men, who were of widely different sentiments from himself, have testified, that he had the happy faculty of *saying what he pleased, and proving all he said*. He appears to have acquainted himself thoroughly both with geometry, and logic: and those who are acquainted with these sciences can easily perceive this in all his reasonings. He is allowed to have possessed an extraordinary power in extempore preaching. His capacity as a writer was very great, and his success in enlightening the mind, and affecting the heart, was uncommon.

He wrote not less than 120 books, and had sixty written against him, but those rather added to, than diminished from his reputation. *Dr. Isaac Barrow*, than whom none was more capa-

ble of judging, says, Mr. Baxter's practical writings were never mended, and his controversial, seldom confuted.

The following is Mr. Grainger's character of him, which should never be omitted in an account of his Life. "Richard Baxter was a man famous for weakness of body and strength of mind; for having the strongest sense of religion himself, and exciting a sense of it in the thoughtless and profligate; for preaching more sermons, engaging in more controversies, and writing more books, than any other nonconformist of his age.

"He spoke, disputed, and wrote with ease; and manifested the same intrepidity when he reprov'd *Cromwell*, and expostulated with Charles II. as when he preached to a congregation of mechanics. His presence and his firmness of mind on no occasion forsook him. He was just the same man *before* he went to a prison, *while* he was *in* it, and *when* he came *out* of it; and he maintained a uniformity of character till the last gasp. This is a very faint sketch of Mr. Baxter's character, for men of his size cannot be drawn in miniature."

It is natural for a person when he sees a book to inquire who was its author? and those who profit by any man's writings, delight to find authentic memorials of his life; and wish especially to know, whether it illustrated the doctrines he taught.

A genuine Christian is one who believes in, and confesses *Christ*, regulates his conduct by the testimonies of his Master, and with meekness and patience endures those troubles and afflictions, which they who live godly in Christ Jesus

must suffer. But he goes farther; he not only *bears evil* without *avenging* himself, but *does good* to the utmost of his power, to the unthankful and the unholy; prays for his persecutors, and endeavours to live for the good of mankind, his worst enemies not excepted. Such was Mr. Baxter; such his friends and enemies allow him to have been; and such he is demonstrated to have been by his numerous and excellent writings.

As a useful writer, as well as a successful controversialist, Mr. Baxter has deservedly ranked in the highest order of the divines of the seventeenth century. His works have done more to improve the understanding, and mend the hearts of his countrymen, than those of any other writer of his age. While the English language remains, and scriptural Christianity and piety to God are regarded, his works will not cease to be read and prized by the wise and pious of every denomination.

His *Call to the unconverted* has gone through many editions, and has been translated into different languages. The good this tract has done cannot be rated too high: but the extent of it will be *fully* known only in that day when the righteous appear before their Judge, and their works follow them. His *Saint's Everlasting Rest* has also been frequently published, both in the original and in abridgments, and has been highly and deservedly prized by Christians of almost every denomination. To this excellent work many can (under God) attribute their establishment in the divine life.

His *Reformed Pastor* has not only added

much to his praise, as a Christian and a writer, but has also contributed much to the zeal and usefulness of ministers of all denominations, who have carefully read it.

These have hitherto been the most popular of his works, not perhaps because they were the *best*, but because the first was *small*, and easily read; and the others, by being faithfully *abridged* by different pious men, were made *portable*, and brought down to a *moderate price*. His other practical works would, I am certain, have met with the same favourable reception from Christians in general, had they been brought within their reach.

ADAM CLARKE.

EDITOR'S PREFACE.

“ *Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.—*
PROV. iv. 7.”

Few subjects present themselves to our notice of equal interest and importance with the one before us; it is a truly practical subject and intimately connected with the well-being and happiness of man. *Knowledge* gives us power, and is the source of universal good. *Ignorance* is the cause of weakness, error, and evil. *Knowledge* formed a Bacon a Newton and a Locke. *Ignorance* has produced Savages, Thugs, and Cannibals. *Knowledge* directs its votaries into the paths of piety and true felicity; showing them not only what is good, but furnishing them with powers suitable to its attainment and fruition. *Ignorance*, or “falsely-pretended knowledge,” with devious step, and eye askance,—always illusory and deceitful,—smiles only to mock, and guides only to betray. It is an *ignis-fatuus*, which, the longer we follow, the deeper are we immersed in bogs and quagmires, and the more surely involved in inextricable ruin: so true is the

saying of our Lord, "If the light within us be darkness, how great is that darkness!"

In the present instance we have to consider knowledge, not merely in the abstract, but rather as related to, and connected with love. And herein we cannot do better than let the author speak for himself: we shall thus not only give the reader a much more forcible illustration of the subject than we could otherwise supply, but also afford him a pleasing foretaste of that intellectual banquet which is prepared for him in the ensuing discourse. "This life of Love," says our author, "is the perfection of man's faculties as to their intended end and use. As all the operation of the lower faculties, vegetative and sensitive, are subordinate to the use and operation of the intellectual part, which is the higher; so all the acts of the intellect itself are but subservient to the WILL, or to *love* and *practice*. The Understanding is but the Eye by which the soul seeth what to love, and what to choose or refuse. Love is the highest act of our highest faculty; and complacency in the highest infinite good, is the highest of all the acts of love. This is the state of the soul in its ripeness, when it is delightful; embracing its most desired object, and is blessed in the fruition of its ultimate end: for love is the very foretaste of heaven, the beginning of that felicity which shall there

be perfect." Having proceeded thus far, and opened to our readers the portals of this noble fabric of wisdom and piety, we now invite them to enter and explore all its rich treasures. The specimen we have just now exhibited may convince them, that their time will not be lost, nor their highest and holiest aspirations want suitable entertainment or the most ample gratification. In conclusion we may observe, that although in the present edition, no alteration has been made in the general style and arrangement of the original (for we deemed it proper to let the author speak in his own language and after his own manner), yet, in order to increase its sale, and widely extend its usefulness, it has been thought desirable to reduce the bulk of the volume by omitting useless scholastic subtleties, and tiresome repetitions. Thus disencumbered of extraneous matter, the Editor, sends it forth with no small degree of confidence, on its *mission of love*: may it fix in its holy embrace the negligent and the careless, arouse the torpid and comfort the disconsolate and broken-hearted; may it, like the amiable Jesus, continually go about doing good, and may the sphere of its operations be commensurate with its great merits, and co-extensive with the catholic spirit of its author.

THE EDITOR.

Dec. 25, 1839.

TO THE READER.

READER,

UPON a review of this book, written long ago, I find that it is a subject as necessary now as ever; experience telling us that the disease is so far from being cured, that it is become our public shame and danger, and if the wonderful mercy of God prevent it not, is likely to be the speedy confusion and ruin of the land. As to the manner of this writing, I find the effects of the failing of my memory, in often repeating the same things, with little diversification: but I will not for that cast it away; considering that perhaps often repeating may make the matter the better remembered; and if it do this, no matter though the Author be not applauded.

R. BAXTER.

August 3, 1689.

KNOWLEDGE AND LOVE COMPARED.

PART I. FALSELY PRETENDED KNOWLEDGE.

1 CORINTHIANS, viii. 2, 3.

And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know. But if any man love God, the same is known of Him.

CHAP. I.

THE SCOPE AND TEXT OPENED: WHAT PHILOSOPHY OR WORLDLY WISDOM PAUL DEPRESSETH; AND WHY.

THE calamitous divisions of the Churches of Christ, and the miscarriages and contentions of too many particular brethren, having been sad upon my thoughts above forty years, by this time, without imputation of hastiness and rash judging, I may take leave to tell the world, what I have discovered to be the principal cause, which is *falsely Pretended Knowledge*, or *Ignorance of Ignorance*, or a proud unhumbléd understanding, confident that it knoweth that which it knoweth not. And consequently what must be the cure, if our calamity be here curable, viz. To know as much as we can; but withal to know

how little we know, and to take on us to know no more than we do know, nor to be certain of our uncertainties.

The text which I have chosen to be the ground of my discourse, is so plain, notwithstanding some little difficulties, that did not the nature of the disease resist the clearest remedy, so many good people had never here often read their sin described, as insensibly as if they read it not.

The chapter hath so much difficulty, as will not stand with my intended brevity to open it: I refer you to expositors for that; whether they were the Nicolaitans, or any other sort of heretics that the apostle dealeth with, I determine not. It is plain that they were licentious professors of Christianity, who thought that it was the ignorance of others, that made them judge it unlawful to eat things offered to idols; and that their own greater knowledge set them above that scruple. A mixture of Platonic philosophy with Christianity, made up most of the primitive heretics, and for want of a due digestion of each, too much corrupted many of the Greek doctors of the church. The unlearned sort of Christians, were so much despised by some of the philosophical heretics, that they were not thought worthy of their communion; for as Jude saith, they "separated themselves, being sensual, having not the Spirit," but more affected philosophical fancies; which made Paul warn men to take heed lest any seduced them by vain philosophy; not using the name of philosophy, for that solid knowledge of God's works which is desirable, but for the systems of vain conceits and precepts which the word was then used to signify, as every

sect derived them from their masters. And so the apostle taketh knowledge in this text; not for solid knowledge indeed, but for Gnosticism or philosophical presumptions; such as even yet most philosophers are guilty of, who take a multitude of precepts, some useful, some useless, some true, and some false, and all but notionally, or to little purpose, and joining these, do call them philosophy. And Paul tells them, that opinionative and notional knowledge (were it true, like the devil's faith) is of no such excellency as to cause them to shelter their sins under the confidence and honour of it, and despise unlearned conscientious Christians; for such knowledge by inflation often destroyeth the possessors, or becomes the fuel of the devilish sin of pride, when love buildeth up ourselves and others to salvation. And to conceit that a man is wise because of such knowledge, and so to overvalue his own understanding, is a certain sign that he is destitute of that knowledge in which true wisdom doth consist; and knoweth nothing with a wise and saving knowledge, as everything should be known: and indeed a man's excellency is so far from lying in vain philosophical speculations, that the use of all true knowledge is but to bring us up to the love of God, as the highest felicity, to be approved and beloved by God; and those unlearned Christians that have the spirit of sanctification, without your vain philosophy, have knowledge enough to bring them to this love of God, which is a thing that passeth all your knowledge, or rather to be known of God, as his own, and loved by him. For our felicity lieth in receiving from God, and

16 *Knowledge and Love compared.* [PART I.

in his loving us, more than in our loving him ; but both set together, to love God, and so to be loved of him, are the ultimate end and perfection of man ; and all knowledge is to be estimated but as it tendeth to this.

This being the plain paraphrase of the text, I shall stay no longer on it, but thence deduce and handle these two observations.

Doct. I. Falsely pretended knowledge is often pernicious to the possessor, and injurious to the church. And overvaluing one's own opinions and notions, is a certain mark of dangerous ignorance.

Doct. II. A man is so far truly wise, as he loveth God, and consequently is approved or loved by him, and as he loveth others to their edification.

I. The first is but the same that Solomon thus expresseth, "Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit ; there is more hope of a fool than of him." (Prov. xxvi. 12.) And Paul elsewhere, "Be not wise in your own conceits." (Rom. xii. 16 ; xi. 25 ; and Prov. xxvi. 5, 16.) For it is certain that we are all here in great darkness, and it is but little that the wisest know ; and therefore he that thinks he knoweth much, is ignorant both of the things which he thinks he knoweth, and of his ignorance. Therefore "Let no man deceive himself : If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise." (1 Cor. iii. 18.) To be "wise in this world," is the same with that in the words following "The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God." And (1 Cor. i. 19—22.) "It is written, I will destroy the wisdom

of the wise," &c. "Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom," &c. So chap. ii. 4—8. "And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words (or probable discourses) of men's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God: Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect; yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world that come to nought: But we speak that wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory (even Christ the wisdom of God, chap. i. 24), which none of the princes of this world knew:—"

In all this, note—1. That there is a wisdom which Paul placeth Christianity itself in:—2. That this is to know God in Christ objectively, and to be taught of God by Christ and his Spirit efficiently.—3. That there is a wisdom which Paul comparatively vilifieth.—4. This is called the "wisdom of this world" (or age.)—5. That most plainly he meaneth by it, that which then was called learning and philosophy; which the Greeks did value, and by which they judged of the Gospel; which comprehended the methods of all the sects, Epicureans, Academics, Peripatetics and Stoics; but not their true morals, but

their physics, and logic, and metaphysics; which Laertius and others tell us how variously they held.—6. That Paul doth not absolutely prohibit such studies, nor yet despise any true knowledge.—7. But he vilifieth this philosophy on these accounts. (1.) Because it was the exercise of a poor, low, insufficient light: they did but grope after God in the dark, as Acts xvii. 27. (2.) Because it was mostly taken up with inferior things, of small concernment comparatively as things corporeal are good in themselves, and when sanctified and made subservient to things spiritual; so the knowledge of physics is to be esteemed: but as things corporeal are yet objectively the snare and ruin of those that perish, and therefore the world to be renounced and crucified, as it is our temptation, an enemy, or competitor with Christ; just so it must be with natural philosophy. (3.) Because it was greatly overvalued by the world, as if it had been the only wisdom, when indeed it is of itself but an indifferent thing, or fit but to make a by-recreation of, till it be made to serve to higher ends; even as riches, honour and pleasure are overvalued by worldlings, as if they were the only felicity; when in themselves they are but mere indifferent things, and prove beneficial or hurtful as they are used. Therefore Paul was to take down the pernicious esteem of this kind of philosophy, as preachers now must take down men's esteem of worldly things, however they are the works and gifts of God. And as Christ would by his actual poverty and sufferings, and not by words only, lower the esteem of worldly wealth and pride; so Paul by

neglecting and forbearing the use of artificial logic, physics and metaphysics, would depress their value. (4.) Because that there was abundance of falsehood mixed with the truth which the philosophers held ; as their multitude of different sects fully proves. (5.) Because the artificial, organical part was made so operose, as that it drowned real learning instead of promoting it ; and became but like a game at chess, a device rather to exercise vain, proud wits by, than to find out useful truth. As to this day when logic and metaphysics seem much cultivated and reformed, yet the variety of methods, the number of notions, the precariousness of much, the uncertainty of some things, the falsehood of many, maketh them as fit for boys to play with in the schools, and to be a wood into which a sophister may run, to hide his errors, as to be a means of detecting them. And therefore a knavish cheater will often bind you strictest to the pedantic part of the rules of disputation, that when he cannot defend his matter, he may quarrel with your form and artifice, and lose time by questioning you about mood and figure. (6.) Because by these operose diversions the minds of men were so forestalled or taken up, as that they had not leisure to study great and necessary saving truth : and if men must be untaught in the doctrines of life, till they had first learned their logic, physics, and metaphysics, how few would have been saved ! When at this day so many come from our Universities after several years' study, raw smatterers in these, and half-witted scholars, whose learning is fitter to trouble than to edify : and if Scripture had been written in the terms

and method of Aristotle, how few would have been the better for them! But great good must be common.

And as Paul on all these accounts sets light by this philosophy, so he calls it, the wisdom of this world:—1. Because this world was its chief object:—2. And the creatures were its only light:—3. And it led but few to any higher than worldly ends:—4. And it was that which worldly men, that were strangers to heavenly light and holiness, did then most magnify and use.

And therefore the apostle aptly joined both together, (1 Cor. i. 26,) “Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called;” seeming to equal worldly wealth and greatness, with worldly wisdom or philosophy, as to the interests of religion and salvation. And the foolish wits that think he spake against learning, because he had it not, may as truly say, that he spake against worldly wealth and greatness because he had it not; for the possession, use and knowledge of worldly things, are near of kin. But they knew not Paul so well as Festus, who thought him not unlearned, though he thought him mad. Nor was it the way of worldly wealth and greatness which he chose.

Doubtless neither Christ, nor Paul, did speak against any real knowledge, but, (1.) Against nominal, pretended knowledge, which was set up to divert men from real knowledge; and was full of vanities and falsehoods. (2.) And against the overvaluing of that learning, which is of little use, in comparison of the knowledge of great and excellent, and necessary things. For knowledge is valuable according to its object and its use.

The knowledge of trifles for trivial ends, is itself a trifle. The knowledge of things great and necessary for great and necessary ends, is the great and necessary knowledge. And therefore how unmeasurably must the knowledge of God and our eternal happiness, excel the pedantic philosophy of the Gentiles. However Christians may sanctify and ennoble this by making it a help to higher knowledge. And therefore the Platonists and the Stoics were the noblest philosophers; because the former studied the highest things, and the other the necessary means of felicity, amending of men's hearts and lives.

But in the present text the thing which the apostle reprehendeth is, the esteeming of a man's self to be wiser than he is; and taking himself to be a wise man because of his trifling philosophical knowledge. And he would have them know that till they knew nobler things than those, and were guided by a nobler light, they were very fools.*

I have looked over Hutten, Vives, Erasmus, Scaliger, Salmasius, Casaubone, and many other critical grammarians, and all Gruterus's critical

* A countryman having sent his son to the University, when he came home asked him what he had learned. He told him he had learned logic. He asked him what that logic was, and what he could do with it: and it being supper-time, and the poor people having but two eggs for supper, he told them that he could prove that those eggs were three: This is *one*, saith he, and that is *two*, and *one* and *two* are *three*. The father gave way to him, and told him that his art was useful, for he had thought himself to have gone without his supper, but now, saith he, I will take *one* egg, and your mother the other, and take you the third. Such kind of logic the world hath gloried in as learning.

volumes. I have read almost all the Physics and Metaphysics I could hear of: I have wasted much of my time among loads of historians, chronologers, and antiquaries; I despise none of their learning. All truth is useful; in mathematics, which I have least of, I find a pretty manlike sport. But if I had no other kind of knowledge than these, what were my understanding worth! what a dreaming dotard should I be! Yea, had I also all the codes and pandects, all Cujacius, Wesenbechius, and their tribe at my fingers' ends; and all other volumes of civil, national and canon laws, with the rest in the *Encyclopædia*, what a puppet play would my life be, if I had no more!

I have higher thoughts of the schoolmen, than Erasmus and our other grammarians had; I much value the method and sobriety of Aquinas, the subtlety of Scotus and Ockam, the plainness of Durandus, the solidity of Ariminensis, the profundity of Bradwardine, the excellent acuteness of many of their followers; of Aureolus, Capreolus, Bannes, Alvarez, Zumel, &c.; of Mayro, Lychetus, Trombeta, Faber, Meurisse, Rada, &c.; of Ruiz, Pennatus, Suarez, Vasquez, &c.; of Hurtado, of Albertinus, of Lud. à Dola, and many others; but how loath should I be to take such sauce for my food, and recreations for my business! The jingling of too much and too false philosophy among them, often drowns the noise of Aaron's bells. I feel myself much better in Herbert's Temple; or in a heavenly treatise of faith and love. And though I do not, with Dr. Colet, distaste Augustine above the plainer fathers, yet I am more taken with his

Confessions, than with his grammatical and scholastic treatises. And though I know no man whose genius more abhorreth confusion instead of necessary distinction and method; yet I loathe impertinent, useless art, and pretended precepts and distinctions, which have not a foundation in the matter.

In a word, there is a Divine knowledge, which is part of man's felicity, as it promoteth love and union, and there is a solid knowledge of God's word and works, a valuable grammatical knowledge, and a true philosophy, which none but ignorant persons will despise. But the vain philosophy, and pretended wisdom and learning of the world, hath been, and is, the cheat of souls, the hinderer of wisdom, and a troubler of the church and world.

CHAP. II.

WHAT WISDOM AND ESTEEM OF IT, ARE NOT
HERE CONDEMNED.

THE order which I shall observe in handling the first doctrine shall be this; I. I will tell you negatively what wisdom, and esteem of our own wisdom, is not here condemned. II. What it is that is here condemned. III. What are the certainties which we must hold fast, and make our religion of. IV. What degrees of these certainties there are. V. What are the mischiefs of falsely pretended knowledge. VI. What are the causes of it. VII. What are the remedies.

I. What wisdom, and what esteem of our wisdom is not here condemned?

Answ. 1. Not any real useful knowledge at all, whilst every thing keepeth its proper place, and due esteem, as is said.

2. That which of itself primarily is of so small use, as that it falleth under the contempt of the apostles, yet by accident, through the subtlety of Satan, and the viciousness of the world, may become to some men in some measure necessary. And here cometh in the calamity of divines. Of how little use it is to me in itself to know what is written in many hundred books; which yet by accident it much concerneth me to know! And if God restrain him not, the devil hath us here at so great an advantage, that he can make our work almost endless, and hath almost done it already; yea, can at any time divert us from the greatest truth and works, by making another at that time more necessary.

If he raise up Socinians, our task is increased; we must read their books, that we may be able to confute them; so must we when he raiseth up Libertines, Familists, Seekers, Quakers, and such other sects. If he stir up controversies in the church, about Government, Worship, Ceremonies, Circumstances, Words, Methods, &c., we must read so much as to understand all, that we may defend the truth against them. If Papists will lay the stress of all their controversies on Church History, and the Words of Ancients; we must read and understand all, or they will triumph. If Schoolmen will build their theology on Aristotle, all men have not the wit with the Iberian legate at the Florentine Council in Sagyrophilus, to cry against the preacher, 'What have we to do with Aristotle?'

But if we cannot deal with them at their own weapons, they will triumph. If cavillers will dispute only in mood and figure, we must be able there to overtop them, or they will insult. If the plica, scurvy, or other new diseases do arise, the physician must know them all, if he will cure them. And hence it is that we say, that a lawyer must know the law; and a physician must know physic, medicine, &c. But a divine should know all things that are to be known; because the diseased world hath turned pretended knowledge into the great malady, which must be cured; but is the thing itself of any great worth; is it any great honour to know the vanity of philosophical pedantry; and to be able to overdo such gamesters, any more than to beat one at a game at chess, or for a physician to know the plague or leprosy?

3. Yet indeed, as all things are sanctified to the holy, and pure to the pure; a wise man may and must make great use of common, inferior kinds of knowledge: especially the true, grammatical sense of Scripture words, the true precepts of logic, the certain parts of real physics and pneumatology; for God is seen in his works as in a glass: and there to search after him and behold him, is a noble, pleasant work and knowledge. And I would that no Israelite may have need to go down to the Philistines for instruments of this sort.

4. It is not forbidden to any man to know that measure of wisdom which he truly hath; *God bindeth us not to err*, nor to call light darkness, or truth error, or to belie ourselves, or deny his gifts. 1. It is desirable for a man

absolutely to know as much as he can, preferring still the greatest things, and to know that he knoweth them, and not to be sceptical, and doubt of all: 2. It is a duty for a converted sinner comparatively to know that he is wiser than he was in his sinful state, and to give God thanks for it. 3. It is his duty who groweth in wisdom, and receiveth new accessions of light, to know that he so groweth, and to give God thanks, and to welcome each useful truth with joy. 4. It is the duty of a good and wise man comparatively to know that he is not as foolish as the ungodly; nor to think that every wicked man, or ignorant person whom he should pity and instruct, is already wiser than he; every teacher is not to be so foolish as to think that all his flock are more judicious than himself. In a word, it is not a true estimate of the thing or of ourselves, that is forbidden us; but a false. It is not belying ourselves, nor ingratitude to God, nor a contradiction, to know a thing, and not to know that I know it, nor an ignorance of our own minds, which is commanded us under the pretence of humility; but it is a proud conceit, that we know what we do not know, that is condemned.



CHAP. III.

II. WHAT PRETENDED KNOWLEDGE IS CONDEMNED, AND WHAT PHILOSOPHY AND LEARNING IT IS THAT PAUL DISLIKED.

MORE distinctly, 1. It is condemnable for any man to think himself absolutely or highly wise:

because our knowledge here is so poor, and dark, and low, that, compared with our ignorance, it is little : we know not what or how many, or how great the things are which we do not know ; but in general we may know that they are incomparably more and greater than what we do know ; we know now but as children, and darkly, and in a glass or riddle. (1 Cor. xiii. 11, 12.) In the sense that Christ saith, none is good but God, we may say that none is wise but God. For a man must know (unless he be a very sot) that he knoweth nothing perfectly in the world ; that he knoweth but little of any worm, or fly, or pile of grass which he seeth, or of himself, his soul or body, or any creature ; for this man to assume the title of a *wise man*, is arrogant, unless comparatively understood, when he is ignorant of ten thousandfold more than he knoweth, and the predominant part denominateth. The old inquirers had so much modesty, as to arrogate no higher name than Philosophers.

2. It is very condemnable for any man to be proud of his understanding : while it is so low, and poor, and dark, and hath still so much matter to abase us. He knoweth not what a dungeon poor mortals are in, nor what a darkened thing a sinful mind is, nor what a deplorable state we are in, so far from the heavenly light, no, nor what it is to be a man in flesh, who findeth not much more cause of humiliation than of pride in his understanding. O how much ado have I to keep up from utter despondency under the consciousness of so great ignorance, which no study, no means, no time doth overcome. How long, Lord, shall this dungeon be our dwelling ! and

how long shall our foolish souls be loath to come into the celestial light !

3. It is sinful folly to pretend to know things unrevealed and impossible to be known. "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us, and to our children for ever, that we do them." (Deut. xxix. 29.) "For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?" (Rom. xi. 34.) And how many such compose the theology of some, and the philosophy of more.

4. It is sinful folly to pretend to know that which is impossible or unrevealed to him, though it be possible and revealed to others. For as the eye, so the understanding must have its necessary light, and due constitutions and conditions of the object, and of itself; or else it cannot understand.

5. It is sinful folly to pretend to certainty of knowledge, when either the thing is but probable, or at best, we have but doubtful opinions or conjectures of it, and no true certainty.

6. It is sinful folly to pretend that we know or receive anything by Divine faith (or revelation) when we have it but by human faith, or probable conjecture from natural evidence. As soon as men are persuaded by a sect, a seducer, or a selfish priest, to believe what he saith, abundance presently take such a persuasion for a part of their religion, as if it were a believing God.

7. It is sinful folly to take on us that we know what we know not at all: because we do but know that it is knowable, and that wise men know it, and as soon as we understand that it

should be known, and that wise men conclude it to be true, therefore to pretend that we know it to be true.

8. And it is sinful folly to pretend that we truly know or apprehend the thing or matter, or incomplex object, merely because we have got the bare words, and second notions of it, which are separable from the knowledge of the thing. All these are false and sinful pretences of knowledge which men have not.

But because Paul so warneth us to take heed of vain philosophy, and atheists and infidels deride him for speaking against the wisdom of the world, as if he spake against learning, because he had it not; and because the disease which he attempted to cure, remaineth among scholars to this day, and instead of a cure, many contemn the physician; and dislike Christ himself and the Gospel, as defective of the learning which they overvalue; I will once again, and that more distinctly tell you some few of the faults of our common learning; even now that it is cultivated and augmented in this age, that you may see that Paul did not injuriously accuse it, or Christ injuriously neglect it.*

I. Natural imperfection layeth the foundation of our common calamity; in that it is so long

* M. Antonine (l. 1, sect. 17) doth thank God that he made no greater progress in Rhetoric, Poetry, and such like studies, which might have hindered him from better things, if he had perceived himself to have profited in them. And (in fine) *quod cum Philosophandi cupiditas incessisset, non in sophistam aliquem inciderim, nec commentariis evolvendis, vel syllogismis resolvendis, vel Meterologicis discutiendis tempus deses contriverim.*

before sense and reason grow up to a natural maturity, through the unripeness of organs, and want of exercise, that children are necessitated to learn words before things, and to make these words the means of their first knowledge, of many of the things signified; so that most furnish themselves with a stock of names and words, before ever they get any true knowledge of the matter.

II. And then they are exceeding apt to think that this treasury of words and second notions is true wisdom, and to mistake it for the knowledge of the thing: even as in religion we find almost all children and ignorant people, will learn to say by rote the Creed and Lord's-prayer, and Commandments, and Catechism, and then think that they are not ignorants, when it is long after, before we can get them to understand the sense of the words which they can so readily speak; yea, though they are plain English words, which they use for the most part in ordinary discourse.

III. When children come to school, also their masters teach them as their parents did, or worse; I mean that they bestow almost all their pains to furnish them with words and second notions; and so do their tutors too often at the University. So that by that time they are grown to be masters of a considerable stock of words, grammatical, logical, metaphysical, &c., and can set these together in propositions and syllogisms, and have learned *memoriter* the theorems or axioms, and some distinctions which are in common use and reputation, they are ready to pass for Masters of the Arts, and to set

up for themselves, and leave their tutors, and to teach others the like sort and measure of learning which they have thus acquired. Like one that sets up his trade as soon as he hath gotten a shop full of tools,

IV. And the great mischief is, that multitudes of those notions that are taught us are false, not fitted to the things, but expressing the conceptions of roving, uncertain, erroneous, bewildered minds. Words are the instruments of communication of thoughts. And when I hear a man speak, I hear, perhaps, what he *thinketh* of things, but not always what they are. Our universal notions are the result of our own comparing things with things. And we are so wofully defective in such comparings, that our universal notions must needs be very defective, so that they abound with error.

V. And the conceptions of men being as various as their countenances, the same words in the mouths of several men, have several significations. So that when tutors read the same books to their scholars, and teach them the same notions, it is not the same conceptions always that they thus communicate.

VI. And the narrowness of man's mind and thoughts is such, that usually there must go many partial conceptions to one thing or object really indivisible: so that few things, or nothing rather in the world, is known by us with one conception, nor with a simplicity of apprehension answerable to the simplicity of the thing: and hereby it cometh to pass that inadequate conceptions make up a great part of our learning and knowledge.

VII. The 'entia rationis' being thus exceeding numerous, are already confounded with objective realities, and have compounded our common systems of logic, metaphysics, and too much of physics : so that students must at first see through false spectacles, and learn by seducing notions, and receive abundance of false conceptions, as the way to wisdom ; and shadows and rubbish must furnish their minds under the name of truth, though mixed with many real verities. For young men must have teachers ; they cannot begin at the foundation, and yet every one learn of himself, as if none had ever learned before him : he is like to have but a slow proficient, that maketh no use of the studies and experience of any that ever learned before him. And he that will learn of others, must receive their notions and words as the means of his information.

VIII. And when they grow up to be capable of real wisdom, O ! what a labour it is, to cleanse out this rubbish, and to unlearn all the errors that we have learned, so that it is much of the happiest progress of extraordinary successful studies, to find out our old mistakes, and set our conceptions in better order one by one : perhaps in one year we find out and reform some two or three, and in another year one or two more, and so on. Even as when at my removal of my library, my servant sets up all my books, and I must take them half down again to set them in their right places.

IX. And the difficulty of the matter is our great impediment, when we come to study things. For, 1. Their matter, 2. Their compo-

sure, 3. Their numbers, 4. Their order and relations, 5. And their action and operation, are much unknown to us.

X. The order and relation of things to one another is so wonderfully unsearchable, and innumerably various, as quite surpasseth all human understanding. Yea, though ORDER and RELATION constitute all morality, policy, literature, &c., so that it is as it were that world which human intellects converse in, and the business of all human wills and actions, yet few men know so much as what ORDER and RELATION is: nay, whether it be anything or nothing. And though health and sickness, harmony and discord, beauty and ugliness, virtue and vice, consist in it, and heaven and hell depend upon it, and law and judgment do make and determine it: yet is it not easy to know what it is by an universal notion; nor whether it be truly to be called anything at all.

XI. And which is yet worse, the certain apprehension of sense and reason, is commonly by men called learned, reduced to, and tried by, these dreaming ambiguous names and universal notions; and men are drawn to deny their certain knowledge, because they know not by what universal term to call it, *e. g.* I know as far as is useful to me, by *seeing*, what light is; but whether it be 'substantia, accidens, modus,' &c., or what to call it universally, few know! And no wonder, for their universal notions are their own works or 'Entia rationis,' fabricated by the imperfect comparing of things with things, by ignorant understandings; but the sensibility of objects, and the sensitive faculty and the intellect,

are the works of God. I know much better what light is by seeing it, than I know what an *accident* or a *quality* is.

So I know by *feeling* what heat is, I know what motion or action is, I know what pain and pleasure is, I know what love and hatred is, I know partly what it is to think, to know, to will, to choose and refuse; but what is the right universal notion of these, what true definition to give of any one of them, the most learned man doth not well know; insomuch, as I dare boldly say, that the vulgar ordinarily know all these better without definition, than the most learned man living can know them by definitions alone.

XII. And it is so hard a thing to bring men to that self-denial and labour, as at age thoroughly and impartially to revise their juvenile conceptions, and for them that learn words before things, to proceed to learn things now as appearing in their proper evidence; and to come back and cancel all their old notions, which were not sound, and to build up a new frame; that not one of a multitude is ever master of so much virtue as to attempt it and go through with it. Was it not labour enough to study so many years to know what others say, but they must now undo much of it, and begin a new and harder labour? who will attempt it?

XIII. And indeed none but men of extraordinary acuteness and love of truth, and self-denial and patience, are fit to do it. For, 1. The common dullards will fall into the ditch when they leave their crutches. And will multiply sects in philosophy and religion, while they are unable to see the truth in itself. And indeed

this hath made the Protestant churches so liable to the derision and reproach of their adversaries. And how can it be avoided, while all must pretend to know and judge, what indeed they are unable to understand!

2. Yea, the half-witted men, that think themselves acute and wise, fall into the same calamity.

3. And the proud will not endure to be thought to err, when they plague the world with error.

4. And the impatient will not endure so long and difficult studies.

5. And when all is done, as Seneca saith, they must be content with a very few approvers, and must bear the scorn of the ignorant-learned; who have no way to maintain the reputation of their own wisdom, orthodoxy, and goodness, but by calling him proud, or self-conceited, or erroneous, that differeth from them by knowing more than they. And who but the truly self-denying can be at so much cost and labour for such reproach, when they foreknow that he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow?

XIV. By these means, men's minds that should be taken up with God and his service, are abused and vilified, and filled with the dust and smoke of vain, and false, and confused notions. And man's life is spent (as David saith) in a vain show. And men dream waking with as great industry, as if they were about a serious work. Alas, how pitifully are many of the learned world employed.

CHAP. IV.

III. WHAT ARE THE CERTAINTIES THAT MUST BE KNOWN AND HELD FAST, AND WHY.

IT is none of the apostle's meaning that men should be mere sceptics: nor am I seconding Sanchez's 'nihil scitur,' unless you take science for adequate science, or in a transcendent notion, as it signifieth that which is proper to another world, and therefore may be denied of this. He can neither play the part of a Christian or of a man, who doubts of all things, and is confident of nothing.

That our discourse of this may be orderly and edifying it is of great use that I first help you rightly to understand what *certainty* is. The word is ambiguous, and sometimes is applied to the object, and sometimes to the act and agent. The former is called *objective certainty*; the latter *subjective certainty*.

The Objective is either certainty of the thing, or certainty of evidence, by which the thing is discernible or perceptible to us; and this either sensible or rational evidence; and the latter is either self-evidence of principles, or derived evidence of consequences.

Subjective certainty is also either considered in the nature of it, or in the degree; and as to the nature it is either the senses' certainty, or the intellects'; and this is either of incomplex objects, or complex: the first is either of sensible objects, or purely spiritual: the second of principles, or of conclusions. Of all these there are certainty.

The degrees are these: It being first supposed

that no human apprehension here is absolutely perfect; and therefore all our certainties subjective are imperfect; the word therefore signifieth not only a perfect apprehension, but it signifieth 'non falli,' not to be deceived, and such an apprehension of the evidence as giveth us a just resolving and quieting confidence. And so, 1. The due objects of sense, and, 2. The immediate acts of the soul itself, are certain in the first and highest degree. I know certainly what I see clearly, so far as I see it: and I know certainly that I think, and know, and will. The next degree of certainty is of rational principles, and the next of consequents.

A few propositions may further help your understandings,

I. All things in the world have their certainty *physical* of being; that is, it is a certainty, or a truth that this thing is.

II. The thing which is most commonly called *objective certainty*, is such a degree of perceptibility or evidence as may aptly satisfy the doubting intellect.

III. Evidence is called infallible; 1. When he that receiveth it is never deceived; and so all truth is infallible truth; for he is not deceived who believeth it: 2. Or when a man cannot err about it. And there is no such evidence in the world, unless you suppose all things else agreeable.

IV. The perception is called infallible, 1. Either 'quia non falsa,' because it is not deceived: and so every man is infallible in every thing which he truly perceiveth: 2. Or because it cannot or will not err. And so absolute in-

fallibility is proper to God; but 'secundum quid' in certain cases, upon certain objects, with certain conditions, all sound men's senses and intellects are infallible.

V. Certainty of evidence consisteth in such a position of the thing evident, as maketh it an object perceptible to the faculty perceiving; to which many conditions are required. As, 1. That the thing itself have such intrinsic qualifications, as make it fit to be an object. 2. That it have the due intrinsic conditions concomitant.

1. To the nature of an object of perception it is necessary, 1. That it be a thing which in its nature is within the reach of the perceiving faculty; and not (as spirits are to sense) so above us, or alien to us, as to be out of the orb of our perception. 2. That they have a perceptible quantity, magnitude or degree. 3. That, if it be an incomplex term and object, and not an universal of the highest notion, it be 'hoc aliquid,' and have its proper individuation. 4. That it have some special distinct conformity to the distinct perceiving faculty. In sum, that it be 'Ens, unum, verum, bonum, vel hisce contraria reductive et per accidens cognita.'

2. To the extrinsic conditions, it is necessary, 1. That the object have a due site or position. 2. And a due distance; neither too near nor too far off. 3. And that it have a due medium, fitted to it and the faculty. 4. And that it have a due abode or stay, and be not like a bullet out of a gun, imperceptible through the celerity of its motion.

VI. That the perception of sense be certain,

it is necessary, 1. That the organ be sound, in such a measure as that no prevalent distemper undisturb it. 2. That it be not oppressed by any disturbing adjunct. 3. That the sensitive soul do operate on and by these organs; for else its alienation will leave the organ useless: as some intense meditations make us not hear the clock. 4. That it be the due sense and organ which meeteth with the object; as sounds with the ear, light with the eye, &c., besides the aforesaid necessities.

VII. Common *notitiæ* or *principles* are not so called, because men are born with the actual knowledge of them; but because they are truths, which man's mind is naturally so disposed to receive as that upon the first exercises of sense and reason, some of them are understood, without any other human teacher.

VIII. Even self-evident principles are not equal, but some of them are more, and some less evident; and therefore some are sooner, and some later known. And some of them are more commonly known than others.

IX. The self-evidence of these principles ariseth from the very nature of the intellect which inclineth to truth, and the nature of the will which essentially inclineth to good, and the nature and posture of the objects which are Truth and Goodness in the most evident position, compared together, or conjunct; some call it instinct.

X. It is not necessary to the certainty of a principle, that it be commonly known of all or most. For intellects have great variety of capacities, excitation, helps, improvements, and even

principles have various degrees of evidence, and appearances to men.

XI. Man's mind is so conscious of its own darkness and imperfections, that it is distrustful of its own inferences, unless they be very near and clear. When by a long series of *ergos* any thing is far fetched, the mind is afraid there may be some unperceived error.

XII. He therefore that holdeth a true principle as such, and at once a false inference which contradicteth it, is to be supposed to hold the principle first and fastest, and that if he saw the contradiction he would let go the consequent and not the principle.

XIII. He that denieth the certainty of sense, imagination, and intellective perception of things sensed as such, doth make it impossible to have any certainty of science or faith, about those same objects but by miracle. And therefore the Papists denying and renouncing all these (sense, imagination and intellective perception) when they say, that there is no bread or wine in the Sacrament, do make their pretended contrary faith impossible. For we are men before we are Christians, and we have sense and intellects before we have faith, and as there is no Christianity but on supposition of humanity, so there is no faith, but on supposition of sense and understanding. How know you that here is no bread and wine? Is it because Scripture or Councils, say so? How know you that; by hearing or reading? But how know you that ever you did hear or read or see a book or man; by sense or no way? If sense be infallible here, why not there? You

will say that sense may be infallible in one case, and not in others. I answer, either you prove it infallible from nature, even by sense and intellectual perception, or by sense; or else by supernatural revelation. If only by this revelation, how know you that revelation? How know you that ever you heard, read, or saw any thing which you call revelation? If by a former revelation, I ask you the same question 'in infinitum.' But if you know the certainty of sense, by sense and intellectual perception, then where there is the same evidence and perception, there is the same certainty. But here is as full evidence and perceiving as any other object can have. 1. We see bread and wine. 2. We taste it. 3. We smell the wine. 4. We hear it poured out. 5. We feel it. 6. We find the effects of it; it refresheth and nourisheth as other bread and wine. 7. It doth so by any other creature as well as by man. 8. It corrupteth. 9. It becometh true flesh and blood in us, and a part of our bodies; even in the worst; yea, part of the body of a mouse or dog. 10. It is possible for a mouse or dog to live only upon consecrated bread and wine. Is his body then nothing but Christ? 11. In all this perception, the objects are not rare, but commonly exhibited in all ages; they have all the conditions that other sensible, evident objects have, as to sight, magnitude, distance, medium. 12. And it is not one or two, but all men in the world of the soundest senses, who sense and perceive them to be bread and wine. So that here is as full evidence as the words which you read or hear can have to assure us.

Object. 'But if God deny sense in this case

and not in others, we must believe sense in others and not in this.'

Answ. But again I ask you, How you know that God biddeth or forbiddeth you anything, if sense be not first to be believed?

Object. 'But is it not possible for sense to be deceived? Cannot God do it?'

Answ. 1. It is possible for sense to be annihilated, and made no sense; and it is possible that the faculty, or organ, or medium, or object be depraved, or want its due conditions, and so to be deceived. But to retain all these due conditions, and yet to be deceived is a contradiction, for then it is not the same thing; it is not that which we call now formally sense and intellect, or sensation and intellection. And contradictions are not things for Omnipotency to be tried about. God can make a man to be no intellectual creature; but thereby he maketh him no man: for to be a man, and not intellectual, is a contradiction. And so it is to be men, and yet to have no sense nor intellect, that can truly perceive sensible objects as before qualified: therefore they unman all the world, on pretext of asserting the power of God.

2. But suppose that all sense be fallible, and intellection of things sensible, yet it is the first and only entrance of all things sensible into the mind or knowledge of man; and therefore we must take it as God hath given it us, for we can have no surer: no sensible thing is in the intellect which was not first in the sense. Whether my eyes and ears and taste be fallible or not, I am sure I have no other way to perceive their objects; but by them I must take them and use

them as they are. All the words and definitions in the world will not give any man without sensation, a true conception of a sensible object.

3. Such absurd suppositions therefore are not to be put. (As—what if God should tell you by his Word, that all the senses of all men are deceived, in one thing, or in all things? would you not believe him?) It is not to be supposed that God will give us all our senses and intellective perception by them, to be our discerners of things sensible, and then bid us not believe them, for they are false; unless he told us, that all our perceptions are false; and our whole life is but deceit. And I further answer, if God tell me so, it must be by some word or writing of man or angel, or himself; and how should I know that word, but by my sense?

But the great answer which seemeth to satisfy Bellarmine and the rest, is, that sense is no judge of substances, but of accidents only; therefore it is not deceived.

But, 1. It is false, that sense perceiveth not substances: it is not only colour, quantity, figure, which I see; nor only roughness and smoothness which I feel; nor only sweetness which I taste; but it is a coloured, extended, figured substance which I see; a rough or smooth substance which I feel, and a sweet substance which I taste: and if the accident were the only primary object, the substance is the secondary and certain. Else no one ever saw a man, a tree, a bird, a plant, the earth, a book, or any substance; but only the colour, quantity or figure of them. No man ever touched felt or a body, but only the accidents of it.

2. And I pray you, tell me how substances come to the understanding, if they were never in the sense : prove a substance without sensation as a medium, if you can. Do you perceive any substances intellectually or not ? If not, why pretend you that there are any ? If yea, it must be either as conclusions, or as intellectual principles (which are both logical complex objects, and therefore not substances), or as the immediate immaterial objects of intellection (which is only the soul's own acts), or what is by analogy gathered from them ; or else the objects of sense itself. It can be none of the former ; therefore it must be the latter : and how can the understanding find that in sense which was never there ?

If it be said that it is there but by accidents ; I answer, 1. That is false, though said by many. I do as immediately touch substance as accidents, though not substance without the accidents. 2. Whether it be there by the meditation of the accidents, or immediately itself, we are sure that the understanding no otherwise receiveth it, than as the sense transmitteth it ; we must know material substance as it is sensed, or not at all.

We see then what a pass this Roman religion bringeth the world to. That they may be Christians, they must believe (and swear by the Trent oath) *that they are not men* ; and that they may have faith, they must *renounce their senses* ; and that they may be sure God's word is true (and the church's decrees), they must be *sure that they are sure of nothing* ; and how then are they sure of that ? And while they subvert all the

order of nature in the world, they pretend that God can do it, and therefore we are to believe that he doth it, merely because these doctors can call themselves the CHURCH, and then can so expound the Scripture. When it is God's settled order in nature, that a man as an *animal* shall have sense to perceive things sensibly by, and as *a man* shall have understanding to receive from the imagination and sense, these objects; we must now suppose that God hath quite overturned the course of nature, either by making sense no sense, or the object no object, or the medium no fit medium; and yet this is to be believed by men that have *nothing but the same senses* to inform their understandings that it is written or spoken, or that there is a man in the world.

Suppose we grant it to be no contradiction, and therefore a thing that God can do, no man can question but that he must do it as a miracle, by altering and overturning nature's course. And shall we feign, 1. Miracles to become ordinary things, through all the churches in the world, and every day in the week, or every hour to be done? 2. And miracles to be made a standing church ordinance? 3. And every one in the church, even all the wicked, and every mouse that eateth the host, to be partaker of a miracle? 4. Yea, that every such man and mouse, may all the week long live on a continued miracle, while accidents without substance do nourish them, and turn to flesh and blood? 5. And all this ordinary course of miracles to be wrought at the will of every priest, be he never so ignorant or wicked a man? 6. And yet the same

words spoken by the holiest of the Protestant pastors will not do the miracle. 7. But if a Papist priest should be unduly ordained, or forge his own Orders, sobeit the church think him truly ordained, he can do the miracle. *All this must be believed.*

And the plague of all is, all men must be burnt as heretics, or exterminated, that cannot believe all this, and disbelieve their senses. And yet worse, all temporal lords must be dispossessed of their dominions, who will suffer any such to live therein, and not exterminate them.

An epicure and a sensual infidel, who think man is but of the same species of brutes, do but unman us, and leave us the honour of being animals or brutes. But the Papists do not leave us this much, but must reduce us to a lower order, and teach us to *deny our sense itself*; and torment and kill them that will not do it.

And what is it that must persuade us to all this? Why merely a 'hoc est corpus meum,' as expounded by the Councils of Lateran and Trent. And is not David's "I am a worm and no man"; (Ps. xxii. 6) as plain; yea, and that in a prophecy of Christ? Must we believe therefore that neither David nor Christ was a man, but a worm? Is not "I am the Vine, and ye are the branches" (John xv. 1, 2) as plain? Must sense be renounced and ordinary miracles believed for such words as these?

And doth not Paul call it bread (1 Cor. xi.) after consecration, three times in the three next verses? And is not he as good an expositor of Christ's words as the Council of Trent?

And when did God work miracles which were

mere objects of belief against sense? Miracles were done as sensible things, thereby to confirm faith, and that which no sense perceived was not taken for a miracle.

To conclude, when the apostle saith, that "flesh and blood cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (plainly speaking of them formally as now called, and not as they signify sin), and consequently that Christ's body is now in heaven a spiritual body, and not formally flesh and blood, yet must the bread and wine be turned into his flesh and blood on earth, when he hath none in heaven?

And by their doctrine no baker nor vintner is secured, but that a priest may come into his shop or cellar, and turn all the bread and wine in it into Christ's body and blood: yea, the whole city or garrison may thus be deprived of their bread and wine, if the priest intend it; and yet it shall not be so in the Sacrament itself, if the priest intend it not. But I have dwelt too long on this.

XIV. Next to the act of cogitation and volitation itself, and to the most certain objects of sense, there is nothing in all the world so certain, that is, so evident to the intellect, as the being of God: he being that to the mind which the sun is to the eye, most certainly known, though little of him be known, and no creature comprehend him.

XV. That God is true, is part of our knowing him to be perfect, and to be God; and therefore is most certain.

XVI. That man is made by God and for God; that we owe him all our love, obedience and

praise, that we have all from him, and should please him in the use of all, with many such like, are 'notitiæ communes,' certain verities, received by nature, some as principles, and some as such evident conclusions as are not to be doubted of.

XVII. That the Scripture is the word of God, is a certain truth, not sensible, nor a natural principle; but an evident conclusion drawn from that seal or testimony of the Spirit, antecedent, concomitant, impressed and consequent; which I have often opened in other treatises.

XVIII. That the Scripture is true, is a certain conclusion drawn from the two last-mentioned premises, viz. That God is true, 'verax,' and that the Scripture is his word.

XIX. Those doctrines or sayings which are parts of Scripture evidently perceived so to be by sense and intellective perception, are known to be true, by the same certainty as the Scripture in general is known to be true.

XX. To conclude then, there are two sorts of certain verities in Theology. 1. Natural principles with their certain consequents. 2. Scripture in general, with all those assertions which are certainly known to be parts. And all the rest are to be numbered with uncertainties, except prophetic certainty of inspiration, which I pass by.

CHAP. V.

IV. OF THE SEVERAL DEGREES OF CERTAINTY.

1. As certainty is taken for truth of being, it admitteth of no degrees: all that is true, is equally true.

2. But certainty of evidence hath various degrees; none doubteth but there are various degrees of evidence; all the doubt is whether any but the highest may be called certainty.

And here let the reader first remember that the question is but 'de nomine,' of the name, and not the thing. And next, the evidence is called certain, because it is certifying aptitudinally. It is apt to certify us.

3. And then the question will be devolved to subjective certainty, whether it have various degrees. For if it have so, then the evidence must be said to have so, because it is denominated respectively from the apprehensive certainty.

And here 'de re' it must be taken as agreed,
 1. That certainty is a certain degree of apprehension. 2. That there are various degrees of apprehension. 3. That no man on earth hath a perfect intellectual apprehension, at least, of things moral and spiritual; for his apprehension may be still increased, and those in heaven have more perfect than we.

4. That there are some degrees so low and doubtful, as are not fit to be called certainty.

5. That even these lowest degrees with the greatest doubting, are yet often true apprehensions; and whenever they are true they are infallible, that is, not deceived: therefore this infallibility, which is not to be deceived, is indeed one sort of certainty, which is so denominated relatively from the natural truth or certainty of the object; but it is not this sort of certainty which we inquire after.

6. Therefore it followeth that this subjective certainty containeth this infallible truth of per-

ception and addeth a degree which consisteth in the satisfaction of the mind.

7. But if the mind should be never so confident and satisfied of a falsehood, this deserveth not the name of certainty, because it includeth not truth. For it is a certain perception of truth which we speak of; and confident erring is not certainty of the truth.

8. As therefore the degrees of doubting are variously overcome, so there must needs be various degrees of certainty.

9. When doubting is so far overcome, as that the mind doth find rest and satisfaction in the truth, it may be called certainty. But when doubting either is prevalent, and so troublesome as to leave us wavering, it is not called certainty.

10. It is not the forgetting or neglect of a difficulty or doubt, nor yet the will's rejecting it, which is properly called certainty. This quieteth the mind indeed, but not by the way of ascertaining evidence. Therefore ignorant people that stumble upon a truth by chance with confidence, are not therefore certain of it. And those that take it upon trust from a priest or their parents, or good people's opinions, are not therefore certain of it. Nor they that say as some Papists, 'Faith hath not evidence, but is a voluntary reception of the Church's testimony, and meritorious, because it hath not evidence; therefore though I see no cogent evidence, I will believe, because it is my duty.' Whether this man's faith may be saving or no, I will not now dispute; but certainly it is no certainty of apprehension. He is not certain of what he so believeth. This is but to cast away the doubt or

difficulty, and not at all by certainty to overcome it.

11. When a man hath attained a satisfying degree of perception, he is capable still of clearer perception. Even as when in the heating of water, after all the sensible cold is gone, the water may grow hotter and hotter still. So after all sensible doubting is gone the perception may grow clearer still.

12. But [still the objective certainty is the same; that is, there is that evidence in the object which is 'in suo genere' sufficient to notify the thing to a prepared mind.

13. But this sufficiency is a respective proportion; and therefore, as it respecteth man's mind in common, it supposeth that by due means and helps, and industry, the mind may be brought certainly to discern this evidence. But if you denominate the sufficiency of the evidence, from its respect to the present disposition of men's minds, so it is almost as various as men's minds are. For 'recipitur ad modum recipientis;' and that is a certifying, sufficient evidence of truth, to one man, which to a thousand others is not so much as an evidence of probability. Therefore mediate and immediate sufficiency and certainty of evidence, must be distinguished.

From all this I may infer, 1. That though God be the original and end of all verities, and is ever the first 'in ordine essendi et efficiendi,' and so à Jove principium, in methodo syntheticâ; yet he is not the 'primum notum,' the first known, 'in ordine cognoscendi,' nor the beginning 'in methodo inquisitivâ' (though in such analytical methods as begin at the ultimate end, he is also

the first). Though all truth and evidence be from God, yet two things are more evident to man than God is, and but two: viz. The present objects of sense; and our own internal acts, of intellective cogitation and volition. And these being supposed, the being of God is the third evident certainty in the world.

2. If it be no disparagement to God himself, that he is less certainly known of us, than sensibles, and our internal acts, 'de esse,' it is then no disparagement to the Scripture, and supernatural truths, that *they* are less certainly known; seeing they have not so clear evidence as the being of God hath.

3. The certainty of the Scripture truths is mixed of almost all other kinds of certainty conjunct. 1. By sense and intellective perception of things sensed, the hearers and see'rs of Christ and his apostles, knew the words and miracles. 2. By the same sense we know what is written in the Bible, and in Church History concerning it, and the attesting matters of fact; and also what our teachers say of it. 3. By certain intellectual inference I know that this history of the words and fact is true. 4. By intellection of a natural principle I know that God is true. 5. By inference I know that all his word is true. 6. By sense I know (intellectually receiving it by sense) that this or that is written in the Bible, and part of that Word. 7. By further inference therefore I know that it is true. 8. By intuitive knowledge, I am certain that I have the love of God, and heavenly desires, and a love of holiness, and hatred of sin, &c. 9. By certain inference I know that this is the special work of the Spirit

of Christ by his Gospel doctrine. 10. By experience I find the predictions of this Word fulfilled. 11. Lastly, By inspiration the prophets and apostles knew it to be of God. And our certain belief ariseth from divers of these, and not from any one alone.

4. There are two extremes here to be avoided, and both held by some, not seeing how they contradict themselves.

I. Of them that say that faith hath no evidence, but the merit of it lieth in that we believe without evidence. Those that understand what they say, when they use these words, mean that things evident to sense, as such, that is, incomplex sensible objects are not the objects of faith, "We live by faith and not by sight." God is not visible: heaven and its glory, angels and perfected spirits are not visible. Future events, Christ's coming, the resurrection, judgment, are not yet visible: it doth not yet appear (that is, to sense) what we shall be; our life is hid (from our own and others' senses) with Christ in God. We see not Christ when we rejoice in him with joy unspeakable, and full of glory. (1 Pet i. 8.) Thus faith is the evidence of things not seen, or evident to sight. (Heb. xi. 1.) But ignorant persons have turned all to another sense; as if the objects of faith had no ascertaining intellectual evidence: when it is as impossible for man's mind to understand and believe anything to be true, without perceiving evidence of its truth; as it is for the eye to see without light. As Richard Hooker saith in his Ecclesiastical Polity, '*Let men say what they will, men can truly believe no further than they perceive evidence.*' It is a natural

impossibility; for evidence is nothing but the perceptibility of the truth. and can we perceive that which is not perceptible?

It is true, that evidence from Divine revelation is often without any evidence 'ex natura rei:' but it may be nevertheless a fuller and more satisfying evidence.

Some say there is evidence of credibility, but not of certainty. Not of natural certainty indeed. But in Divine revelations (though not in human) evidence of credibility is evidence of certainty, because we are certain that God cannot lie.

And to say, I will believe, though without evidence of truth, is a contradiction or hypocritical self-deceit; for your will believeth not: and your understanding receiveth no truth but upon evidence that it is truth. It acteth of itself 'per modum naturæ,' necessarily further than it is 'sub imperio voluntatis; and the will ruleth it not despotically: nor at all 'quoad specificationem,' but only 'quoad exercitium.' All therefore that your will can do (which maketh faith a moral virtue), is to be free from those vicious habits and acts in itself which may hinder faith, and to have those holy dispositions and acts in itself which may help the understanding to do its proper office, which is to believe evident truth on the testimony of the revealer, because his testimony is sufficient evidence. The true meaning of a good Christian, when he saith *I will believe*, is, I am truly willing to believe, and a perverse will shall not hinder me, and I will not think of suggestions to the contrary. But the meaning of the formal hypocrite when he saith, *I will believe*, is, I will cast away all doubt-

ful thoughts out of my mind, and I will be as careless as if I did believe, or I will believe the priest or my party, and call it believing in God. Evidence is an essentiating part of the intellect's act. As there is no act without an object, so there is no object 'sub formali ratione objecti,' without evidence. Even as there is no sight but of an illustrated object, that is, a visible object.

II. The other extreme (of some of the same men) is, that yet faith is not true and certain if it have any doubtfulness with it. Strange! that these men can only see what is invisible; believe what is inevident as to its truth, that is, incredible, but also believe past all doubting, and think that the weakest true believer doth so too; Certainly there are various degrees of faith in the sincere: all have not the same strength! Christ rebuketh Peter in his fears, and his disciples all at other times, for their little faith. "When Peter's faith failed not, it staggered, which Abraham's did not: "Lord, increase our faith," and "Lord, I believe, help my unbelief," were prayers approved by Christ, I will call a prevalent belief which can lay down life and all this world for Christ and the hopes of heaven, by the name of certainty, which hath various degrees. But if they differ 'de nomine,' and will call nothing certainty but the highest degree, they must needs yet grant that there is true, saving faith, that reacheth to no certainty in their sense. Yea, no man on earth then attaineth to such a certainty, because that every man's faith is imperfect.

CHAP. VI.

INFERENCE I. THE TRUE PRESERVATIVE OF
PUZZLED CHRISTIANS, FROM THE ERRORS
OF FALSE TEACHERS, WHO VEHEMENTLY
SOLICIT THEM TO THEIR SEVERAL PARTIES.

It is the common outcry of the world, 'How shall we know which side to be of? And who is in the right among so many, who all with confidence pretend to be in the right?'

Answ. Your preservative is obvious and easy; but men usually bestow more labour and cost for error and hell, than for truth and heaven. *Pretend not to faith or knowledge before you have it,* and you are the more safe. SUSPEND your judgments till you have true evidence to establish them. 1. It is only Christians that I am now instructing; and if you are Christians, you have already received the essentials of Christianity, even the Baptismal Covenant, the Creed, the Lord's-prayer, and Decalogue. And I need not tell you, that moreover you must receive all those truths in nature and Scripture, which are so plain, that all these dissenting sects of Christians are agreed in them. And when you have all these, and faithfully love and practise them, you are sure to be saved, if you do not afterward receive some contrary doctrine which destroyeth them. Mark then which is the *safe religion*. As sure as the Gospel is true, he that is meet for baptism before God, is meet for pardon of sin; and he that truly consenteth to the Baptismal Covenant, and so doth dedicate himself to God, is made a member of Christ, and is justified, and an heir of heaven. Your Church Catechism

saith truly of all such, that in baptism each one is made a 'member of Christ, a child of God, and an heir of heaven.' So that as sure as the Gospel is true, every true baptized Christian, whose love and life doth answer that faith, shall certainly be saved.

Ask all parties, and few of them but impudent designers can deny this. Well then, the Baptismal Covenant expounded in the Creed, Lord's-prayer, and Commandments is your Christian Religion. As a Christian you may and shall be saved: that a true Christian is saved, all confess. But whether a Papist be saved, is questioned by the Protestants; and so is the salvation of many other sects by others. You are safe then if you take in nothing to endanger you. And is it not wisdom then to take heed how you go further, and on what grounds, lest you overrun your safe religion?

Object. 'But then I must not be a Protestant, for the Papists say, that they cannot be saved.'

Answer. A Protestant is either one that holdeth to the ancient, simple Christianity without the Paptists' manifold additions; or one that positively also renounceth and opposeth those additions. In the first sense, a Protestant and a mere Christian is all one: and so to say, that a Protestant cannot be saved, is to say, that a Christian as such cannot be saved. If it be the mere name of a Protestant that the Papist accounteth damnable, tell him that you will not stick with him for the name: you are contented with the old name of Christian alone.

But Protestantism in the second sense is not your religion, but the defensative of your reli-

gion; as flying from the plague is not my humanity or life, but a means to preserve it. And so Protestants are of many sizes: some oppose some points, and some others; some more, some less, which the Papists have brought in: and yet they are not of so many religions.

But whoever condemneth you, if Christ save you, he doth but condemn himself as uncharitable. Christianity is certainly a state of salvation; but whether Popery be, or whether the Greek opinions be, or whether this or that difference and singularity stand with salvation, is the doubt. Cast not yourself then needlessly into doubt and danger.

Object. 'But then you will have us be still but infants, and to learn no more than our Catechisms, and not to learn and believe all that God hath revealed in his word.'

Answ. No such matter. This is the sum of what I advise you to.

1. Hold fast to your simple Christianity as the certain terms of salvation: 2. Receive nothing that is against it: 3. Learn as much more as ever you can: 4. But take not men's words, nor their plausible talk for certifying evidence; and do not think if you believe a priest, that this is believing God: nor if his reasons seem plausible to you, and you are of his opinion, that this is Divine knowledge. If you do incline to one man's opinion more than another, tell him that you incline to his opinion, but tell him that you take not this for Divine knowledge, or any part of your religion. If you will needs believe one side rather than another, about Church History, or the matters of their parties'

interest, tell them, I believe you as fallible men ; but this is none of my divine faith or religion. To learn to know, is to learn scientific evidence, and not to learn what is another man's opinions, nor whether they are probable or not ; much less to read a council's decrees, or the propositions of a disputing system, and then for the men's sake to say, this is orthodox : nor yet because it hath a taking aspect. To learn of a priest to believe God, is one thing ; and to believe him, or his party, church, or council, is another thing. Learn to know as much as you can ; and especially to know what God hath revealed to be believed : and learn to believe God as much as you can : and believe all your teachers, and all other men as far as they are credible in that case, with such a human belief as fallible men may justly require. And where contenders do consent, suspect them the less. But where they give one another the lie in matters of fact, try both their evidences of credibility before you trust them, and then trust them not beyond that evidence.

But still difference your divine faith and religion from your opinion and human faith ; and let men solicit you never so long, take not on you to know or believe till you do ; that is, not beyond the evidence. I do but persuade you against presumption and hypocrisy. Shall I say, **SUSPEND TILL YOU HAVE TRUE EVIDENCE**, and you are safe ! Why if you do not, you will know never the more, nor have ever the more Divine faith : for I mean no more than **SUSPEND YOUR PRESUMPTIONS**, and do not foolishly or hypocritically take on you to know what you do

not, or to have a faith which you have not. If you can know truly, do it with fidelity, and be true to the truth, whoever offer it, or whatever it cost you. But suspend your profession or hasty opinions and conceits of what you know not.

Object. 'But every side almost tells me that I am damned if I do not believe as they do.'

Answer. By that you may see that they are all deceived, at least save one (which ever it be) while they differ, and yet condemn each other. 2. Thereby they do but give you the greater cause to suspect them, for "*by this shall all men know Christ's disciples, if they love one another.*" Right Christians are not many masters, as knowing that themselves shall have the greater condemnation; for in many things we offend all. And the wisdom which hath envy and strife, is not from *above*, but from *beneath*, and is earthly, sensual, and devilish, introducing confusion and every evil work. (James iii. 1, 15, 16.) *Christ's disciples judge not, lest they be judged.*

3. By this you may see that unless you can be of all men's minds, you must be damned by the censures of many. And if you can bear it from all the sects save one, why not from that one also?

4. But I pray you ask these damning sectaries, 'is it believing your word, and being of your opinion that will save me? Or must I also know by scientific evidence that you say true, and that God himself hath said what you say: if he say that believing him and his party (though he call it the Church) is enough to save you, you have then less reason to believe him: for unless he can undertake himself to save you, he cannot undertake that believing him shall save you? If

he say, God hath promised to save you if you believe me,' believe that when he hath proved it to you.

But if it be knowledge and divine faith which he saith must save you, it is not your believing his word or opinion that will help you to that. I would tell such a man, 'help me to knowledge and faith, by cogent or certifying evidence, and I will learn and thank you with all my heart.' But till I have it, it is but mocking myself and you to say that I have it.

Object. 'But the Papists herein differ from all other sects: for they will say, that if I believe the church concerning divine revelations, and take all for divine revelation which the church saith is so, and so believe it, then I have a divine faith.'

Answ. 1. And is this to you a certifying evidence that indeed God revealed it, because their church saith so? If their church agree with Greeks, Armenians, Syrians, Coptics, Abassines, Protestants, and all other Christian churches, then it will be no part of the contest in question; and it is a stronger foundation of the two, to believe it, because *all* say it, than because *they* say it. But if they differ from the rest, know their proof that their church can tell God's mind, and not the rest of the Christian world. And that about a third part of the Christians in the world have such a promise which all the rest have not. 2. And how doth their church know that it is God's word? Is it by any certifying evidence, or by prophetic inspiration? If by evidence, let it be produced. Is it not revealed to others as well as to them? Must not we have a faith

of the same kind as the church hath? If so, we must believe by the same evidence as that church believeth. And what is that? It is not their own words. Doth a pope believe himself only? or a council believe themselves only? Or hath God said, 'You shall be saved if you will believe yourselves, and believe that I have said all that you say I have said?' Where is there such a promise? But if pope and council be not saved for believing themselves, how shall I know that I shall be saved for believing them, and that one kind of faith saveth me, and another them.

I ask it of each particular bishop in that council, is he saved for believing himself or the rest? If no man be saved for believing himself, why should another be saved for believing him? And the faith of the council is but the faith of the individual members set together.

Object. 'But they are saved for believing themselves as consenters, and not singly.'

Answ. All consenters know nothing as consenters, but what they know as individuals. And what is the evidence by which they know, and are brought to consent? Must not that evidence convince us also?

Object. 'But the present church are saved for believing not themselves but the former church.'

Answ. Then so must we: it is not the present church then that I must believe by a saving faith: but why then was the last age saved, and so the former? and so on to the first? Is any thing more evident than that all men must be saved for believing God, and that his word must be known to be his word by the same evidence,

by one man and another? And that evidence I have proved in several treatises to be another kind of thing than the decree of a pope, and his council.

But if it be not evidence, but prophetic inspiration and revelation by which the council or church knoweth God's word, I will believe them when by miracles or otherwise they prove themselves to be true prophets; till then I shall take them for fanatics, and hear them as I do other enthusiasts.

Should I here stay to bid you ask them, as before, how you shall be sure that their council was truly general, and more authentic and infallible than the second at Ephesus, or that at Ariminum, or that at Constance and Basil, &c. And whether the more general dissent of all the other Christians from them be not of as great authority as they that are the smaller part? And how you shall be sure of that? And also how but on the word of a priest you can know all that the church hath determined? with abundance such questions, of the meaning of each council, the ambiguity of words, the error of printers, the forgery of publishers, &c. I should help you to see, that saying as a priest saith, is not knowing the thing, nor believing God.

Stop therefore till you have evidence: follow no party as a party in the dark: or if probability incline you more to them than to others, call not this certainty Religion, Divine Faith. Thus your faith will be faith indeed, and you will escape all that would corrupt and frustrate it. The business is great. God requireth you to refuse no light: but withal he chargeth you to

believe no falsehood, nor put darkness for light: much less to father men's lies, or errors, or conceits on God, and to lay your salvation on it as if they are all God's word. How dreadful a thing is this if it prove false! Is it not blaspheming God?

No man in his wits then but a partial designer can look that you should make haste, or go any further than you have assuring or convincing evidence. If you know that any sect doth err, you need no preservative: if you do not, tell them, 'I am ignorant of this matter, I will learn as fast as I can; not neglecting greater matters; and I will be neither for you, nor against you, further than I can know.'

And as to the former objection, of being still infants, I further answer, that as feigned knowledge is no knowledge, so manhood consisteth not in being of many uncertain opinions; no, not so much in knowing many little controverted things, as in getting a clearer, more affecting, powerful, practical knowledge and belief of our Christianity, and the great and sure things which we know already; and in love and obedience practising of them. He is the strongest Christian who loveth God best, and hath most holiness; and he knoweth God better than any others do.

By this much you may see that the world is full of counterfeit faith, knowledge, and religion; even fancy and belief of men, and their own opinions, which go under these names. One turneth an Anabaptist, another a Separatist, another an Antinomian, another a Pelagian, and another a Papist, when if you try them

you shall find that they neither understand what they turn to, nor what they are against : they do but turn to his side, who hath the best advantage to persuade them, either by insinuating into their affections, or by plausible reasonings ; they talk for one doctrine, and against another, when they understand neither.

Reader, I advise thee therefore as thou lovest thy soul, 1. Not to neglect or delay any true knowledge that thou canst attain. 2. But not to be rash and hasty in judging. 3. Nor to take shows and men's opinions, or anything below a certifying or notifying evidence of truth, to make up thy Christian faith and knowledge. 4. And till thou see such certain evidence, suspend, and tell them that solicit thee, that thou understandest not the matter, and that thou art neither for them nor against them ; but wilt yield as soon as truth doth certainly appear to thee.

CHAP. VII.

INFERENCE 2. WHAT IS THE GREAT PLAGUE
AND DIVIDER OF THE CHRISTIAN WORLD.

FALSELY PRETENDED KNOWLEDGE and **FAITH** are the great plague and dividers of the Christian world.

Even among divines this plague is most pernicious, as being of most public influence. Take him that never had a natural acuteness of wit, nor is capable of judging of difficult points, if he be but of long standing, and grey hairs, and can preach well to the people, and have studied long ; he is not only confident of his fitness to judge of

that which he never understood, but his reputation of wisdom, must be kept up among the people by his supercilious talking against what he understandeth not.* Yea, if he be one that never macerated his flesh with the difficult and long studies of the matter, without which hard points will never be well digested and distinctly understood; yet, if he be a doctor, and have lived long in a reputation for wisdom, his ignorant, flashy conjectures, and hasty, superficial apprehensions, must needs go for the more excellent knowledge. And if you put him to make good any of his contradictions to the truth, his magisterial contempt, or his uncivil wrath, and unmannerly interruptions of you in your talk must go for reason: and if he cannot resist the strength of your evidence, he cannot bear the hearing of it; but like a scold, rather than a scholar, taketh your words out of your mouth before you come to the end; as if he said, 'Hold your tongue, and hear me who am wiser: I came to teach, and not to hear.' If you tell him how uncivil it is, not patiently to hear you to the end, he thinks you wrong him, and are too bold to pretend to a liberty to speak without interruption; or he will tell you that you 'are too long; he cannot remember all at once.' If you reply that the sense of the former part of a speech usually depends much on the latter part, and he cannot have your sense till he have all; and that he must not answer before he understandeth you; and that if his memory fail, he should take notes; and that to have uninterrupted turns of

* Yea, now it is also young, ignorant novices that are sick of the same feverish temerity.

speaking, is necessary in the order of all sober conferences, without which they will be but noise and strife ; he will let you know that he came not to hear, or keep any laws of order or civility, but to have a combat with you for the reputation of wisdom or orthodoxy : and what he wants in reason and evidence, he will make up in ignorant confidence and reviling, and call you by some ill name or other, that shall go for a confutation.

But yet this is not the usual way : it is too great a hazard to the reputation of their wisdom, to cast it on a dispute. The common way is, never to speak to the person himself ; but if any one cross their conceits, or become the object of their envy, they backbite him among those that reverence their wisdom ; and when they are sure that he is far enough out of hearing, they tell their credulous followers, ‘ O such a man holdeth unsound or dangerous opinions ! Take heed how you hear him or read his writings ; this or that heresy they savour of ; ’ when the poor man knoweth not what he talketh of. And if any one have the wit to say to him, ‘ Sir, he is neither so sottish, nor so proud as to be incapable of instruction ; if you are so much wiser than he, why do you not teach him ? ’ he will excuse his omission and commission together with a further calumny, and say, ‘ These erroneous persons will hear no reason : it is in vain.’ If he be asked, ‘ Sir, did you ever try ? ’ it is likely he must confess that he did not, unless some magisterial rebuke once went for evidence of truth. If the hearers (which is rare) have so much Christian wit and honesty, as to say,

‘ Sir, ministers above all men must be no backbiters, nor unjust: you know it is unlawful for us to judge another man, till we hear him speak for himself. If you would have us know whether he or you be in the right, let us hear you both together:’ his answer would be like Cardinal Turnon at the conference at Poisie, and as the Papists’ ordinarily is, ‘ It is dangerous letting heretics speak to the people, and it agreeth not with our zeal for God, to hear such odious things uttered against the truth.’

In a word, there are more that have the spirit of a pope in the world, than one, even among them that cry out against Popery, and that would be fain to be taken for the dictators of the world, whom none must dissent from, much less contradict. And there are more idolaters than heathens, who would have their ignorant understandings to be instead of God, the uncontrolled director of all about them.

But if these men have not any confidence in their self-sufficiency, if they can but embody in a society of their minds, or gather into a synod, he must needs go for a proud and arrogant schismatic at least, that will set any reason and evidence of truth, against the magisterial ignorance, when it is the major vote.

The very truth is, the great Benefactor of the world hath not been pleased to dispense his benefits equally, but with marvellous disparity. As he is the God of nature, he hath been pleased to give a natural capacity for judiciousness and acuteness in difficult speculations but to few. And as he is the Lord of all, he hath not given men equal education, nor advantages for such

extraordinary knowledge; nor have all that have leisure and capacity, self-denial and patience enough for so long and difficult studies. But the devil and ourselves have given to all men pride enough, to desire to be thought to be wiser and better than we are; and he that cannot be equal with the wisest and best, would be thought to be so: and while all men must needs seem wise, while few are so indeed, you may easily see what must thence follow.

2. And it is not divines only, but all ranks of people, who are sick of this disease. The most unlearned, ignorant people, the silliest women, if they will not for shame say that they are wiser than their teachers in general, yet when it cometh to particular cases, they take themselves to be always in the right: and O how confident are they of it! And who more peremptory and bold in their judgments, than those that least know what they say? It is hard to meet with a person above eighteen or twenty years of age, that is not notably tainted with this malady.

And it is not only these great mischiefs in matters of religion which spring from self-conceitedness; but even in our common converse, it is the cause of disorder, ruin, and destruction: for it is the common vice of blinded nature, and it is rare to meet with one that is not notably guilty of it, when they are past the state of professed learners.

1. It is ordinary for self-conceited persons to ruin their own estates, and healths, and lives. When they are rashly making ill bargains, or undertaking things which they understand not, they rush on till they find their error too late;

and poverty, prisons, or their ruined families, must declare their sin: for they have not humility enough to seek counsel in time, nor to take it when it is offered to them. What great numbers have I heard begging relief from others, under the confession of this sin! And far more, even the most of men and women, overthrow their health, and lose their lives by it. Experience doth not suffice to teach them what is hurtful to their bodies; and as they know not, so you cannot convince them that they know not. Most persons, by the excess in quantity of food, do suffocate nature, and lay the foundation of future maladies: and most of the diseases that kill men untimely, are but the effects of former gluttony or excess. But as long as they feel not any present hurt, no man can persuade them but their fulness is for their health, as well as for their pleasure. They will laugh, perhaps, at those that tell them what they do, and what diseases they are preparing for.

Many a one have I known that daily lived in that fulness which I saw would shortly quench the vital spirits; and fain I would have saved their lives, but I was not able to make them willing. Had I seen another assault them, I could have done somewhat for them; but when I foresaw their death, I could not save them from themselves. They still said, they found their measures of eating and drinking between meals refresh them, and they were the worse if they forbore it; and they would not believe me against both appetite, reason and experience. And thus have I seen abundance of my acquaintance wilfully hasten to the grave; and all through an unhumbled, self-

conceited understanding, which would not be brought to suspect itself, and know its error.

But the saddest work is that in churches, kingdoms, families, and souls. I must expect that opening the crime will exasperate the guilty.

1. Should I largely open what work this maketh in families, I have too much matter for the complaint. If the wife differ from the husband, she seemeth always in the right: if the servant differ from the master, and the child from the parent, if but a little past infancy, they are always in the right: what is the contention in families, and in all the world, but who shall have his way and will? If they are of several parties in religion, or if any be against religion itself; if they be foolish, erroneous, or live in any sin, that can without utter impudence be defended, still they are able to make it good: and except children at school, or others that professedly go to be taught, whom can we meet with so ignorant or mistaken, that will not still think, when even superiors differ from them and reprove them, that they are in the right?

2. And what mischiefs doth it cause in churches! When the Papal tyrannical part are so confident that they are in the right, that when they silence preachers, and imprison and burn Christians, they think it not their duty so much as to hear what they have to say for themselves. Or if they hear a few words, they have not the patience to hear all, or impartially to try the cause: but they are so full of themselves and overwise, that it must seem without any more ado a crime to dissent from them, or contradict them. And thus proud self-conceitedness smiteth

the shepherds, scattereth the flocks, and will allow the church of Christ no unity or peace. And the popular crowd are usually or often as self-conceited in their way; and if they never so unreasonably oppose their teachers, how hard it is to make them know or once suspect that they are mistaken! O what mutinies in Christ's armies, what schisms, what confusions, what scandals, what persecutions in the church, what false accusations, what groundless censures, do proud self-conceited understandings cause!

But scarcely any where is it more lamentably seen than among injudicious, unexperienced ministers! What work is made in the Christian world, by sect against sect, and party against party, in cases of controversy, by most men's bold and confident judging of what they never truly studied, tried, or understood! Papists against Protestants, Protestants against Papists, Lutherans (or Arminians) and Calvinists, &c. usually charge one another by bare hearsay, or by a few sentences or scraps collected out of their writings by their adversaries; contrary to the very scope of the whole discourse or context. And men cannot have leisure to peruse the books, and to know before they judge. And then they think that seeing their reverend doctors have so reported their adversaries before them, it is arrogance or injury to think that they knew not what they said, or else belied them. And on such supposition the false judging doth go on. Of all the pulpits that often trouble the people with invectives against this side or that, especially in the controversies of Predestination, Grace, and Freewill, how few do we hear that know what they talk against!

Yea, those young or unstudied men, who might easily be conscious how little they know, are ready to oppose and contemn the most ancient studied divines; when if ever they would be wise men, they should continue scholars to such, even while they are teachers of the people.

I will not presume to open the calamities of the world, for want of rulers truly knowing their subjects' case, but judging hastily by the reports of adversaries: but that rebellions ordinarily hence arise I may boldly say. When subjects that know not the reasons of their ruler's actions, are so overwise as to make themselves judges of that which concerneth them not: and how few be they that think not themselves wiser than all their guides and governors!

And lastly, by this sin it is that the wisdom of the wisest is as lost to the world: for let a man know never so much more than others, after the longest, hardest studies, the self-conceitedness of the ignorant riseth up against it, or maketh them incapable of receiving it, so that he can do little good to others.

I conclude again, that this is the plague and misery of mankind, and the cause of all sin and shame and ruin,—that ignorant unhumbled understandings will be still judging rashly before they have thoroughly tried the case, and will not suspend till they are capable of judging, nor be convinced that they know not what they know not, but be confident in their first or ungrounded apprehensions.

CHAP. VIII.

V. OF THE MISCHIEVOUS EFFECTS OF THIS
PROUD PRETENCE TO MORE KNOWLEDGE
THAN MEN HAVE.

THIS vice of pretended certainty and knowledge hath set up several false terms of Christian unity and peace, and by them hath done more to hinder the church's peace and unity than most devices ever did which Satan hath contrived to that end. By this church-tearing vice, abundance of falsehoods, and abundance of things uncertain, and abundance of things unnecessary, have been made so necessary to the union and communion of the churches and their members, as that thereby the Christian world hath been ground to powder by the names and false pretences of unity and peace. Just as if a wise statesman would advise his Majesty, that none may be his subjects that are not of one age, one stature, one complexion, and one disposition, that so he might have subjects more perfectly concordant than all the princes on earth besides; and so might be the most glorious defender of unity and peace. But how must this be done? Why command them all to be of your mind: but that prevaieth not, and it is yet undone. Why then they are obstinate, self-willed persons. Well, but yet it is undone. Then lay fines and penalties upon them. Well, but yet it is undone: all the hypocrites that had no religion, are of the religion which is uppermost; and the rest are uncured. Next require more bricks of them, and let them have no straw, and tell them that their religion is their idleness, stubbornness, and pride, and let your little finger

be heavier than your father's loins. But hearken, young counsellors! Jeroboam will have the advantage of all this, and still the sore will be unhealed.

By this vice of pretended knowledge and certainty, it is, that the Papacy hath been made the centre of unity of the universal church. Unity we must have, God forbid else; there is no maintaining Christianity without it. But the pope must be '*Principium Unitatis* : and will all Christians certainly unite in the pope? Well, and patriarchs must be the pillars of unity: but was it so in the unity of the first churches? or is it certain that all Christians will unite in patriarchs; But further, all the mass of Gregory the great, and all the legends in his dialogues, or at least all the doctrines and ceremonies which he received, and the form of government in his time, must be necessary to church-union. Say you so? But it was not all necessary in the apostles' times, nor in Cyprian's times, nor in Gregory's own times; much of those things being used arbitrarily: and what was made necessary by canons of general councils in the empire, was never thereby made necessary in all the rest of the churches. And are you sure that mere Christians will take all these for certain truths? Why then, if not, banish them, and hang them until there be none left that are not of one mind. But, sir, I pray you, who shall do it; and who shall that one man be that shall be left to be all the kingdom? You are not such a fool as to be ignorant, that no two men will agree in all things, nor be perfectly of the same complexion. If there must be one

king, and but one subject, I pray you who shall that one subject be? I hope not he that counselleth it; 'Neque enim lex justior ulla est, quam necis artifices arte perire sua.' But hark you, sir, shall that one man have a wife or not? If not, the kingdom will die with him; if yea, I dare prognosticate he and his wife will not be in all things of a mind. If they be, take me for a mistaken man.

But hark, sir, this way hath been tried too long in vain: millions of Albigenses and Waldenses are said by historians to be killed in France, Savoy, Italy, Germany, &c. The French massacre killed about thirty or forty thousand. The Irish massacre in that little island killed about two hundred thousand. But were they not stronger after all these cruelties than before? Alas, sir, all your labour is lost, and your party is taken for a blood-thirsty generation, and human nature which abhorreth the blood-thirsty, ever after breedeth enemies to your way. This is the effect of false principles, and terms of unity and peace, contrived by proud, self-conceited men, that think the world should take their dictates for a supreme law, and obey them as the directive deities of mankind.

If all this be not enough to tell you what proud, pretended certainty is, read over the histories of the ages past, and you shall find it written in ink, in tears, in blood, in mutations, in subversions of the empires and kingdoms of the world, in the most odious and doleful contentions of prelates, lacerations of churches, and desolations of the earth. And yet have we not experience enough to teach us!

CHAP. IX.

THE ADVANTAGES OF A SUSPENDED JUDGMENT, AND HUMBLE UNDERSTANDING, WHICH PRETENDETH TO NO MORE KNOWLEDGE OF CERTAINTY THAN IT HATH.

THE advantages of a humble mind, which pretendeth not to be certain till he is certain, you may gather by contraries from the forementioned mischiefs of previdence.

Moreover I add : 1. Such a humble, suspended mind doth not cheat itself with seeming to have a knowledge, a divine faith, a religion, when it hath none. It doth not live on air and dreams, nor feed on shadows, nor is puffed up with a tympanite of vain conceits, instead of true, substantial wisdom.

2. He is not prepossessed against the truth, but hath room for knowledge, and having the teachableness of a child, he shall receive instruction, and grow in true knowledge, when the proud and inflated wits, being full of nothing, are sent empty away.

3. He entangleth not himself in a seeming necessity of making good all that he hath once received and entertained. He hath not so many bastards of his own brain to maintain, as the preident, hasty judgers, have : which saveth him much study and strife.

4. He is not liable to so much shame of mutability : he that fixeth not till he feel firm ground, nor buildeth till he feel a rock, need not pull down, and repent so oft as rash presumers.

5. Unless the world be bedlam mad in proud obtrudings of their own conceits, methinks such

a wary, humble man should offend but few, and better keep both his own and the church's peace than others. Can persecutors for shame hang and burn men for mere ignorance, who are willing to learn, and will thankfully from any man receive information? What if in Queen Mary's days the poor men and women had told my Lords of Winchester and London, 'We are not persons of so good understandings as to know what a spiritual body is, as Paul describeth it, 1 Cor. xv. And seeing most say that the sun itself is a body, and not a spirit; and late philosophers say, that light is a substance, or body, which yet from the sun in a moment diffuseth itself through all the surface of the earth and air, we know not how far locality, limitations, extension, impenetrability, divisibility, &c. belong to the body of Christ, and consequently how far it may be really present; *we can say nothing, only that we know not.*' Would my good Lord Bishops have burnt them for '*I know not?*' Perhaps they would have said, 'You must believe the church.' But which is the church, my Lord? 'Why, it is the pope and a general council.' But, alas, my Lord, I have never seen or heard either pope or council. 'Why, but we have, and you must believe us.' Must we believe you, my Lords, to be infallible; or only as we do other men that may deceive and be deceived? Is any infallible besides the pope and his council? Truly, my Lords, we are ignorant people, and we know not what the pope and councils have said; and we are uncertain whether you report them truly, and uncertain whether they are fallible or not; but we are willing to hear any

thing which may make us wiser. Would their Lordships have burnt such modest persons?

Suppose in a church where men are put to profess or subscribe to, or against the opinions of Freewill, or Reprobation, or Predetermination, or such like, a humble man should say, these are things above my understanding; I cannot reach to know what Freewill is, nor whether all causes natural and free be predetermined by Divine premotion, &c. *I can say neither it is so, nor it is not; they are above my reach:* would they silence and cast out such an humble person, and forbid him to preach the Gospel of Christ? Perhaps they would: but there are not so many hardened to such inhumanity, as there are men that would deal sharply with one that is as confident as they are on the other side. And those few that were thus silenced, would have the more peace, that they had procured it not by self-conceited singularities; and the silencers of them would be the more ashamed before all sober persons that shall hear it. Other instances I pass by.

CHAP. X.

PROOFS OF THE LITTLE KNOWLEDGE THAT IS
IN THE WORLD, TO MOVE US TO A DUE DIS-
TRUST OF OUR UNDERSTANDINGS.

IF you think this sin of a proud understanding, and pretended knowledge, doth need for the cure of a fuller discovery of its vanity, I know not how to do it more convincingly, than by showing you how little true knowledge is in the world,

and consequently that all mankind have cause to think meanly of their understandings.

I. The great imperfection of the sciences, is a plain discovery of it: when mankind hath had above five thousand years already to have grown to more perfection; yet how much is still dark, and controverted! And how much unknown in comparison of what we know! But above all, though nothing is perfectly known which is not methodically known, yet how few have a true methodical knowledge! He that seeth but some parcels of truth, or seeth them but confusedly, or in a false method, not agreeable to the things, doth know but little, because he knoweth not the place, and order, and respects of truths to one another, and consequently neither their composition, harmony, strength or use. Like a philosopher that knew nothing but elements, and not mixed bodies, or animate beings: or like an anatomist that is but an anatomist, and can say no more of the body of a man, but that it is made up of atoms, or at most can only enumerate the similar parts; or like a man that knoweth no more of his clock and watch, but as the pieces of it lie on a heap, or at best, setteth some one part out of its place, which disableth the whole engine: or like one that knoweth the chessmen only as they are in the bag, or at least in some disorder. Who will make me so happy as to show me one true scheme of physics, of metaphysics, of logic, yea of theology, which I cannot presently prove guilty of such mistake, confusion, disorder, as tendeth to great error in the subsequent. I know of no small number that have been offered to the world, but never saw

one that satisfied my understanding. And I think I scarcely know any thing to the purpose, till I can draw a true scheme of it, and set each compounding notion in its place.

II. And the great diversity and contrariety of opinions, of notions and of methods, proveth that our knowledge indeed is yet but small. How many methods of logic have we! how many hypotheses in physics, yea, how many contentious volumes written against one another, in philosophy and theology itself! What loads of 'Videtur' in the schoolmen! How many sects and opinions in religion! Physicians agree not about men's lives. Lawyers agree not about men's estates; no nor about the very fundamental laws. If there be a civil war, where both sides appeal to the law, there will be lawyers on both sides. And doth not this prove that we know but little!

III. But men's rage and confidence in these contrarieties doth discover it yet more. Read their contentious writings of philosophy and theology; observe their usage of one another; what contempt, what reproach, what cruelties they can proceed to! The Papist silenceth and burneth the Protestant; the Lutheran silenceth and revileth the Calvinist; the Calvinist sharply judgeth the Arminians, and so round: and may I not judge that this wisest part of the world is low in knowledge, when not the vulgar only, but the leaders and doctors are so commonly mistaken in their greatest zeal! and that Solomon erred not in saying, "The fool rageth, and is confident."

IV. If our knowledge were not very low, the

long experience of the world would have long ago reconciled our controversies. The strivings and distractions about them, both in philosophy, politics and theology, have torn churches, and raised wars, and set kingdoms on fire, and should in reason be to us as a bone out of joint, which by the pain should force us all to seek for a cure: and surely in so many thousand years, many remedies have been tried: the issues of such disingenious-ingenious wars, do furnish men with such experience as should teach them the cure. And yet after so many years' war of wits, to be so witless as to find no end, no remedy, no peace, doth show that the wit of man is not such a thing to be proud of.

V. The great mutability of our apprehensions doth show that there are not many things that we are certain of. Do we not feel in ourselves how new thoughts and new reasons are ready to breed new conjectures in us, and that looketh doubtful to us, upon further thoughts, of which long before we had no doubt. Besides the multitudes that change their very religion, every studious person so oft changeth his conceptions, as may testify the shallowness of our minds.

VI. The general barbarity of the world, the few countries that have polite learning, or true civility, or Christianity, do tell us that knowledge in the world is low: when besides the vast unknown regions of the world, all that are of late discovery in the West Indies, or elsewhere, are found to be so rude and barbarous; some little differing from subtle brutes; when the vast regions of Africa, of Tartary, and other parts of Asia, are no wiser to this day. When the Ro-

man Eastern empire so easily parted with Christianity, and is turned so much to barbarous ignorance; this showeth what we are; for these men are all born as capable as we.

VII. Especially the sottish opinions, which the Heathen and Mahometan world do generally entertain, do tell us how dark a creature man is. That four parts of the whole world (if not much more, that is unknown) should receive all the sottish opinions as they do, both against the light of nature, knowing so little of God, and by such vain conceits of their prophets and petty deities; that above the fifth part of the known world, should receive, and so long and quietly retain, so sottish an opinion as Mahometanism is, and build upon it the hopes of their salvation. If the Greek Church can be corrupted into so gross a foolery, why may not the Latin, and the English, if they had the same temptations? O what a sad proof is here of human folly!

VIII. But in the Latin Church (be it spoken without any comparing Mahometanism with Christianity) the wonder is still greater, and the discovery of the fallaciousness of man's understanding is yet more clear: were there no proof of it, but the very being of Popery in the world, and the reception of it by such and so many, it affordeth the strongest temptation that ever I thought of in the world, to the brutish, to question whether instinct advance not brutes above man! The brutes distrust not their right disposed senses; but the Papists not only distrust them, but renounce them: bread is no bread, and wine is no wine with them, all men's senses are deceived that think otherwise:

it is necessary to salvation to believe that God's natural revelations to sense here are false, and not to be believed. Every man that will be saved must believe that bread is no bread, that quantity, locality, colour, weight, figure, are the quantity, locality, colour, weight, figure, of nothing: and God worketh grand miracles by every priest, as frequently as he consecrateth in the mass: and if any man refuse to swear to this renunciation of human sense, and the truth of these miracles, he must be no priest, but a combustible heretic. And if any temporal lord refuse to exterminate all those from their dominions, who will believe their senses, and not think it necessary to renounce them as deceived, he must be excommunicated and himself dispossessed, his subjects absolved from their oaths and allegiance, and his dominions given to another: and this is their very religion, being the decree of a great General Council, questioned indeed by some few Protestants, but not at all by Papists, but largely vindicated: Later. sub. Innoc. 3. Can. 1, 3. The sum is, no man that will not renounce not only his humanity, but his animality, must be suffered to live in any one's dominions, and he that will suffer such men in his dominions, must be himself turned out! this is plain truth: and yet this is the religion of popes and emperors, and kings, and lords and counsellors, of prelates and doctors, universities, churches, and famous kingdoms; and such as *men*, all these wise men dare lay their salvation upon; and dare massacre men by thousands and hundred-thousands upon, and burn their neighbours to ashes upon; and what greater confidence of certainty can be expressed!

And yet shall men be proud of wit? O what is man! How dark, how sottish and mad a thing! All these great princes, doctors, cardinals, universities and kingdoms, are born with natures as capacious as ours. They are in other things as wise: they pity us as heretics, because we will not cease to be men: The infidel that denieth man's reason and immortality, would but level us with the brutes, and allow us the preeminence among them in subtlety; but the Papists forswear or renounce that sense which is common to brutes with us, and sentence us either below the brutes, or unto hell. Pretend no more, poor man, to great knowledge. As the sight of a grave and a rotten carcase may humble the fool that is proud of beauty, so the thought of the Popish Mahometan and Heathen world, may humble him that is proud of his understanding. I tell thee, man, thou art capable of such madness as to believe that an ox or an onion is a God; or to believe that a bit of bread is God; yea more, to believe as necessary to salvation, that thy own and all men's senses about their proper objects are deceived, and the bread which thou seest and eatest is no bread; yea though it be three times in the three next verses (1 Cor. xi.) called bread after consecration by an inspired expositor of Christ's words.

IX. Moreover the poverty of man's understanding appeareth by the great time and labour that must be bestowed for knowledge. We must be learning as soon as we have the use of reason, and all our life must be bestowed in it. I know by experience, that knowledge will not be got without long, hard and patient studies. O what abun-

dance of books must we read ! What abundance of deep meditations must we use ! What help of teachers do we need ? And when all is done, how little do we obtain ! Is this an intellect to be proud of ?

X. And it is observable how every man slighteth another's reasons, while he would have all to magnify his own. All the arguments that in disputation are used against him, how frivolous and foolish are they ! All the books that are written against him, are little better than nonsense, or heresy, or blasphemy : contempt is answer enough to most that is said against them. And yet the men in other men's eyes, are perhaps wiser and better than themselves. Most men are fools in the judgments of others ! Whatever side or party you are of, there are many parties against you, who all pity your ignorance, and judge you silly, deceived souls. So that if one man be to be believed of another, and if the most of mankind be not deceived, we are all poor, silly, cheated souls : but if most be deceived, mankind is a very deceivable creature. How know I that I must believe you, when you befool twenty other sects, any more than I should believe those twenty sects, when they as confidently befool you ; if no other evidence turn the scales ?

XI. And verily I think that the wars and contentions, and distractions of the kingdoms of the world, do show us that man is a pitiful, silly, deceivable thing. I am not at all so sharp against wars and soldiers as Erasmus was ; but I should think that if men were wise, they might keep their peace, and save the lives of thousands, which must be dearly answered for. Were all

the princes of Christendom, as wise as proud wits, conceit themselves to be, how easy were it for them to agree among themselves.

XII. And what need we more than every days' miscarriages to tell us of our folly ! Do we not miss it in one degree or other in almost all that we that take in hand ! Hence cometh the ruin of estates, the ill education of children, the dissensions among neighbours and in families. Parents have scarce wit enough to breed and teach a child, nor husbands and wives to live together according to their relations ; nor masters to teach their servants. If I write a book, how many can find folly and error in it : and I as easily in theirs. If I preach, how many faults can the silliest woman find in it : and I as many perhaps in other men's. Do we live in such weakness, and shall we not know it ?

XIII. And the uncurableness of ancient errors is no small evidence of our folly. If our ancestors have but been deceived before us, though their error be never so palpable, we plead their venerable antiquity, for an honour to their ignorance and mistakes. The wisdom of wise ancestors almost dieth with them ; but the errors of the mistaken must be successive, lest they be dishonoured. We will deny reason, and deny Scripture, and deny sense, for fear of being wiser for our souls, than some of our forefathers were.

XIV. The self-destroying courses of mankind, one would think, should be enough to evince man's folly. Who almost suffer but by themselves ! Few sicknesses befall us which folly brings not on us by excess of eating or drinking, or by sloth, or some unwise neglect. Few ruins

of estates but by our own folly ! Few accidents and calamities but by ourselves ! What churches distracted and ruined, but by the pastors and children of the church themselves ! What kingdom ruined without its own procurement. It need not be said. 'Quos perdere vult Jupiter host dementat;' It is enough to say. 'Insaniam eorum non curat :' If he cure not our madness, we shall certainly destroy ourselves. Whose hands kindled all the flames that have wasted the glory, wealth and peace of England in state and church, except our own ? Were they foreign enemies that did it, and still keep open our wounds, or is it ourselves ? And yet are we wise men ?

XV. But the greatest evidence in all the world of the madness of mankind, is the obstinate *self*-destruction of the ungodly. Consider but 1. The weight of the case : 2. The plainness of the case : 3. The means used to undeceive them : 4. And yet the number of the madly erroneous ; and then bethink you what *man's* understanding is.

1. It is their souls and everlasting hopes that are cast away ! It is no less than heaven and endless happiness which they reject : it is no better than hell and endless misery which they run into ; and are these men in their wits ?

2. It is themselves that do all this ; neither men nor devils else could do it : they do it for nothing. What have the wretches for their salvation ? a few cups of drink, filthy carnality, a little preferment, or provision for a corruptible flesh, which must shortly lie and rot in darkness ; the applause and breath of flatterers as silly as

themselves! O profane persons, worse than Esau, who will sell their birthright for so poor a morsel! Come see the madness of mankind! It is a doubt to them whether God or a filthy lust should be more loved and obeyed! it is a doubt with them whether heaven or earth be better worth their labour! whether eternity or an inch of time; whether a soul or a perishing body should be more cared for. Are these wise men? Did I say, *it is a doubt?* Yea, their choice and practice showeth that at the present they are resolved: vanity, and shadows, and dreams are preferred; heaven is neglected; "they are lovers of pleasure more than of God:" they set less than a feather in the balance against more than all the world, and they choose the first, and neglect the latter. This is the *wise* world!

3. And all this they do against common reason, against daily teaching of appointed pastors, against the judgment of the most learned and wise men in the world: against the express word of God; against the obligations of daily mercies; against the warnings of many afflictions; against the experience of all the world, who pronounce all this vanity, which they sell their souls for; even while men die daily before their eyes, and they are certain that they must shortly die themselves; while they walk over the churchyard, and tread on the graves of those that went before them; yet will they take no warning, but neglect God and their souls, and sin on to the very death.

4. And this is not the case only of here and there one; we need not go to Bedlam to seek them. Alas! in how much more honoured and splendid habitations and conditions may they be

found ! In what reverend and honourable garbs ! and in how great numbers throughout the world ! And these are not only sots and idiots, that never were told of better things ; but those that would be accounted witty, or men of learning and venerable aspect and esteem. But this is a subject that we use to preach on to the people ; it being easy, by a multitude of arguments, to prove the madness of all ungodly persons. And is this nothing to humble us, who were naturally like them, and who, so far as we are sinners, are alas ! too like them still ?

XVI. And the fewness of wise men in all professions, doth tell us how rare true wisdom is. Among men whose wisdom lieth in speculation, where the effects of it do not openly difference it much from prudence, the difference is not commonly discerned : a prating speculator goeth for a wise man ; but in practicals the difference appeareth by the effects. All men see, that among physicians and lawyers, those that are excellent are few. And even among the godly preachers of the Gospel, O that it were more easy and common, to meet with men suited to the majesty, mystery, greatness, necessity and holiness of their works ; that speak to God, and from God, like divines indeed, and have the true frame of sound theology ready in their heads and hearts ; and that in public and private speak to sinners, as beseemeth those that believe that they and we are at the door of eternity, and that we speak, and they hear for the life of souls, and that are uncertain whether ever they shall speak again. Alas ! Lord, thy treasure is not only in earthen vessels, but how ordinarily in polluted

vessels, and how common are empty, sounding vessels, or such as have dirt or air instead of holy treasure !

And as for philosophers and judicious speculators in divinity, do I need to say, that the number is too small? Of such as are able judiciously to resolve a difficulty, to answer cases of conscience, to defend the truth, to stop the mouths of all gainsayers, and to teach holy doctrine clearly and in true method, without confusion, or running into any extremes? We bless God, this land, and the other reformed churches have had a laudable degree of this mercy; the Lord restore it to them and us, and continue the comfortable measure that we possess.

XVII. And it is a notorious discovery of the common ignorance, that a wise man is so hardly known. Men that have not wisdom to imitate them, have not wit enough to value them; so that as Seneca saith, 'He that will have the pleasure of wisdom, must be content with it for itself, without applause: two or three approvers must suffice him.' The blind know not who hath the best eyesight. Swine trample upon pearls. Nay, it is well if, when they have increased knowledge, they increase not sorrow, and become not the mark of envy and hatred, and of the venom of malignant tongues and hands, yea, and that merely for their knowledge sake. All the learning of Socrates, Demosthenes, Cicero, Seneca, Lucan, and many more; and all the learning and piety of Cyprian, and all the martyrs of those ages; of Boetius, of the African bishops that perished by Hunnerichus; of Peter Ramus, Marlorate, Cranmer, Ridley, Philpot, Bradford,

and abundance such, could not keep them from a cruel death. All the excellency of Greg. Nazianzen, Chrysostom, and many others, could not keep them from suffering by orthodox bishops; Insomuch that Nazianzen leaveth it to his people as a mark of the man whom he would have them value and choose when he was dead. 'This one thing I require, that he be one of those that are envied, not pitied by others; who obey not all men in all things; but for the love of truth in some things incurreth men's offence.' And of himself he professeth, that, 'Though most thought otherwise than he did, that this was nothing to him who cared only for the truth, as that which must condemn him or absolve him, and make him happy or miserable. But what other men thought, was nothing to him, any more than what another dreameth.' Orat. 27. p. 468. And therefore he saith, Orat. 26. p. 443, 'As for me, I am a small and poor pastor, and to speak sparingly, not yet grateful and accepted with other pastors, which whether it be done by right judgment and reason, or by malevolence of mind and study of contention, I know not.' And Orat. 32. p. 523, 'I am tired, while I fight both with speech and envy, with enemies, and with those that are our own. Those strike at the breast, and obtain not their desire: for an open enemy is easily taken heed of; but these come behind my back and are more troublesome.'

Such obloquy also had Jerom, such had Augustine himself, and who knoweth not that envy is virtue's shadow? And what talk I of others, when all godly men are hated by the world, and the apostles and Christ himself were used as they

were; for Christ saith, "Which of the prophets did not your fathers kill and persecute?" (Matt. xxiii.) If hating, persecuting, slandering, silencing, killing men that know more than the rest, be a sign of wisdom, the world hath been wise from Cain's age until this.

Even a Galilæus, a Savonarola, a Campanella, &c. shall feel it, if they will be wiser than the rest: so that Solomon's warning (Eccles. vii. 16) concerneth them that will save their skin; "Be not righteous overmuch, neither make thyself over-wise: why wilt thou destroy thyself?" But again, I may prognosticate with Anthisthenes in Laertius, 'Then are cities perishing, when they are not wise enough to know the good from the bad.' And with Cicero, Rhet. 1, 'That man's safety is desperate whose ears are shut against the truth, so that even from a friend he cannot hear it.'

XVIII. And this leadeth me to the next discovery. How rare wisdom is in the world, in that the wisest men and most learned teachers have so small success. How few are much the wiser for them! If they praise them, they will not learn of them, till they reach to their degree. Men may delight in the sweetness of truth themselves; but it is a feast where few will strive for part with them. A very few men that have first sprung up in obscure times have had great success: so had Origen at Alexandria, and Chrysostom at Constantinople, but with bitter sauce. Pythagoras, Plato, and Aristotle at Athens, and Augustine at Hippo, had the most that history maketh mention of, with Demosthenes and Cicero in oratory; Melanchthon at Wirtemburgh,

with Luther, and Zuinglius in Helvetia, and Calvin at Geneva prevailed much : and now and then an age hath been fruitful of learned, wise and godly men ; and when we are ready to expect, that each of these should have a multitude of scholars like themselves, suddenly all declineth, and ignorance and sensuality get uppermost again. And all this is because that all men are born ignorant and sensual ; but no man attaineth to any excellency of wisdom, without so long and laborious studies, as the flesh will give leave to few men to perform. So that he that hath most laboriously searched for knowledge all his days, knoweth not how to make others partakers of it ; no not his own children of whom he hath the education : unless it be here and there one Scaliger, one Paræus, one Tossanus, one Trelcattius, one Vossius, &c. How few excellent men do leave one excellent son behind them ! O what would a wise man give, that he could but bequeath all his wisdom to others when he dieth !

XIX. And it is evident that great knowledge is more rare than prudence, in that the hardest students, and most knowing men, complain more than others of difficulties and ignorance : when certainly other men have more cause. They that study a little, know little, and think they know much : they that study very hard, but not to maturity, oft become sceptics, and think nothing certain. But they that follow it till they have digested their studies, do find a certainty in the great and necessary things, but confess their ignorance in abundance of things which the presumptuous are confident in. I will not leave this out, to escape the carping of those that will

say, that by this character I proclaim myself one of the wisest, as long as it is but the confession of my ignorance which is their occasion. But I will say as Augustin to Jerom, Epist. 29, 'Adversus eos qui sibi videntur scire quod nesciunt, hoc tutiores sumus, quod hanc ignorantiam nostram non ignoramus.'

XX. Lastly, every man's nature, in the midst of his pride, is conscious of the fallibility and frailty of his own understanding. And thence it is that men are so fearful in great matters of being overreached. And wherever any conclusion dependeth upon a contexture of many proofs, or on any long, operous work of reason, men have a natural consciousness of the uncertainty of it. Yea, though our doctrines of the immortality of our own souls, and of the life of retribution after this, and the truth of the Gospel, have so much evidence as they have, yet a lively, certain faith is the more rare and difficult, because men are so conscious of the fallibility of their own understandings, that about things unseen and unsensible, they are still apt to doubt, whether they be not deceived in their apprehensions of the evidence.

By these twenty instances it is too plain that there is little solid wisdom in the world; that wise men are few, and those few are but a little wise. And should not this suffice to make all men, but especially the unlearned, half-learned, the young, and unexperienced, to abate their ungrounded confidence and to have humble and suspicious thoughts of their own apprehensions.

CHAP. XI.

INFERENCE 3. THAT IT IS NOT THE DISHONOUR, BUT THE PRAISE OF CHRIST, HIS APOSTLES, AND THE GOSPEL, THAT THEY SPEAK IN A PLAIN MANNER.

I HAVE been myself often scandalizing at the Fathers of the fourth Carthage Council,* who forbid bishops the reading of the heathen books; and at some good old unlearned Christian bishops, who spake to the same purpose, and often reproach Apollinaris, Ætius and other heretics for their secular or Gentile learning, logic, &c. And I wonder that Julian and they, should prohibit the same thing. But one that is so far distant from the action, is not a competent judge of the reasons of it. Perhaps there were some Christian authors then, who were sufficient for such literature as was best for the Church: perhaps they saw that the danger of reading the heathens' philosophy was like to be greater than the benefit: both because it was such that they lived among, and were to gather the churches out of; and if they put an honour upon logic and philosophy, they might find it more difficult to draw men from that party which excelled in it, to the belief of the Scriptures which seemed to have so little of it: and they had seen also how a mixture of Platonic notions with Christianity, had not only been the original of many heresies, but had sadly blemished many great doctors of the churches.

Whatever the cause was, it appeareth that in those days it was the deepest insight into the

* Concil. Carth. 4, Can. 16.

sacred Scriptures which was reckoned for the most solid learning; philosophy was so confounded by differences, sects, uncertainties, and falsehoods, that made it the more despicable, by how much the less pure. And logic had so many precarious rules and notions, as made it fitter to wrangle and play with, than to further grave men in their deep and serious inquiry in the great things of God, and mysteries of salvation.

But yet it cannot be denied but that true learning of the subservient arts and sciences is of so great use to the accomplishing of man's mind with wisdom, that it is one of the greatest offences that ever was taken against Christ and the holy Scriptures, that so little of this learning is found in them, in comparison of Plato, Aristotle, Demosthenes, or Cicero. But to remove the danger of this offence, let these things following be well considered :

I. Every means is to be judged of by its aptitude to its proper use and end: morality is the subject and business of the Scriptures: it is not the work of it to teach men logic and philosophy, any more than to teach them languages: Who will be offended with Christ for not teaching men Latin, Greek, or Hebrew: Architecture, Navigation, or Mechanic Arts? And why should they be more offended with him for not teaching them Astronomy, Geometry, Physics, Metaphysics, Logic, &c. It was none of his work.

II. Nature is presupposed to grace; and God in nature has before given man sufficient helps to the attainment of so much of the knowledge of nature, as was convenient for him. Philosophy is the knowledge of God's works of creation. It

was not this (at least chiefly) that man lost by his fall : it was from God, and not from the creature that he turned : and it was to the knowledge of God, rather than of the creature, that he was to be restored. What need one be sent from heaven to teach men the order and rules of speaking ? or to teach men those arts and sciences which they can otherwise learn themselves. As it is presupposed that men have reason, so also that they have among them the common helps and crutches of reason.

III. Consider also that the Eternal Wisdom, Word, and Son of God, our Redeemer, is the fountain and giver of all knowledge : nature to be restored, and grace to restore it, are in his hands. He is that true light that lighteneth every one that cometh into the world. The light of nature and arts, and sciences are from his Spirit and teaching, as well as the Gospel. Whether Clemens Alexandrinus, and some other ancients were in the right or not, when they taught that philosophy is one way by which men come to salvation, it is certain that they are in the right, that say it is now the gift of Christ : And that as the light which goeth before sun-rising (yea, which in the night is reflected from the moon,) is from the sun, as well as its more glorious beams ; so the knowledge of Socrates, Plato, Zeno, Cicero, Antonine, Epictetus, Seneca, Plutarch, were from the wisdom and word of God, the Redeemer of the world, even by a lower gift of his Spirit, as well as the Gospel and higher illumination : and shall Christ be thought void of what he giveth so many in the world ?

IV. Lastly, let it be considered above all, that the grand difference between the teaching of

Christ and other men, is that he teacheth effectively (as God spake when he created, and as he said to Lazarus, Arise :) He giveth wisdom by giving the Holy Ghost : All other teachers speak but to the ears ; but he only speaketh to the heart ; were it not for this he would have no church.—I should never else have believed in him myself, nor would others, seriously and savingly. Aristotle and Plato speak but words, but Christ speaketh LIFE and LIGHT and LOVE, in all countries, through all ages unto this day. This above all is his witness in the world. He will not do his work on souls, by enticing words, of the pedantic wisdom of the world ; but by illuminating minds, and changing hearts and lives, by his effectual operations on the heart. God used no more rhetoric nor logic than a philosopher, when he said “ Let there be light,” but he used more power. Indeed the first chapter of Genesis (though abused by ignorants and cabalists) hath more true philosophy in it than the presumptuous will understand. But operations are the glorious oratory of God, and his wisdom shineth in his works, and in things beseeming the heavenly Majesty ; and not in childish conceits, and toys of wit.

Let us therefore cease quarrelling, and learn wisdom of God, instead of teaching and reprehending him. Let us magnify the mercy and wisdom of our Redeemer, who hath brought life and immortality to light, and certified us of the matters of the world above, as beseemed a messenger sent from God ; and hath taught us, according to the matter, and our capacity, and not with trifling, childish notions.

CHAP. XII.

VI. OF THE CAUSES OF THIS DISEASE OF PREFIDENCE, OR PROUD PRETENDED KNOWLEDGE, IN ORDER TO THE CURE.

THE cure of previdence and pretended knowledge, could it be wrought, would be the cure of souls, families, churches, and kingdoms. But alas, how low are our hopes! Yet that may be done on some, which will not be done on all or most. And to know the causes, and oppugn them, is the chief part of the cure, so far as may be hoped for.

I. Several ways doth PRIDE cause pretended knowledge. 1. By thinking that our understandings are so good as that without great study we can know truth from falsehood; and so making us venture to judge of things at the first hearing or reading; which we cannot be capable of judging of, under long and diligent studies; because 'recipitur ad modum recipientis.' Therefore it is that when a man by great success in studies hath made things as plain as words can make them, so that you would think that all students should presently be wise at easy rates by the light which he hath set up to them, they are half as long in learning for all that, as if he had never given them such a help. And therefore it is, that we cannot leave our learning to posterity; the hindrance being in the receiver's incapacity: we cannot master the plainest precepts, but by much time and study.

2. Pride maketh men hasty in concluding, because they are not humbled to a just suspicion

of their own apprehensions. And men stay not to prove and try things before they judge.

3. Pride maketh men insensible how much they are ignorant of, in all their knowledge.

4. And it causeth men to slight the reasons and judgments of other men, by which they might learn, or at least might be taught to judge considerably, and suspend their own.

If overvaluing a man's own apprehensions be pride (as it is), then certainly pride is one of the commonest sins in the world, and particularly among men professing godliness, who upon every poor surmise or report are condemning those, that they do not thoroughly know, and in every petty controversy, they are all still in the right, though of never so many minds.

II. Another cause of pretended knowledge is the want of a truly tender conscience: which should make men fear, lest they should err, lest they should deserve the curse of putting "light for darkness, and darkness for light; evil for good, and good for evil:" (Isa. v. 20:) and should make them afraid lest they should defile their minds, resist the truth, blaspheme God or dishonour him, by fathering errors on him, and lest they should prove snares to men's souls, and a scandal and trouble to the Church of God. A tender conscience would not have espoused such opinions under one or two or many years deliberation, (if they were true), which an Antinomian, or other sectary will take up in a few days. O, saith the tender conscience, what if I should err, and prove a snare to souls, and a scandal and dishonour to the Church of God! &c.

III. Another cause of pretended knowledge is

a blind zeal for knowledge and godliness in the general, while men know not what it is they are zealous of. They think it is a necessary part of sincerity to receive the truth speedily without delay; and therefore they take a present concluding, for a true receiving of it. And he that soonest taketh up that which is offered him, probably as a part of godliness; is taken for the most resolved downright convert. Which is true in case of evident truths, where it is the will that by vice suspendeth the mind. But not in dark and doubtful cases.

IV. Another great cause of pretended false knowledge and confidence is the unhappy prejudices which our minds contract even in our childhood, before we have time, and wit, and conscience to try things by true deliberation. Children and youth must receive much upon trust, or else they can learn nothing: but then they have not wit to proportion their apprehensions to the evidence, whether of credibility or certainty; and so fame and tradition, and education and the country's vote, do become the ordinary parents of many lies; and folly maketh us to fasten so fearlessly in our first apprehensions, that they keep open the door to abundance more falsehoods! and it must be *clear teachers*, or great, impartial studies, of a self-denying mind, with a great blessing of God, that must deliver us from prejudice, and undeceive us. And therefore all the world seeth, that almost all men are of the religion of their country or their parents, be it never so absurd; though with the Mahometans they believe the nonsense of a very sot, (once reading a quarter of whose Alcoran one would think

should cure a man of common reason, of any inclination to his belief.) And among the Japonians, even the eloquent Bonzii believe in Amida and Xaca; to mention the belief of the Chinese, the people of Pegu, Siam, and many such; yea, the Americans, the Brasilians, Lappians, &c., that correspond with devils would be a sad instance of the unhappiness of men's first apprehensions and education. And what doth the aforesaid instance of Popery come short herein: these tell us how prejudice, and education, and company can make men believe common, unseen miracles, and yet deny all men's common sense.

V. Another cause, is, conversing only with of our own mind, and side, and interest; and not seeking familiar, loving acquaintance with those that differ from us: whereby men deprive themselves of hearing half that is to be heard, and of knowing much that is to be known. And their proud vice hardeneth them in this way, to say, 'I have read, and I have heard enough of them; I know all that they can say.' And if a man soberly speak to them, their vices of pride, presumption and passion, will scarce patiently bear him to go on without interruption to the end; but the wizard saith, 'I know already what you will say, and you are tedious; and do you think that so wise a man as I, hath nothing to do but hear such a fool as you talk?' Thus proud men are ordinarily so full of themselves, that they can scarcely endure to hear, or at least learn anything from others, nor restrain their eagerness to speak, even so long as either just information, or human civility requireth.

VI. Another cause, is malignity, and want of Christian love; whereby men are brought, if not to a hatred, yet to a proud contempt of others, who are not of their mind, and side, and way. O they are all—as foolish and bad as any one chuses to call them; and he that railleth at them most ingeniously and impudently, giveth them but their due. And will a man, full of himself be moved from his presumptions, by anything that such a hated or scorned people can say? Nay, will he not be hardened in his self-conceit, because it is such as these that contradict him?

Many such causes of this vice there are; but pride and ignorance are the proper parents of it, whatever else be the nurse or friend.

CHAP. XIII.

VII. DIRECTIONS FOR THE CURE OF PRETENDED KNOWLEDGE, OR SELF-CONCEIT.

THE cure of this plague of previdence or pretended knowledge is it which all the rest is written for; and must now be the last in execution as it was the first in my intention. And could men be persuaded to this following course it might be done: but nature's vicious inclination to the vice, and the commonness and strength of temptations to it, do make me expect to prevail but with a few.

Direct. I. Labour to understand the true nature and principles of certainty before opened. False measures will make you judge certainties to be falsehoods or uncertain, and falsehoods to

be certain truths. And when you know the conditions of certainty, try all things by them accurately; and if any would by art, persuade you of the uncertainty of nature's just perceptions, by sense or intellect, remember that be they what they will, you have no better or surer; they are such as your Creator hath given you to trust to for your use, even for the ends of life.

Direct. II. Discern the *helps* of knowledge from knowledge or certainty itself. Believing your teachers as men, and believing historians according to their credibility, and reverencing the judgment of seniors, and of the church, are all preparative helps to certainty: and human faith is such as to Divine faith. But do not therefore think that it is the same: nor give men that prerogative of infallibility which belongeth to God, or to inspired prophets, who prove their word by God's attestation. The belief of logicians is needful to your understanding logic, and logic is a great help to your certain discerning of physical, metaphysical and moral verities. And yet many rules of your logic may be uncertain, and you must not take the *helps* of your knowledge for evidence itself.

Some think that nothing is known till we have second notions for it, or can define it: when things sensible are better known by sensing them, and usually second notions deceive men and make them doubt of what they better apprehended without them.

Be very suspicious of all words or terms; 1. As *ambiguous*, as almost all are: and therefore he that cannot distinguish them must needs err by confusion. 2. Lest you take the names for

things, most disputes using to carry controversies 'de nomine' as if they were 'de re,' or slide from this into that.

Direct. III. Therefore also trust not too far to the artificial forms of argument, without, or instead of the evidence of the truth of the thing itself. For there are many things supposed to the infallibility of your art, which may not themselves be infallibly true; and man's wit is conscious of its own fallibility; and therefore is doubtful lest it should be deceived in its collections and ratiocinations; especially when the engine hath many tacklings, and the chain many links, we are still in doubt lest some one should break: but the evidence of the thing in its own reality, which is not wholly laid on the form of an artificial argument, doth satisfy more.

Direct. IV. Take truths in order; the principles first, and the rest in their true exurgence and dependance upon them: and take nothing to be well known which is not known, not only in a method but in a method clearly suitable to the things. As words and notions, so rules and methods must be fetched from the things, and fitted to the things, or they are vain. Sense and intellect must first perceive the things themselves, and be your first tutors in somatology and pneumatology; and then these must do much in making your logic. The foot must be the measure of the shoe. And remember that you have but a half, fallacious knowledge, till you know the true place, and order, and respects of the thing, as well as the nature and quality of it in itself; and till you can draw up a true scheme of the

things which you know : It is dreams that are incoherent.

Direct. V. Let the great radical verities have your greatest confidence, and not only so, but the most of your thoughts, and estimation, and time : and proportionally let the lesser things have but that share of your esteem, and time, and studies which they deserve ; which comparatively will be little. And make them the test of what is further offered to you : and believe nothing which is certainly contrary to them. Argue always ‘à notioribus,’ and reduce not certainties to uncertainties, but the contrary.

Direct. VI. Keep all your perceptions distinct according to the distinction of their natures. Let both your books and your intellects be like an apothecary’s shop, where there are different boxes with different titles for different things. Let sensible perceptions be by themselves : and the intellective perception of things sensate be by themselves : and the intellective perception of its own, and the will’s acts, be by themselves : and the collection of the nature of spirits and intellective agents thence, be by themselves : and the knowledge of principles, physical and moral, be by themselves : and the certainty of conclusions be ranked according to the variety of their degrees. The confusion of these different things causeth so confused a kind of knowledge, as is next to no knowledge, and more fit to trouble than to satisfy.

Direct. VII. Look to *all things*, or as many as is possible. When half is unknown, the other half is not half known. ‘Respicere ad omnia’ is proper to God : ‘Respicere ad plurima’ is ne-

cessary to the competent wisdom of a man : to be of a narrow mind and prospect, is the property of the ignorant and erroneous. He that seeth only a hand or foot knoweth not what a man is by it : and he that seeth only a word knoweth not by that what a sentence is. God's works are all one. I know not what we shall see in Comenius's Pansophy, which they say is yet to see the light ; how far he hath reduced all sciences to one. But I little doubt but they may and should be all reduced to two, which are as the the soul and body that yet make up one man, though not one nature, viz. 1. The ontological or real part, distinguished into that of substances and of modes, where morality cometh in, &c. 2. The organical part, which fitteth words and notions to things. And I am sure that as the knowledge of one thing or of many, much conduceth to further knowledge ; so the ignorance of one thing conduceth to ignorance and error about others. It is here as in the knowledge of a clock or watch, or musical instrument. Know all or you know little, and next to none. No man is a fit judge of church affairs, who hath not the state of the world in some good measure in his eye ; else he will be like most sectaries, who judge, and talk, and live, as if the world were no bigger than their synagogues or sects. He must have all the Scripture in his eye, the whole body of divinity, and all the world in his eye ; and God himself, who is more than all, for by a narrow mind we are cheated into a multitude of errors. There are abundance of truths unknown to you which, were they known, would rectify your other errors.

Direct. VIII. Conclude not hastily of negatives. You may more easily know, that you know what you do know, than know what it is that you do not know. It doth not follow that there is no more, because you know no more. St. John tells you, that if all that Christ did should be written, the world could not contain the books; you cannot therefore conclude from what is recorded, that he said and did no more than is recorded: though I am sure against popery, by my sense and intellect, that there is real bread and wine in the sacrament, I am not sure by sense that there is no spiritual body of Christ; the negative must be otherwise proved. I am sure by my five senses (as they are commonly distinguished and numbered) that there are existent all the sensible qualities, which are their objects; but whether the world may not have more sensible qualities, suited to many other sort of senses, which we have no conception, notion or name of, is a thing that no mortal man can know.

You hear many things, and know many things, of another man, which make his cause seem bad: but do you know how many more things may be existent unknown to you, which if you knew would change your judgment?

Allow still room and supposition for abundance of unknown things, which may come hereafter to your knowledge, and make things seem to you quite other than they do. How can you possibly know how much more may be unknown to you? If I have a servant that stayeth much longer than I expected, I may conjecture that he could have no business but his negligence to stay

him ; but there may be many accidents to cause it, which I cannot judge of till I hear him speak.

Direct. IX. Be sure that you suspect your first apprehensions of things ; and take few conceptions (conclusive) for certain, that are not digested. Fasten not over-tenaciously upon opinions, in the beginning, at the first hearing : take it for granted, that your first conceptions of things must alter, either as to the truth, or the evidence, or the order, or the degree. Few men are so happy in youth, as to receive at first such right impressions, which need not after be much altered. When we are children, we know as children ; but when we become men, childish things are done away. Where we change not our judgment of the matter, yet we come to have very different apprehensions of it. I would not have boys to be mere sceptics ; for they must be godly, and Christians. But I would have them leave room for increase of knowledge, and not be too peremptory with their juvenile conceptions, but suppose that a further light will give them another prospect of the same things.

Direct. X. Choose such teachers, if possible, as have themselves attained the things you seek ; even that most substantial wisdom which leadeth to salvation. For how else shall they teach others, what they have not learned themselves ! O the difference between *teachers* and *teachers* ! between a rash, flashy, unexperienced, proud wit ; and clear-headed, well-studied, much-experienced, godly men ! Happy is he that hath such a teacher, that is long exercised in the ways of truth, and holiness, and peace ; and hath a heart disposed to value him.

Direct. XI. Value truth for goodness, and goodness above truth; and estimate all truths and knowledge by their usefulness to higher ends. That is good as a means, which doth good. There is nothing besides God that is simply good, in, of, and for itself; all else is only good derivatively from God the efficient, and as a means to God the final cause. As a pound of gold more enricheth than many loads of dirt; so a little knowledge of great and necessary matters, maketh one wiser than a great deal of pedantic, toyish learning. No man hath time and capacity for all things: he is but a proud fool, that would seem to know all, and deny his ignorance in many things. Even he that with Alstedius, &c., can write an Encyclopædia, is still unacquainted with abundance that is intelligible. For my own part, I humbly thank God, that by placing my dwelling as in the church-yard, he hath led me to choose still the studies which I thought were fittest for a man, that is posting to another world. He that must needs be ignorant of many things, should choose to omit those which he can best spare. Distinguish well between studying and knowing, for use and for lust; for the true ends of knowledge, and for the bare delight of knowing. One thing is necessary, (Luke x. 42,) and all others, but as they are necessary to that one; mortify the lust of useless knowledge, as well as other lusts of flesh and fantasy: Dying men commonly call it vanity. Remember what a deal of precious time it wasteth; and from how many greater and more necessary things it doth divert the mind; and with what wind it puffs men up; as is aforesaid.

How justly did the rude Tartarians think the great libraries, and multitudes of doctors and idle priests, among the Chinese to be a foolery; and call them away from their books to arms, as Palafox tells us; when all their learning was to so little purpose, and led them to no higher and more necessary things?

Direct. XII. Yet because many smaller parts of knowledge are necessary to kingdoms, academies and churches, which are not necessary, nor greatly valuable to individual persons: let some few particular persons be bred up to an eminency in those studies, and let not the generality of students waste their time therein. There is scarcely any part of knowledge so small and useless, but it is necessary to great societies, that some be masters of it, which yet the generality may well spare. And all are to be valued and honoured according to their several excellencies. But yet I cannot think of studying as long as Politian, how Virgil should be spelt; nor to decide the quarrels between Phil. Pareus and Gruter, nor to digest all his grammatical collections, nor to read through abundance of books, which I allow house-room to. Nor to learn all the languages and arts which I could wish to know, if I could know them without neglecting greater things. But yet the excellent professors of them I honour.

Direct. XIII. Above all, value, digest, and seriously live upon the most great and necessary certain truths. O that we knew what work, inward and outward, the great truths of salvation call for from us all! If you do not faithfully value and improve these, you prepare for delu-

sion : you forget your premises and principles : God may justly leave you in the dark, and give you up to believe a lie. Did you live according to the importance of certain principles, your lives would be filled with fruit, and business, and delight, and all this great : so that you would have little taste or leisure for little and unnecessary things. It is the neglect of things necessary, which fills the world with the trouble of things unnecessary.

Direct. XIV. Study hard, and search diligently and deeply, and that with unwearied patience and delight. Unpleasant studies tire and seldom prosper. Slight running thoughts accomplish little. If any man think that the Spirit is given to save us the labour of hard and long studies, Solomon hath spent so many chapters in calling them to dig, search, cry, labour, wait for wisdom, that if that will not undeceive them, I cannot : they may as well say, that God's blessing is to save the husbandman the labour of ploughing and sowing : and that the Spirit is given to save men the labour of learning to read the Bible, or to hear it, or think of it, or to pray to God. Whereas the Spirit is given us to provoke and enable us to study hard, and read, and hear, and pray hard, and to prosper us herein.

And as vain are our idle lads, who think that their natural wits, or their abode and degrees in the Universities, will serve the turn instead of hard studies ! And so they come out almost as ignorant, and yet more proud than they went thither, to be plagues in all countries where they come, to teach others by example the idleness

and sensuality which they learned themselves ; and being ignorant, yet the honour of their functions must be maintained, and therefore their ignorance must be hid, which yet themselves do weekly make ostentation of in the pulpit, where they should be shining lights ; and when their own tongues have proclaimed it, those of understanding that observe and loathe it, must be malign'd and railed at for knowing how little their teachers know.

Nothing without long and hard studies furnisheth the mind with such a stock of truth, as may be called real wisdom. "That God is the reward of them that diligently seek him," (and not of the lazy neglecters of him) is the second principle in religion. (Heb. xi. 6.) They that cannot be at this labour, must be content to know but little, and not take on them to know much. For they are not able to discern truth from falsehood ; but while they sleep the tares are sowed : or while they open the door, all crowd in that can come first ; and they cannot make a just separation. Ignorant persons will swarm with errors, and he that erreth will think that he is in the right ; and if he think that it is a divine and necessary truth which he embraceth, how zealously may he pursue it !

Direct. XV. Take heed of the bias of carnal interest, and of the disturbing passions, which selfish partiality will be apt to raise. Men may verily think, that they sincerely love the truth, when the secret power of a carnal interest,—their honour, their profit or pleasure, is it that turneth about their judgment, and furnisheth them with arguments, and whets their wits, and maketh hem passionately confident ; and they are not

aware of it. Observe : Is your worldly interest on that side that your opinion is for ? Though that prove it not false, it proveth that you should be very suspicious of yourselves.

Direct. XVI. Keep up unfeigned fervent love to others, even as to yourselves. And then you will not condemn their persons and their arguments, without certain cause. You will not turn to passionate contentions, and reproaches of them when you differ ; and the reverence of your elders, teachers, and superiors, will make you more ready to suspect yourselves than them. Most of our self-conceited pretenders to knowledge, have lost all love and reverence, and are bold despisers of the persons, reasons and writings of all that contradict their error. And most that venture to cast the churches into flames, and their brethren into silence and sufferings, that they may plant their own opinions, are great despisers of those that they afflict, and either hate them, or would make them hateful, lest they should be thought to be unjust in using them like hateful persons. “ Love that thinketh no evil of others, is not apt to vaunt itself.” (1 Cor. xiii.)

Direct. XVII. Reverence the Church of God, but give not up your understandings absolutely to any men ; but take heed of taking any church, sect, or party, instead of the infallible God. With the Universal Church, you must embody not hold concord : it is certain, that *that* erreth not from the *essentials* of Christianity : otherwise the Church were no Church, and no Christians could be saved. If a Papist say, ‘ and which is this Church ? ’ I answer him, it is the universality of Christians, or all that hold these essentials ; and when I say, that this Church cannot fall

from these essentials, I do but say, it cannot cease to be a Church, the Church is constituted of, and known by the essentials of faith; and not the essentials of faith constituted by the Church, nor so known by it; though it be known as the teacher of it.

He that deserteth the Christian universality, in deed though not in words, and cleaveth too close to any sect, whether Papal or any other, will be carried down the stream by that sect, and will fill his understanding with all their errors and uncertainties, and confound them with the certain truths of God, to make up a mixed religion with; and the reverence of his party, church or sect, will blind his mind, and make him think this his duty.

Direct. XVIII. Above all pray and labour for a truly humble mind, that is well acquainted with its own defects; and fear and fly from a proud, overvaluing of your own understanding. Be thankful for any knowledge that you have, but take heed of thinking it greater than it is. The devils sin, and the imitation of Adam, are not the way to have the illumination of God's spirit. It is not more usual with God to bring low those that are proud of greatness, than to leave to folly, deceit and error, those that are proud of wisdom; and to leave to sin and wickedness, those that are proud of goodness.

Direct. XIX. Lastly, keep in a childlike, teachable, learning resolution, with a sober and suspended judgment, where you have not sure evidence to turn the scales. When Christ saith, "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven:" (Matt. xviii. 3 :) as he hath re-

spect to the humility of children in general (and their inception of a new life), so in special he seemeth to respect them as disciples.

But two things here I earnestly advise you :
 1. That you spend more time in learning than in disputing : not but that disputing in its season is necessary to defend the truth ; but usually it engageth men's wits in an eager opposition against others, and so against the truth which they should receive ; and it goeth more according to the ability of the disputants, than the merits of the cause. And he that is worsted is so galled at the disgrace, that he hateth the truth the more for his sake that hath dishonoured him : and therefore Paul speaketh so often against such disputing, and saith that the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle, and apt to teach, and in meekness instruct opposers.

I would ordinarily, if any man have a mind to wrangle with me, tell him ; ' If you know more of these things than I, if you will be my teacher, I shall thankfully hear and learn,' and desire him to open his judgment to me in its fullest evidence : and I would weigh it as the time and case required ; and if I were fully satisfied against it, I would crave leave to tell him the reasons of my dissent, and crave his patient audience to the end. And when we well understood each other's mind and reasons, I would crave leave then to end in peace ; unless the safety of others required a public dispute to defend the truth.

2. And my special repeated counsel is, that you suspend your judgment till you have cogent evidence to determine it. Be no further of either side than you know they are in the right ; cast

not yourself into other men's opinions hastily, upon slight reasons at a blind adventure. If you see not a certainty, judge it not certain. If you see but a probability, judge it but probable. "Prove all things, and hold fast that which is good." (1 Thess. v.) The Bereans are commended for searching the Scripture, and seeing whether the things were so which Paul had spoken. (Acts xvii.) Truth feareth not the light. It is like gold, that loseth nothing by the fire. Darkness is its greatest enemy and dishonour. Therefore look before you leap : you are bid, "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God." (1 John ii.) Stand still till you know that the ground is safe which you are to tread on. When poisoners are as common as physicians, you will look well to what you take. It is safer when once you have the essentials of Christianity, to take too little than too much : for you are sure to be saved if you are mere true Christians ; but how far Popery, Antinomianism, &c., may corrupt your Christianity is a controversy. Wish them that urge you to forbear their haste in a matter of everlasting consequence : these are not matters to be rashly done. And as long as you are uncertain, profess yourselves uncertain ; and if they will condemn you for your ignorance when you are willing to know the truth, so will not God. But when you are certain, resolve in the strength of God, and hold fast whatever it cost you, even to the death : and never fear being losers by God, by his truth, or by fidelity in your duty.

PART II.

OF TRUE SAVING KNOWLEDGE :

- I. CAUSING OUR LOVE TO GOD.
- II. THEREBY QUALIFYING US FOR HIS LOVE.

1 CORINTHIANS viii. 3.

But if any man love God, the same is known of him.

CHAP. I.

KNOWLEDGE IS TO BE ESTIMATED MORE BY
THE END IT TENDETH TO, THAN BY ITSELF.

HAVING done with that epidemical, mortal disease, SELF-CONCEITEDNESS, OR PREFIDENCE, OR over-hasty judging, and pretending to know that which we know not, which I more desire than hope to cure ; I have left but little room for the nobler part of my subject, True Saving Knowledge, because the handling of it was not my principal design.

The meaning of the text I gave you before. The true paraphrase of it is as followeth : As if Paul had said : ‘ You overvalue your barren notions, and think that by them you are wise ; whereas knowledge is a means to a higher end ; and is to be esteemed of as it attaineth that end ; that end is to make us lovers of God, that so we may be known with love by him ; for to love God and be beloved by him is man’s felicity and ultimate end ; and therefore that which we must seek after and live for in the world ; and he is to be accounted the wisest man that loveth God

most; when unsanctified notions and airy speculations will prove but folly.'

This being the true meaning of the text, I shall briefly speak of it by parts, as it containeth these several doctrines or propositions.

Doct. I. Knowledge is a means to a higher end, according to which it is to be estimated.

Doct. II. The end of knowledge is to make us lovers of God, and so to be known with love by him.

Doct. III. Therefore knowledge is to be valued, sought and used, as it tendeth to this holy blessed end.

Doct. IV. And therefore those are to be accounted the wisest or best-knowing men, that love God most; and not those that are stored with unholy knowledge.

For the first of these, that 'Knowledge is a means to a higher end,' I shall first open it, and then prove it.

I. Aquinas and some other schoolmen make the vision or knowledge of God to be the highest part of man's felicity: and I deny not but that the three faculties of man's soul, *vital activity, intellect, and will*, as the image of the Divine Trinity, have a kind of inseparability and co-equality. And therefore each of their perfections and perfect receptions from God, and operations on God, is the ultimate end of man: but yet they are distinguishable, though not divisible; and there is such an order among them, as that one may in some respects be called the inceptor and another the perfecter of human operations; and so the acts of one be called a means to the acts of the other. And thus though the vision

or knowledge of God be one inadequate conception, if not a part of our ultimate end ; yet the love of God, and living to God, are also other conceptions or parts of it : yea, and the more complete, perfect parts, which we call ' *finis ultimatè ultimus.*'

II. The proof shall be fetched, 1. From the order and use of the faculties of the soul. 2. From the objects. 3. From the constitution of the acts. 4. From express Scripture.

III. It is evident to our internal perception ; 1. That the understanding is but the guide of the will, and its acts but mediate to determine the will : as the eye is to lead the appetitive and executive faculties, by presenting to them their proper objects. To know is but an initial introductory act.

Yea, 2. It is evident that the soul is not satisfied with bare knowing, if no delight or complacency follow : for what is that which we call satisfaction, but the complacency of the will ? Suppose a man to have no effect upon his will, no pleasure, no contentation in his knowledge, and what felicity or desirable good to him would there be, in all the knowledge in the world ? Yea, when I name either *good* or *desirable* every one knoweth that I name an object of the will. Therefore if you stop at bare intellection, it is not to be called good or desirable as to the intellect, these being not proper intellectual objects : though remotely I confess they are ; that is, that which is called good, amiable and desirable primarily as the proper object of the will, must be discerned to be such by the understanding : when yet the formal notion of the intellects object, is

but 'quid intelligibile,' which materially is 'Ens, Unum, Verum, Bonum:' But goodness is the *formal* notion of the object of the will, and not only the *material*.

If any say that I seem here to take part with Epicurus, and Cicero's Torquatus, who erred by placing the chief excellency of virtue in the pleasure of it; and consequently making any thing more excellent which is more pleasant, though it be sin itself; I answer, He that will decide that great controversy, must distinguish, 1. Between sensitive pleasure, and the complacency of the will. 2. Between that which is good only to me and that which is good to others, and that which is good in relation to the supreme and final will of God. 3. Between the exterior and the interior acts of virtue, and then you shall see Cicero and Torquatus easily reconciled thus:—

1. It is certain that *goodness* and the *will* are so essentially related to each other, that they must each enter the other's definition. To be 'bonum' is to be 'volibile;' and to will is ever 'velle bonum.'

2. It is certain that God's will is the original and end of all created good, which hath its essence in relation to his will. And therefore if it were possible for virtue to be unpleasant or pernicious to the possessor, it would be good as it is suited and related to the will of God.

3. Therefore it cannot be said, that virtue as virtue is better than virtue as it pleaseth God: but it is most certain that virtue as virtue is pleasing to God, (as to the objective aptitude,) and that virtue as pleasing to God, and consequently as virtue; is better than virtue, as it is pleasant to the possessor.

4. And it is certain that virtue, as it is profitable, and justly pleasing to mankind, to the church, to kingdoms, to public societies or multitudes, is better than as it is pleasing unto one. Because the good of many is better than of one.

5. And it is certain that virtue, as it pleaseth the rational will, is better than as it pleaseth the mere sensitive appetite, which it seldom doth: and therefore sensuality hath no advantage hence.

6. And virtue as it profiteth, though at present it occasioneth sorrow or disobedience in its consequents, is better than that which at the present only pleaseth, and quickly vanisheth. But that profit lieth in this, that it prepareth for everlasting, or more durable pleasure. And a long pleasure attained by present sorrow, is better than a momentary pleasure; which is another difference between *sensual* sinful, and *spiritual* durable delights.

7. And to end all this controversy between us and Epicurus, it is notorious, that the internal vital acts of true virtue, are nothing else radically but pleasure itself: for it is radically and summarily nothing but the love of God and goodness: and love in its properest notion is nothing but the complacency of the will. To say, I love it, is but to say, it pleaseth me; unless when you speak of either sensual appetite and delight, or love as conjunct with some other act or passion. And (though Occum here stretch it a little too far) it is certain that the external act of man hath no virtue in it that is moral, but secondary, and derived from the will, even as far as it is

voluntary. So that the informing root of virtue is *will, love or complacency*; which Austin useth to call delectation; asserting what I now assert. So that the question* is, Whether virtue, which is nothing but complacency in good, be better as complacency or as virtue; that is, *under one name or another?* whether it be better as *virtue*, or as *virtue?* as *complaecncy*, or as *complacency?*

If you think I make Cicero and the old philosophers fools, by feigning them to agitate such a question; I answer, 1. If they do so, it is not my doing, but their own. 2. But I think Cicero meant not so foolishly, but understood Epicurus only of sensual pleasure, and not of rational. 3. Or at least, of private pleasure of a single person, as opposite to the utility and pleasure of multitudes. 4. And whether he had so much Theology as to remember that which resolveth the whole doubt, I know not, viz. that virtue as virtue is objectively pleasing to the will of God: and as pleasing to God, it is better than as pleasing to me, and all the world.

So that notwithstanding this objection, thus fully answered, the acts of the intellect merely as such, without their respect to some will, either of God or man, are not so much as formally amiable desirable or good.

I further add, that the acts of the intellect may be forced, involuntary, displeasing, and both morally and penally evil. A man may by God be forbidden to search after, and to know some things; and to know them (as voluntarily done) may be his sin. And all know that a man may be necessitated to know many things; and that

knowledge may torment him : As to know dangers, losses, enmities, injuries, future evils ; especially sins by an accusing conscience and God's displeasure : and devils and damned souls have such knowledge.

Object. 'All this is true of some knowledge, but not of the knowledge of God or goodness.'

Answ. I. It is granted then that knowledge, as such, is not sufficient to be man's felicity, or final act. 2. And as to the object, I easily grant that the true knowledge of God is the initial part of man's felicity : but that is much, because it ever inferreth that love or complacency of the will, which is the more completive part. 3. But there is a knowledge, even of God, which being separated from love, is sin and misery. As the devils and damned that believe, and tremble and hate, and suffer, are not without all knowledge of God. So much for the first proof, fetched from the order of the faculties of the soul.

II. The second proof is drawn from the objects : it is not mere intelligibility that blesseth a man, but goodness, which as such is the *formal* object of the will, though the *material* object of the understanding. It is a pleasant thing for the eyes to behold the sun : and as pleasant, it is good : and also as useful to ourselves or others. Nothing maketh a man good or happy, but as it is good. Therefore the goodness of God, (his transcendent perfection by which he is first essentially good in himself, and amiable to himself, and then good and aimable to us all) is the ultimately ultimate object of man's soul, to which his intelligibility is supposed.

III. The third proof is from the constitution

of these several acts: knowledge being but an introductive act, supposeth not love, as to its essence, though it produce it as an effect: but love includeth knowledge in it; as the number of two includeth one, when one doth not include two. Therefore both together must needs be more perfect than one alone.

IV. The fourth proof is from express Scripture; I will only cite some plain ones which need no tedious comment. 1. For love it is said, "We have known and believeth the love that God hath to us: God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect, (or in this the love with us is perfected) that we have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we, in this world: there is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear. He that feareth is not made perfect in love." (1 John iv. 16—18.) So that love is the perfection of man.

1 Cor. xii. 31; xiii. 2., &c. "Yet show I unto you a more excellent way: though I understand all mysteries, and all knowledge, and have not charity, I am nothing.—Charity never faileth, 13. The greatest of these is charity."

Rom. viii. 35. "Who shall separate us from the love of God," &c.

Rom. xiii. 10. "Love is the fulfilling of the law."

Rom. v. 5. "The love of God is poured out on our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given to us."

Gal. v. 6. "Faith which worketh by love."

Matt. xxii. 37. "The first and great commandment is, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," &c.

Luke x. 27; Deut. x. 12; xi. 1, 13, 22; xix. 9; xiii. 3; xxx. 6, 16, 20; Josh. xxii. 5; xxiii. 11; Psal. v. 11; xxxi. 23; lxix. 36; cxix. 165; cxliv. 20; Jam. i. 12: "He shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." Song ii. 5.

Prov. viii. 17. "I love them that love me."

See John xiv. 21; xvi. 27; 1 John iv. 19; John xxi. 15—17; 1 John iii. 22; Heb. xi. 6., &c.

And of knowledge it is said (John xiii. 17), "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

See James ii. 14, to the end; John xv. 24. "But now they have both seen and hated, both me and my Father."

Luke xii. 47. Knowing God's will, and not doing it, prepareth men for many stripes. See Rom. ii. And as barren knowledge is oft made the aggravation of sin, so true knowledge is usually made the cause or means of love and obedience, 1 John iv. 8. "He that loveth not, knoweth not God." 2 Pet. i. 2. "Grace and peace be multiplied to you, through the knowledge of God," 2 Pet. ii. 20, and many such like.

I conclude therefore that the knowledge of creatures is not desirable ultimately for itself, but as it leadeth up the soul to God. And the knowledge of God, though desirable ultimately for itself, yet not as the perfect, but the initial part of our ultimate act or end, and as the means or cause of that love of God, which is the more perfect part of that ultimate perfection.

CHAP. II.

THE END OF KNOWLEDGE IS TO MAKE US
LOVERS OF GOD, AND SO TO BE KNOWN
WITH LOVE BY HIM.

THIS is the second doctrine contained in the meaning of the text : where is included, 1. That all knowledge of creatures, called learning, must be valued and used but as a means to the knowledge and love of God : which is most evident in that the whole creation is the work of God, bearing the image or impress of his perfections, to reveal him to the intellectual creature, and to be the means of provoking us to his love, and helping us in his service. To deny this, therefore, is to subvert the use of the whole creation, and to set up God's works as an useless shadow, or as an idol in his own place.

2. It is included, as was before proved, that all our knowledge of God himself, is given us to kindle in us the love of God. It is the bellows to blow up this holy fire. If it do not this, it is unsound and dead. If it do this, it hath attained its end ; which is much of the meaning of James in that chap. ii. which prejudice hindereth many from understanding.

3. This love of God hath its degrees and effects. Knowledge first kindleth but some weak initial act of love, which through mixtures of fear, and of carnal affections, is hardly known to be sincere by him that hath it. But afterwards it produceth stronger acts, and the Holy Ghost still working as the principal cause, infuseth or operateth a radicated habit. So that this holy love becometh like a second nature in the soul, even

a Divine nature, making it in] a sort natural to us to love God and goodness, though not as the brutish nature, which is exercised by necessity, and without reason. And this *new nature* of holy love, is called the new creature and the Holy Ghost dwelling in us, and the Spirit of adoption; and is our *new-name*, the *white-stone*, the *witness* in ourselves that Christ is the Saviour, and that we are the regenerate children of God, the pledge, the earnest, the first-fruits, and the foretaste of life eternal.

And all the works of a Christian are so far truly holy, as they are the effects of holy love. for 1. Holy love is but a holy will; and the will is the man, in point of morality. 2. And the love of God is our final act upon the final object; and all other gracious acts are but means subservient to this end: and the end is it that informeth all the means, they being such only as are adapted to the end.

And in this sense it is true which is said in the schools, (though many Protestants misunderstanding, have contradicted it) that love is the form of all other graces; that is, the heart of the new creature; or that by which the man is morally to be reputed and denominated: it is the final grace which animateth or informeth the rest.

And thus it is true, that when you will prove any grace to be sincere and saving, or any evidence certain, you must prove it to participate of the love of God and goodness, or you have failed and said nothing, Yea, you must prove it to be conjunct with predominant love, which setteth God above all creatures. And if you will prove

any good work to be acceptable to God, prayer, praise, alms, justice, &c., you must prove that it cometh from this predominant love. For it is so far and no further acceptable to God.

And their ignorance is but to be pitied, who tell you that this is to make our love of God to be instead of Christ to us, or to set up an acceptable righteousness or merit in ourselves: for we dream not that our love of God was a sacrifice for our sins, and the expiatory atonement and satisfaction to justice, nor *that* merit which procured us love itself, or purchased us the Holy Ghost. Our meaning is that goodness is the only proper object of love: that God loveth his essential goodness first, and created goodness next: and our moral goodness which is his image, is holy love, produced by and joined with holy wisdom and vitality. And so though God love us in Christ, or as related to him, it is as holy members of him; and not that he loveth complacently the haters of God for their relation to Christ, without respect to any goodness in themselves. And to say, that Christ maketh us acceptable and amiable to God, is all one as to say that he procureth us the pardon of sin, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, and maketh us holy lovers of God: or that he is indeed our Saviour. He that commendeth health as wrought by his physician, doth not set health instead of the physician: Christ is the physician; the Holy Ghost or holy love in us, is our health: to procure and give us the Holy Ghost, is Christ's office. He pardoneth our sin when he pardoneth the punishment: the privation of the Holy Ghost and his operations is our principal punishment: and

therefore not all, but the principal part of our pardon lieth in giving us the Holy Ghost.

But some will say, 'That if God love nothing but goodness, and love us no further than we are good, how then did he love us first, and while we were his enemies? Are not Election, Creation, Redemption and Conversion, acts of love? And is not *our* love, the fruit of *his* love?'

Answ. Thus names by confounding heads, are made the matter of a thousand controversies. As our *love* is nothing but our *will*, so the word *love* is taken strictly and properly, or largely and less properly. A man's will is considered as efficient or as final: as it respecteth a future effect, or a present exigent good. And so God's will as it is final, and respecteth things existent, either 1. 'In esse cognito.' 2. or 'in esse reali,' is called complacence, and only complacence is love in the strict and proper sense. But God's will as efficient of good, may in a laxer sense be called love. God's will is the fountain or efficient cause of all good, natural and moral, in the world. And so you may call God's causing or making good, by the name of love, if you please; remembering that it is but the name that is questioned: but his complacency in good foreseen, or existent, is strictly called his love. And so still God loveth nothing in either sense but good. For 1. He causeth nothing but good. 2. And he is pleased in nothing but good *as good*.

Quest. 'But how then doth God love his enemies?'

Answ. 1. He maketh us men, which may be called one act of efficient love: and he redcemeth

men; and he giveth them all the good things which they possess; and he sanctified some, and maketh them lovers of him: that is, *holy*. And thus he willeth their good, while they are nothing or evil; which is called benevolence, and love efficient.

2. And he hath true love of complacency in them, 1. As they have the good of human nature. 2. And thereby are capable of grace, and all the love and service which after they may perform. 3. And as they are related to Christ as his redeemed ones. 4. And as by relation they are those that God foreknoweth will love and serve him here, and in the perfections of eternal glory. There is all this good even in some enemies of God, to be the matter of his complacency. And beyond their goodness he hath no complacency in them.

3. And to clear up all this, still remember that though man's will is changed by or upon various objects, yet so is not the will of God. And therefore all these words signify no variety or change in God; but only how his simple immutable essential will, is variously related to and denominated from, the connotation of effects and objects.

4. Also it must be noted, as included in the text, that God loveth all that truly love him; for to be known of him, meaneth here to be known with approbation and love as his peculiar people. As Psal. i. 6, it is said, "The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous;" and so of the wicked, (Matt. xxv. 12.) "Depart from me, I know you not." God owneth with love all those that love him. What parts, what quality, what degree soever men are of, whatever difference

else there be among them, if they are true lovers of God, they are certainly approved and beloved by him. This being the very heart and essence of the new creature, and the Divine nature in us; must needs make that man amiable to God that hath it. Other things are true marks of a child of God, only so far as they participate of love: but love is the primary proper character, which proveth us adopted directly of itself.

And that God doth most certainly love all that love him, besides the forementioned proofs is further evident.

1. The love of God and goodness is the Divine nature: and God cannot but love his own nature in us: it is his image, which, as in its several degrees, he loveth for himself, and next to himself.

2. The love of God is the rectitude of man's soul, its soundness, health and beauty: and God loveth the rectitude of his creatures.

3. The love of God is the final, perfect operation of the soul; even that end which it was created and redeemed for, and God loveth to have his works attain their end, and to see them in their perfection.

4. The love of God is the goodness of the soul itself: and goodness is amiableness, and must needs be loved by him that is goodness and perfection itself.

5. The love of God is our uniting adhesion to him: and God that first draweth up the soul to this union, will not himself reject us, and avoid it.

6. Love is a pregnant, powerful, pleasing grace; it delivereth up ourselves, and all that we

have to God : it delighteth in duty : it conquereth difficulties : it contemneth competitors, and trampleth on temptations : it accounteth nothing too much, nor too dear for God. Love is the soul's nature, appetite and 'pondus,' according to which it will ordinarily act. A man's love, is his will, his heart—himself : and if God have our love, he hath ourselves, and our all ; so that God cannot but love the soul that truly loveth him as God.

But here are some doubts to be resolved.

Quest. 1. 'What if the same soul have love and sin mixed ; or sincere love in a degree that is sinfully defective, and so is consistent with something of its contrary ; God must hate that sin ; how then can he love that soul ?'

Answ. Remember still that diversity is only in us, and not in God : therefore God's will is related and denominated towards us, just as its object is. All that is good in us God loveth : all that is evil in us he hateth. Where goodness is predominant, there God's love is predominant, or greatest, from this relation and connotation. Where sin is predominant, God's aversation, or hatred is the chief : and we may well expect that the effects are answerable.

Object. 'But we are beloved as elect before conversion.'

Answ. That was answered before. That is, God from eternity purposed to make us good, and amiable, and happy ; if you will call that (as you may) his love.

Object. 'But we are beloved in Christ, for his righteousness and goodness, and not for our own.'

Answ. The latter is false : the former is thus

true. For the merits of Christ's righteousness, and goodness, God will pardon our sins, and make us good, holy and happy; and will love us as the holy members of his Son; that is, both as related to him, and as holy.

Object. 'But if God must needs love sincere imperfect lovers of him as such, with a predominant love (which will not damn them:) then sin might have been pardoned without Christ's death, and the sinner be loved without his righteousness, if he had but sincerely loved God.'

Answ. The supposition is false, that a sinner could have loved God without pardon and the Spirit, purchased by the death and righteousness of Christ. God perfectly loveth the perfected souls in glory, for their own holy perfection, but they never attained it, but by Christ. And God loveth us here, according to the measure of our love to him: but no man can thus love him, until his sin be pardoned; for which he was deprived of the Spirit, this must kindle love. And imperfect love is ever joined with imperfect pardon, (whatever some falsely say to the contrary;) I mean *that love*, which is sinfully imperfect.

Quest. 2. 'Doth not God's loving us make us happy? And if so, it must make us holy. And then none that he loveth will fall away from him: whereas the fallen angels and Adam loved him, and yet fell from him: how then were they beloved by him?'

Answ. I before told you that God's will (or love) is first efficient, causing good, and then final, being pleased in the good that is caused. God's efficient will or love, doth so far make men holy and happy as they are such, even efficiently:

but God's will, or love, as it is our 'causa finalis,' and the terminating object of our love, and as pleased in us, and approving us, is not the efficient cause of our holiness and happiness; but the objective and perfect constitutive cause. Now you must further note, that God's benevolent efficient will, or love, doth give men various degrees of holiness. To Adam in innocency he gave but such a degree, and upon such terms, as he could lose and cast away; which he did. But to the blessed in glory he giveth that which they shall never lose. These degrees are from God's efficient love or will; which, therefore, causeth some to persevere, when it left Adam to himself, to stand or fall. But it is not God's final love of complacency, as such, that causeth our perseverance: for Adam had this love, as long as he loved God, and stood; and he after lost it: so that it is not that final complacency, which is the 'terminus' of our holiness, and constitutive cause of our happiness, which alone will secure the perpetuity of either of them.

Object. 'Thus you make God mutable in his love, as loving Adam more before his fall, than after.'

Answ. I told you, loving, and not loving are no changes in God, but in the creature. It is man that is mutable, and not God. It is only the relation of God's will to the creature, as varying in itself, and the extrinsic denomination, by connotation of a changed object, which is changed as to God. As the sun is not changed when you wink and when you open your eyes; nor a pillar changed when your motions sets it sometimes on your right hand, and sometimes on your left.

5. Lastly, it must be noted, as included in the text 'That our own loving God, is not the only or total notion of our end, perfection, or felicity; but to be known and loved *by God*, is the other part which must be taken in, to make up the total notion of our end.'

In our love, God is considered as the object: but in God's complacential love to us, he is considered as active, and his love as an act, and man as the object: but yet not as an object of efficiency, but of approbation, and a pleased will or delight. Here then the great difficulty is, in resolving which of these is the highest perfective notion of man's felicity; perfection, or ultimate end; our love to God, or God's love to us.

Answ. It is mutual love and union which is the true and complete notion of our end; and to compare God's love and ours as the parts, and tell which is the final principal part or notion, is not easy, nor absolutely necessary. But I conceive.

1. That our love to God is objectively, or as to the object of it, infinitely more excellent than God's love to us, as to the object; which is but to say, that God is infinitely better than man. God loveth man who is a worm; but we love God who is perfect goodness.

2. God's love to us, as to the agent and the act '*ex parte agentis*,' is infinitely more excellent than our love to him: for it is God's essential will, which loveth us; and it is the will of a worm that loveth God.

3. That man's felicity, as such, is not the chief notion of his ultimate end; but he must love God *as God*, better than his own felicity as such, or better than God considered as our felicity.

4. That man's true ultimate end, containeth these five inadequate conceptions. 1. The lowest notion or part of it, is, our own holiness and felicity. 2. The next notion of it, is, the perfection of the church and universe, to which we contribute, and which we must value above our own. 3. The third notion, is, the glory or lustre of God's perfections, as they shine forth in us and all his perfected glorious works. 4. The fourth notion is, God's own essential goodness, as the object of our knowledge, love and praise. 5. The fifth and highest notion is, the active love or complacency of God's fulfilled will, in us, and in the whole creation. So that the pleasing of God's will, is the highest notion of man's ultimate end: though all these five are necessarily contained in it.

CHAP. III.

DOCT. 3. THEREFORE KNOWLEDGE IS TO BE
VALUED, SOUGHT, AND USED, AS IT TENDETH
TO OUR LOVE OF GOD.

THIS third doctrine is much of the scope of the text: all means are for their end: so far as knowledge is a means of love, it must needs hence have the measure of its worth, and we the motives of our desires of it, and the direction for our using of it.

1. All knowledge that kindleth not the love of God in us, is so narrow and small that it deserveth not indeed the name of knowledge; for the necessary things that such a person is ignorant of, are a thousand times more or greater, than

that little which he knoweth : for, (1.) What is it that he is ignorant of ?

1. He hath no sound and real knowledge of God. For if he knew God truly, he could not but love him : goodness is so naturally the object of the will, that if men well knew the infinite Good, they must needs love him ; however there is a partial knowledge that is separable from sincere love.

2. He that knoweth not and loveth not God, neither knoweth nor loveth any creature truly and effectually either as it is *of God*, or *through him*, or *to him* ; either as it beareth the impress of the glorious efficient, or as it is ordered to its end by the most wise director, or as it is a means to lead up souls to God, or to glorify and please him, no nor to make man truly happy. And can he be said indeed to know any creature that knoweth it not in any of these respects, that knoweth neither its original, order or use ? Doth a dog or a goose know a book of philosophy, because he looketh on it, and seeth the bulk ? Doth he know a clock or watch, who knoweth no more of it, but that it hath such parts and shapes, made of iron and brass ? It is most evident that an unholy person knoweth nothing : that is, no *one being*, though he may know ‘*aliquid de re aliqua*,’ something of some being : for he knoweth not the nature, order or use and end of a being, but only ‘*secundum quid*,’ or some accidents of it, or has a general knowledge that it is a substance, or a something, he knoweth not what :—As an Epicurean can call all things compacted atoms, or matter and motion. An ungodly man is just like one that studieth the

art of a scrivener or printer, to make the letters, and place them by art, but never learned to read or know the signification of the letters which he maketh or composeth.

Practical objects are not truly known without a practical knowledge of them. He knoweth not what meat is, that knoweth not that it must be eaten, and how to eat it : he only knoweth the use of clothing that knoweth how to put it on. He only knoweth a pen, a gun, or other instrument, that knoweth how to use it. Now the ungodly, not knowing how any creature displayeth the Divine perfections, nor how by it to ascend to the knowledge and love of God, do indeed know nothing with a proper, formal knowledge.

(2.) And what is it that such men know, or seem to know, which may be compared with their ignorance? To give them their due praise, they know how to eat as well as a dog, though not so subtly as an ox or sheep, that can distinguish grass before he taste it. He can tell how to drink, though not by so constant a temperance as a beast. He can speak better than a parrot : he can build a house as apt for his use, as a swallow or other birds can do for theirs. He can lay up for the time to come, more carefully than a fox, or ant, though not so orderly as the bees : he can look upwards, and see the birds that soar and fly in the air, though he cannot imitate them : he can look into the surface of the waters, and artificially pass over them in ships, though he cannot live in them, or glide through them as the fish : he can master those that are weaker than himself, as the great dogs do the little ones, and carry away the bone from them all : he can glory

in his strength, though it be less than that of a horse, an ox, an elephant's, or a whale. He can kill and eat his fellow *animals*, as well as a pike among the fishes, a kite among the birds, or a wolf or a dog among the beasts: he can more craftily than the fox, entrap and ensnare them (fishes, birds and beasts); yea, as artificially as a spider doth the flies, to make up what he wants, of the hawk or dog for swift pursuit, or of the lion for rapacious strength. He can sing; and so can the linnet, the owsel, the lark and nightingale: he can make his bed as soft as the birds their nests, or as other creatures that love their ease: he can generate and breed up his offspring, though not with that constancy of affection, and accurateness of skill and industry, as a hen her chickens, or most other animals do their young. Yea, he can live in society, families, common-wealths, though much more disorderly, contentiously, and to the disturbance, if not destruction of others, than pigeons in their dove-house, or the flight of swallows, or larks, or lapwings; or, than the bees do in their hive.

All this and more, we can speak of the praises of the knowledge or wisdom of an ungodly man that never learned to know or love his God, nor any thing truly worthy of a man: and is all this deserving the name of knowledge? The character of such could not be more fitly given than here it is by the apostle: "They know nothing as they ought to know." But of this more hereafter.

CHAP. IV.

DOCT. 4. AND THEREFORE THOSE ARE TO BE ACCOUNTED THE WISEST AND BEST KNOWING MEN, THAT LOVE GOD MOST; AND NOT THOSE THAT ARE STORED WITH UNHOLY KNOWLEDGE.

THIS fourth doctrine, is also a discernible part of the meaning of the apostle in the text. His purpose is to humble those that judge themselves wise for that which is no wisdom, but useless, ludicrous notions and self-conceitedness; and to show men wherein true wisdom doth consist. Many thousands there are that heartily love God, and are devoted to him, and live to his service in the world, who never read logic, physics, metaphysics or mathematics; nor laid in that stock of artificial notions, which are the property and glory of the learned world. And yet that these are truly and happily wise and knowing, the apostle judgeth, and I thus further prove.

1. Because they know the things themselves, and not merely the names and definitions of them: as he that knoweth food by eating it, the military art or navigation, by experience, or a country by travelling or dwelling in it. Others touch the outside of the glass, but taste not the sweet that is within.

2. Because they know the greatest and most excellent things: God is infinitely greater and better than the creatures; and heaven incomparably better than the riches and pleasures of this earth. To know how to build a city, or a navy, and how to govern an army or a kingdom, is more than to know how to pick sticks or straws,

or how to dress and undress. Understanding is valuable by the dignity of its objects; therefore how much doth the wisdom of a holy soul excel all the craft and learning of the ungodly? Let not the rich man glory in his riches—But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he knoweth God: if he so know him as to *love* him.

3. Because they know the most necessary things, and the most profitable: They know how to be good, and how to do their duty, and how to attain their end, and how to please God, and how to escape damnation, and how to be happy in everlasting joy and glory. And I think he is wise, that is wise enough to be happy, and to attain all that the soul of man can well desire.

But who will desire the wisdom that maketh a man never the better, and that will not save him from destruction? What soul in hell thinketh that wisdom brought him thither? It were a thousand times better, not to know how to speak or to go, to dress or undress us, than not to know how to be holy and happy, and to escape sin and everlasting misery.

4. A holy soul understands that which his understanding was made for: and for which he hath his life, and time, and teaching; which is but to be good, and love God and goodness, and to do good: Wisdom, as is before proved, as all other means, is to be estimated by its end.

But an ungodly man knoweth not that which he was made for. He is like a knife that cannot cut; a ship that will not endure the water; a house that is not fit to dwell in. What is a man's wit worth, but for its proper end? If man was made but to eat, and drink, and play and sleep,

and build and plant, and stir awhile about the earth, and have his will over others, and his fleshly pleasure, and then die, then the ungodly may be called wise ; but if he be made to prepare for another world, and to know and love, and live to God, they are then worse than lunatics, and more dangerously *beside* themselves.

5. A holy soul knowing God the beginning and end, knoweth all things ; because he knoweth them, 1. In the chief excellency of their natures, as they bear the impress of God ; 2. And in their order as governed by him ; 3. And in their usefulness as tending to him : though neither they, nor any others, be well acquainted with their material part, which the philosopher thinketh that he knoweth best. Who think you best knoweth what money is ? He that knoweth the king's impress, and the value, and what it is good for, and how to get and use it ? or he that can only tell you, whether it be copper or silver, or gold, not knowing well the use of any of these : I tell you, the humble holy person, that *seeth God in all*, and knoweth all things to be *of him*, and *by him*, and *to him*, and loveth him in and for all, and serveth him by all, is the best philosopher, and hath the greatest, most excellent and most profitable knowledge. In comparison of which, the unholy learning of the world, is well called foolishness with God. (For I believe not that paraphraser who would persuade us, that it is but the fanatic conceits and pretensions of the Gnostics, that the apostle here and elsewhere speaketh of. But I rest satisfied, that it is primarily the unholy arts and sciences of the philosophical heathens ; and secondarily the Platonic

heretics' pretensions to extraordinary wisdom, because of their speculations about angels, spirits, and other invisible and mysterious things, which they thought were peculiarly opened unto them.) Doting about questions that engender strife and not edification, and to increase in ungodly acquisitions, is the true description of unholy learning.

6. The lovers of God are wise for perpetuity: they see before them: they know what is to come; even as far as to eternity. They know what will be best at last, and what will be valued, and serve our turn in the hour of our extremity: they judge of things, as all will judge of them; and as they shall constantly judge of them for ever. But others are wise but for a few hours, or a present job: they see not before them; they are preparing for repentance. They are shamefully mutable in their judgments: magnifying those pleasures, gains, and honours to-day, which they vilify and cry out against at death and to eternity! A pang of sickness, the sight of a grave, the sentence of death, the awakening of conscience, can change their judgments, and make them speak in other language, and confess a thousand times over that they were fools: and if they come to anything like wisdom, it is too late, when time is past, and hope is gone. But the godly know the day of their visitation, and are wise in time; as knowing the season of all duties, and the duties of every season. And as some schoolmen say, that all things are known to the glorified, 'in speculo Trinitatis;' so I may say, that all things are morally and savingly known, to him that knoweth and loveth God, as the efficient Governor, and End of all.

Yet, to avoid mistakes and cavils, remember, that I take no true knowledge as contemptible. And when I truly say that he knoweth nothing as he ought to know, that doth not know and love his God, and is not wise to his duty and salvation ; yet if this fundamental knowledge be presupposed, we should build all other useful knowledge on it, to the utmost of our capacity : and from this one stock, may spring and spread a thousand branches, which may all bear fruit. I would put no limits to a Christian's desires and endeavours to know, but that he desire only to know useful and revealed things. Every degree of knowledge tendeth to more : and every known truth befriends others ; and like fire, tendeth to the spreading of our knowledge, to all neighbouring truths that are intelligible. And the want of acquaintance with some one truth among an hundred, may hinder us from knowing rightly most of the rest ; or may breed an hundred errors in us. As the absence of one wheel or particle in a watch, or the ignorance of it, may put all the rest into useless disorder. What if I say that wisdom lieth more in knowing the things that belong to salvation, to public good, to life, health, and solid comfort, than in knowing how to sing, or play on the lute, or to speak or carry ourselves with commendable decency, &c. It doth not follow that all these are of no worth at all ; and that in their places these little matters may not be allowed and desired : for even hair and nails are appurtenances of a man, which a wise man would not be without ; though they are small matters in comparison of the animal, vital and nobler parts. And indeed, *he*

that can see God in all things, and that hath all this sanctified by the love of God, should above all men value each particle of knowledge, of which so holy an use may be made ; as we value every grain of pure gold.

CHAP. V.

INFERENCE I. BY WHAT MEASURES TO ESTIMATE MEN'S KNOWLEDGE.

FROM hence then we may learn how to value the understandings of ourselves and others : that is *good* which doth *good*. Would God but give me one beam more of the heavenly light, and a little clearer knowledge of himself, how joyfully could I exchange a thousand lower notions for it ! I feel not myself at all miserable, for want of knowing the number and order of the stars, the nature of the meteors, the causes of the ebbing and flowing of the sea, with many hundred other questions in physics, metaphysics, mathematics, &c : nor do I feel it any great addition to my happiness, when I think I know somewhat of such things which others know not. But I feel it is my misery to be ignorant of God, and ignorant of my state and duty, and ignorant of the world where I must live for ever. This is the dungeon where my wretched soul doth lie in captivity night and day, groaning and crying out, O when shall I know more of God ! and more of the celestial habitations, and more of that which I was made to know ! O when shall I be delivered from this darkness and captivity ! Had I not one beam that pierceth through this lan-

tern of flesh, this dungeon were a hell, even the outer darkness. I find books that help me to names, and notions ; but O for that Spirit that must give me light to know the things, the spiritual, great and excellent things, which these names import ! O how ignorant am I of those same things, which I can truly and methodically speak and write of ! O that God would have mercy on my dark understanding, that I be not as a clock, to tell others that which itself understandeth not ! O how gladly would I consent to be a fool in all common arts and sciences, if I might but be ever the wiser in the knowledge of God ! Did I know better him by whom I live, who upholdeth all things ; before whom my soul must shortly appear ; whose favour is my life ; whom I hope to love and praise for ever : of what concern were all other things to me ? O for one beam more of his light ! for one taste of his love ! for one clear conception of the heavenly glory ! I should then scarcely have leisure, to think of a thousand inferior speculations, which are now magnified and agitated in the world.

But much more miserable do I find myself, for want of more love to the blessed God, who is love itself. O happy exchange ! did I part with all the pleasures of the world, for one flame, one spark more of the love of God ! I hate not myself for my ignorance in the common arts and sciences ; but my God knoweth, that I even abhor and loathe myself, because I love and delight in him no more ! O what a hell is this dead and disaffected heart ! O what a foretaste of heaven would it be, could I but feel the fervours of Divine love ! Well may that be called the first-fruits of heaven, and the Divine nature and life,

which so uniteth souls to God, and causeth them to live in the pleasures of his goodness. I dare not beg hard for more common knowledge: but my soul melteth with grief for want of love; and forceth out tears, and sighs, and cries; O when will heaven take acquaintance with my heart, and shine into it, and warm and revive it, that I may truly experience the delightful life of holy love! I cannot think them loathsome and unlovely, that are unlearned, and that want the ornaments of art. But I abhor and curse those hateful sins, which have raised the clouds, and shut the windows, and hindered me from the more lively knowledge and love of God. Would God but number me with his zealous lovers, I would presume to say, that he had made me wise, and initially happy. But, alas! such high and excellent things will not be gotten with a lazy wish, nor will holy love dwell with iniquity, in unholy and defiled souls.

But if wisdom were justified of none but her children, how confidently durst I call myself a son of wisdom? For all my reason is fully satisfied, that the learned ungodly doctors are mere fools, and that the lovers of God are only wise: and O that my lot may be with such, however I be esteemed by the doting and dreaming world!

CHAP. VI.

INFERENCE 2. THE APTNESS OF THE TEACHING OF CHRIST, TO INGENERATE THE LOVE OF GOD AND HOLINESS.

If love be the end and perfection of our knowledge, then hence we may perceive, that no

teacher that ever appeared in the world, was so fit for the ingenerating of true saving knowledge as Jesus Christ; for none ever so promoted the love of God.

1. It was he only, that rendered God apparently lovely to sinful man, by reconciling us to God, and rendering him apparently propitious to his enemies, pardoning sin, and tendering salvation freely to them that were the sons of death. Self-love will not give men leave to love aright a God that will damn them, though deservedly for sin. But it is Christ that hath made atonement, and is the propitiation for our sins, and proclaimeth God's love, even to the rebellious: which is more effectual to kindle holy love in us, than all the precepts of naturalists without this, could ever have been. His cross, and his wounds and blood, were the powerful sermons to preach God's winning love to sinners.

2. And the benefits are so many and so great which he hath purchased and revealed to man, that they are abundant fuel for the flames of love. We are set by Christ in the way of mercy, in the household of God, under the eye and special influence of his love; all our sins pardoned, our everlasting punishment remitted, our souls renewed, our wounded consciences healed, our enemies conquered, our fears removed, our wants supplied, our bodies, and all that is ours placed under the protection of Almighty Love; and we are secured by promise, that all our sufferings shall work together for our good. And what will cause love, if all this will not? When we perceive with what love the Father hath loved us, that of enemies, we should be made the sons of

God, and of condemned sinners we should be made the heirs of endless glory, and this so freely and by so strange a means, as may assure us that this doctrine of love, is taught us from heaven by love itself.

3. And especially this work of love is promoted, by opening the kingdom of heaven to the foresight of our faith; and shewing us what we shall enjoy for ever; and assuring us of the fruition of our Creator's everlasting love; yea, by making us foreknow that heaven consisteth in perfect, mutual, endless love. This of itself, will draw up our hearts and engage all our reason and endeavours, in beginning that work which we must do for ever, and to learn on earth to love in heaven.

4. And besides all these objective helps, Christ giveth to believers the Spirit of love, and maketh it become as a nature in us; which no other teacher in the world could do. Others can speak reason to our ears, but it is Christ that sendeth the warming beams of holy love into our hearts.

If the love of God and holiness were no better than common philosophical speculations, then Aristotle, or Plato, or such other masters of names and notions, might compare with Christ and his apostles, and Athens with the primitive church; and the schoolmen might be thought the best improvers of theology. But if thousands of dreaming disputers wrangle the world into misery, and themselves into hell, and are ingenious artificers of their own damnation; if the love of God and goodness be the healthful constitution of the soul, its natural content and pleasure, the business and end of life, and all its helps and bless-

ings, the cement of just societies, the union of man with God in Christ, and with all the blessed ; and the foretaste and firstfruits of endless glory ; then Christ the Messenger of love, the Teacher of love, the giver of love, the Lord and commander of love, is the best promoter of knowledge in the world. And as Nicodemus knew that he was a teacher come from God, because no man could do such works unless God were with him ; so may we conclude the same, because no man could so reveal, so cause, and communicate love, the holy love of God and goodness, unless the God of love had sent him : For love is the end and work of Christ, the fruits of his Word and Spirit.

CHAP. VII.

INFERENCE 3. WHAT GREAT CAUSE MEN HAVE TO BE THANKFUL TO GOD FOR THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION : AND HOW INEXCUSABLE THEY ARE THAT WILL NOT LEARN SO SHORT AND SWEET AND SAFE A LESSON.

So excellent and every way suitable to our case is the religion taught and instituted by Christ, as should render it very acceptable to mankind. And that on several accounts.

1. The brevity and plainness of Christian precepts, greatly accommodateth it to the necessity of mankind. I say his necessity, lest you think it but his sloth. 'Ars longa, vita brevis,' is the true and sad complaint of students. Had our salvation been laid upon learning a body of true philosophy, how desperate would our case have been !

For 1. Man's great intellectual weakness : 2. His want of leisure, would not have allowed him a knowledge that requireth a subtle wit and tedious studies.

1. Most men have wits of a duller sort : such quickness, subtlety, and solidity as is necessary to great and difficult studies, are very rare : so rare, as that few such are found even among the preachers of the Gospel : Of a multitude who by hard studies, and honest hearts, are fit to preach the doctrine of salvation, scarcely one or two are found of so fine and exact a wit as to be fit judiciously to manage the curious controversies of the schools. What a case then had mankind been in, if none could have been wise and happy indeed, but these few of extraordinary capacity. The most public and common good is the best. God is more merciful than to confine salvation to subtlety of wit : nor indeed is it a thing itself so pleasing to him as a holy heavenly heart and life.

2. And we have bodies that must have provision and employment : we have families and kindred that must be maintained : we live in neighbourhoods and public societies, which call for much duty, and take up much time. And our sufferings and crosses will take up some thoughts. Were it but poverty alone, how much of our time will it alienate from contemplation ! Whilst great necessities call for great care and continual labour ; can our common, poor labourers, (especially husbandmen) have leisure to inform their minds with philosophy or curious speculations ?

Nay, we see by experience, that the more subtle and studious wits, that wholly addict themselves to philosophy, can bring it to no

considerable certainty and consistency to this day, except in the few rudiments, or common principles that all are agreed in. Insomuch that those do now take themselves to be the chief or only wits, who are pulling down that which through so many ages, from the beginning of the world, hath with so great wit and study been concluded on before; and are now themselves no higher than new experimenters, who are beginning all anew again, to try whether they can retrieve the errors of mankind, and make any thing of that which they think the world hath been so long unacquainted with: and they are yet but beginning at the skin or superficies of the world, and are got no further with all their wit, than matter and motion, with figure, site, contexture, &c. But if they could live as long as Methuselah, it is hoped they might come to know that besides matter and motion, there are essential virtues called substantial forms, or active natures, and that there is a 'vis motiva,' which is the cause of motion, and a 'virtus intellectiva,' and wisdom, which is the cause of the order of motion, and a vital will and love, which is the perfection and end of all: in a word, they may live to know that there is such a thing in the world as life, and such a thing as active nature, and such a thing as sense and soul, besides corporeal matter and motion, and consequently that man is indeed man. But, alas! they must die sooner, perhaps before they attain so far, and their successors must begin all again, as if none of all these great attempts had been made by their predecessors, and so, by their method, we shall never reach deeper than

the surface, nor learn more than our A B C. And would we have such a task made necessary to the common salvation, even for all the poor and vulgar, which is so much too hard for our most subtle students ?

2. And Christianity is as suitable to us, in the benefit and sweetness of it. What a happy religion is it that employeth men in nothing but receiving good to themselves, and in doing good to themselves and others. Whose work is only the receiving and improving of God's mercies, and loving and delighting in all that is good, rejoicing in the foretaste of God's love on earth, and in the hopes of perfect felicity, love and joy for ever. Is not this sweeter than tedious, unprofitable speculations ?

O then, how inexcusable are our contemners of religion, that live in wilful ignorance and ungodliness, and think this easy and sweet religion to be a tedious and intolerable thing ! What impudent calumniators and blasphemers are they of Christ and holiness, who deride and revile this sweet and easy way to life, as if it were a slavery and an irksome toil, unnecessary to our salvation, and unfit for a freeman, or at least a gentleman, (or a servant of the flesh and world) to practise. If Christ had set you such a task as Aristotle or Plato did to their disciples ; so many notions, and so many curiosities to learn : if he had written for you as many books as Chrysippus did ; if he had made necessary to your salvation, all the arbitrary notions of Lullius, and all the fanatic conceits of Campanella, and all the dreaming hypotheses of Cartesius, and all the astronomical and cosmographical difficulties of

Ptolomy, Tycho-Brache, Copernicus and Galilæus, and all the chronological difficulties handled by Eusebius, Scaliger, Functius, Capellus, Petavius, &c. And all the curiosities in philosophy and theology of Cajetan, Scotus, Ockam, Gabriel, &c. Then you might have had some excuse for your aversion: but to accuse and refuse, and reproach so compendious, so easy, so sweet, so necessary a doctrine and religion, as that which is brought and taught by Christ; this is an ingratitude that hath no excuse, unless sensuality and malignant enmity may pass for such.

Doth Christ deliver you from the maze of imaginary curiosities, and from the burdens of worldly wisdom, called philosophy, and of Pharisical traditions, and Jewish ceremonies, and make you a light burden, an easy yoke, and commandments that are not grievous; and after all this, must he be requited with rejection and reproach, and your burdens and snares be taken for more tolerable than your deliverance? You make a double forfeiture of salvation, who are so unwilling to be saved.

Be thankful, O Christians, to your heavenly Master, for tracing you out so plain and sweet a way. Be thankful that he hath cut short those tiresome studies, by which your taskmasters would confound you, under pretence of making you like gods, in some more subtle and sublime speculations than vulgar wits can reach. Now all that are willing may be religious, and be saved: it is not confined to men of learning. The way is so sweet, as sheweth it suitable to the end. It is but to believe God's love and promises

of salvation by Christ, till you are filled with love and its delights, and live in the pleasures of gratitude and holiness, and in the joyful hopes of endless glory ! and is not this an easy yoke ? Saith our heavenly poet, Mr. G. Herbert, in his poem called " Divinity."

As men for fear the stars should sleep and nod,
 And trip at night, have spheres supply'd ;
 As if a star were duller than a clod,
 Which knows his way without a guide ;
 Just so the other heaven they also serve,
 Divinity's transcendent sky,
 Which with the edge of wit they cut and carve,
 Reason triumphs, and faith lies by,
 — But all his doctrine which he taught and gave,
 Was clear as heav'n from whence it came ;
 At least those beams of truth which only save,
 Surpass in brightness any flame :
 Love God, and love your neighbours, watch and pray,
 Do as you would be done unto.
 O dark instructions ! even as dark as day !
 Who can these Gordian knots undo ?

CHAP. VIII.

INFERENCE 4. HOW LITTLE REASON UNGODLY
 MEN HAVE TO BE PROUD OF THEIR LEARNING,
 OR OF ANY SORT OF KNOWLEDGE OR WISDOM
 WHATSOEVER.

As the ancient Gnostics, being puffed up with their corrupt Platonic speculations, looked down with contempt upon ordinary Christians, as silly ignorants in comparison of themselves and yet had not wisdom enough to preserve them from the lusts and pollutions of the world ; even so is it with abundance of the worldly clergy and ungodly scholars in this age. They think their learning setteth them many degrees above the vulgar, and

giveth them right to be revered as the oracles or rabbies of the world ; when yet, poor souls ! they have not learned, by all their reading, studies and disputings to love God and holiness better than the riches and preferments of the world. And some of them not better than a cup of strong drink, or than the brutish pleasures of sense and flesh. It is a pitiful thing to see the pulpit made a stage for the ostentation of this self-shaming, self-condemning pride and folly : for a man under pretence of serving God, and helping other men to heaven, to make it his errand to tell the hearers, that he is a very wise and learned man, who hath not wit enough to choose a holy, humble life, nor to make sure of heaven, or to save his soul ; nor perhaps to keep out of the tavern or alehouse the next week, nor the same day to forbear the venting of his worldly, carnal mind : What is such learning but a game of imagination, in which the fantasy sports itself with names and notions ; or worse, the materials which are used in the service of sin, the fuel of pride, the blinder and deceiver of such as were too ignorant before, being a mere, shadow and name of knowledge ? What good will it do a man tormented with the gout, or stone, or by miserable poverty, to know the names of various herbs, or to read the titles of the apothecaries' boxes, or to read on a signpost, ' Here is a good ordinary.' And what good will it do a carnal, unsanctified soul that must be in hell for ever, to know the Hebrew roots or points, or to discourse of " *Cartesius's Materia Subtilis,*" and *Globuli Ætherei,*" &c. Or of " *Epicurus and Gassendus' Atoms,*" or to look on the planets in *Galileus' glasses,* while he

casteth away all his hopes of heaven, by his unbelief, and his preferring the pleasures of the flesh? Will it comfort a man that is cast out of God's presence, and condemned to utter darkness, to remember that he was once a good mathematician, or logician, or musician, or that he had wit to get riches and preferments in the world, and to climb up to the height of honour and dominion? It is a pitiful thing to hear a man boast of his wit, while he is madly rejecting the only felicity, forsaking God, courting vanity, and damning his soul: the Lord deliver us from such wit and learning! Is it not enough to refuse heaven, and choose hell (in the certain causes) to lose the only day of their hopes, and in the midst of light, to be incomparably worse than mad, but they must needs be accounted wise and learned, in all this self-destroying folly? As if (like the physician who boasted that he killed men according to the rules of art) it were the height of their ambition to go learnedly to hell—with reverend gravity and wit, to live here like brutes, and hereafter with devils for evermore.

CHAP. IX.

INFERENCE 5. WHY THE UNGODLY WORLD HATETH HOLINESS, AND NOT LEARNING.

FROM my very childhood, when I was first sensible of the concernments of men's souls, I was possessed with some admiration, to find that every where the religious, godly sort of people, who did but exercise a serious care of their own and other men's salvation, were made the wonder

and obloquy of the world ; especially of the most vicious and flagitious men ; so that they that professed the same articles of faith, the same commandments of God to be their law, and the same petitions of the Lord's-prayer to be their desire, and so professed the same religion, did every where revile those that endeavoured to live according to that same profession, and to seem to be in good earnest in what they said. I thought that this was impudent hypocrisy in the ungodly, worldly sort of men ! To take those for the most intolerable persons in the land, who are but serious in their own religion, and do but endeavour to perform what all their enemies also vow and promise. If religion be bad, and our faith be not true, why do these men profess it ? If it be true and good, why do they hate and revile them that would live in the serious practice of it, if they will not practise it themselves ? But we must not expect reason, when sin and sensuality have made men unreasonable.

But I must profess that since I observed the course of the world, and the concord of the word and providences of God, I took it for a notable proof of man's fall, and of the truth of the Scripture, and of the supernatural original of true sanctification, to find such an universal enmity between the holy, and the serpentine seed, and to find Cain and Abel's case so ordinarily exemplified, and he that is born after the flesh persecuting him that is born after the Spirit. And methinks to this day it is a great and visible help for the confirmation of our Christian faith.

Surely there is some special excellency in this holy knowledge, and love, and obedience, which

the devil and the malignant world so hate, in high and low, in rich and poor, in kindred, neighbours, strangers, or any, where they meet with it. It is the image of God; this it is that is contrary to their carnal minds, and to their fleshly lusts, and sinful pleasures. This tells them what they must be and do, or be undone for ever, which they cannot abide to be, or do, or think of.

Let us, therefore, be somewhat the wiser for this discovery of the mind of the devil and all his instruments. I will love and honour all natural, artificial, acquired excellencies in philology, philosophy and the rest: As these expose not men to the world's obloquy, so neither unto mine or any sober man's. In their low place they are good and may be used to a greater good. But let that holy knowledge and love be mine, which God most loveth, and the world most hateth, that costs us dearest upon earth, but hath the blessed end of a heavenly reward.

CHAP. X.

EXHORT. I. PLEAD NOT AGAINST LOVE, OR WORKS OF LOVE, UPON PRETENCE OF A CROSS INTEREST OF LEARNING, KNOWLEDGE, GIFTS, CHURCH-ORDER, DISCIPLINE, &c. OR ANY OTHER THING.

IF Love be that which is most amiable in us to the God of Love, then as nothing in the world can excuse him that is without it, nor render him lovely indeed to God and man, so nothing must be made a pretence against it: and no pretence

will excuse that man, or that society that is against it. Even corrections and severities, when they are used, must come from love, and be wholly ordered to the ends and interest of love. And when necessity calls for destructive executions, which tend not to the good of him that is executed, yet must they tend to the good of the community or of many, and come from a greater love than is due to one, or else that which otherwise would be laudable justice, is but cruelty.

1. LOVE is the life of religion, and of the soul, and of the church: and what can be a just pretence for any to destroy or oppose the very life of religion, the life of souls, and the life of the church of Christ? Phisic, blood-letting and dismembering, may be used for life; but to take away life, except necessary for a greater public good, is murder. And what is it that is better than the life of religion, in all matters of religion? Or than the life of the church, in all church-affairs? Or than the life of men's souls, in all matters of soul-concernment?

2. LOVE is the great command and summary of all the law: and what can be a just pretence for breaking the greatest command, yea, and the whole law?

3. LOVE is God's image; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, who is LOVE, and God in him: and what can be a pretence sufficient for destroying the image of God, which is called by his name?

4. There is nothing in man that God himself loveth better than our love: and therefore nothing better can be set against it.

And yet, alas, what enmity is used in the world

against the *Love* of God and man! and many things alledged as pretences to justify it! Let us consider of some few of them.

1. The great tyrants of the world, such as in several ages have been the plagues of their own and neighbour-nations, care not what havoc they make of religion, and of men's lives, by bloody wars, and cruel persecutions; Destroying many thousands, and undoing far more thousands of families where their armies come; and sacrificing the lives of the best of their subjects by butcheries or flames! and what is the pretence for all this? Perhaps they would be lords of more of the world, and would have larger kingdoms, or more honor. Perhaps some prince hath spoken a hard word of them, or done them some wrong. Perhaps some subjects believe not, as they bid them believe; or forbear not to worship God, in a manner which they forbid them. Perhaps Daniel will not give over praying for a time; or the apostles will not give over preaching; or the three confessors will not fall down to the golden image; and so Nebuchadnezzar or the rulers are despised: and their wills and honors are an interest that with them seems to warrant all this. But how long will it seem so? I had rather any friend of mine had the sins of a thief or drunkard, or the most infamous sinner among us to answer for, than the sins of a bloody Alexander, Cæsar, or Tamerlane.

1. The Roman clergy set up inquisitions, force men by cruelties to submit to their church-keys, whose very nature is opposed to force. They silence, yea, torment the faithful minis-

ters of Christ, and have murdered thousands of his faithful people, raised rebellions against princes, and wars in kingdoms: and taught men to hate God's servants, as heretics, schismatics, rebels, factious, and what not? And what pretence must justify all this? Why, the interest of the pope and clergy: called in ignorance, or craft, by the name of the *Holy-Church—Religion—Unity*, and such other honourable names! But must their church live on blood, and be built or preserved by the destruction of Christ's church? Must their doctrine be kept up, by silencing faithful ministers; and their worship by destroying or undoing the true worshippers of Christ? Are all these precious things which die with love, no better than to be sacrificed to the clergy's pride and worldly lusts?

Truth seldom dwelleth with the enemies of love and peace. They that are strangers and enemies to it, do indeed, often cry it up, and cry down those as enemies to it, that possess it. The wisdom that hath bitter envying and strife, is from beneath, and is earthly, sensual and devilish. I admonish all that care for their salvation, that they set up nothing upon love-killing terms. If you are Christ's disciples, you are taught of God to love each other, you are taught it as Christ's last and great commandment; you are taught it by the wonderful example of his life; and especially by washing his disciples' feet. (John xiii. 4.) You are taught it by the Holy Ghost's uniting the hearts of the disciples, and making them by charity to live as in community. (Acts iii; iv.) You are taught it by the effective operation of the Spirit on your own

hearts ; the new nature that is in you, inclineth you to it. And will you now pretend the necessity of your own interest, or reputation, your canons, and things indifferent ; your little church-orders of your own making, yea, or the positive institutions of Christ himself, as to any present exercise, against this love ? Hath Christ commanded you anything before it, except the love of God ? You say, if such and such men be suffered, this and that disorder and inconvenience will follow : but is it a greater thing than love that you would maintain ? Is it a greater evil than the destruction of love, that you would avoid ? Did not Christ prefer mercy before Sabbath-rest, and before the avoiding familiarity with sinners ? Pretend nothing against love, that is not better than love !

Object. ‘ But what is this to the love of God, which the text speaketh of ? ’

Answer. As God is here seen as in a glass, so he is loved. He that loveth not his brother whom he seeth daily, how shall he love God, whom he never saw ? He that saith he loveth God, and hateth his brother, is a liar ! What you do to his brethren you do as to Christ. If you can find as full a promise of salvation to those that observe your canons, ceremonies, orders, or are of your opinion and sect, as I can show you for them that love Christ and his servants, then prefer the former before love.

I know that the love and good of church and state and of many, must be preferred before the love and good of a few. But take heed of their hypocrisy that make these inconsistent, when they are not ; and make public good and peace

a mere pretence for their persecutions on one side, or their schisms on the other. Love is so agreeable to nature itself, that few of its enemies oppose it but under pretence of its own interest and name: it is from a pretended love to the church and to men's souls that the Inquisition hath murdered so many, and that the laws 'de heretiis comburendis' have been made and executed. But this burning, hanging, tormenting, and undoing kind of love, needs very clear proof to make good its name and pretences, before impartial men will take it for love indeed. Whatever good you may seem to do, by the detriment of love to God and man, you will find in the end it will not bear your charges.

CHAP XI.

EXHORT. 2. BEND ALL YOUR STUDIES AND LABOURS TO THE EXERCISE AND INCREASE OF LOVE, BOTH OF GOD AND MAN, AND ALL GOOD WORKS.

THE greatest, best and sweetest work should have the greatest diligence. This great commandment must be obeyed with the greatest care. The work of love must be the work of our whole life: if you cannot learn to pray and preach, no nor to follow a worldly trade, without study and much exercise, how think you to be proficient in the love of God without them? Do this well, and all is done. O happy souls that are habituated and daily exercised in this work: whose new nature, and life, and study, and business, is holy love.

1. This life of love is the true improvement of

all God's doctrines, ordinances, mercies, afflictions, and all other providences whatsoever! For the use of them all is to lead us up to holy love, and to help us in the daily exercise of it. What else is the Bible written for, but to teach us to love and to exercise the fruits of love? What came Christ from heaven for, but to demonstrate and reveal God's love and loveliness to man, by reconciling us to God, and freely pardoning all our sins, and promising us both grace and glory, to show us those motives which should enkindle love, to teach us, that God is most suitable and worthy of our love, and to fill us with the Spirit of love, which may give us that which he commandeth. What is it that we read books for, and hear sermons for, but to enkindle and exercise holy love? What join we for in the sacred worship of the assemblies, but that in an united flame of holy love we may all mount up in praise to Jehovah? What is the Lord's-day separated to, but the tidings of love, the sufferings, victories, and triumphs of the Saviour's love, the tastes and prospects of God's love to us, and the lively and joyful exercise of ours to him, and to each other? What use are the sacraments of, but that being entertained at the most wonderful feast of love, we should taste its sweetness, and pour out the grateful sense of it in holy thanksgiving and praise, and the exercise of fervent love to one another? What are church societies or combination for, but the loving communion of saints? which the primitive Christians expressed by *selling all, and living in a community of love*, and stedfastly continuing in the apostles' doctrine, and fellowship, in breaking

of bread and in prayer? What are all God's mercies for, but that as by love-tokens we should taste that he is love and goodness, and should thus be inclined to returns of love? Nay, what are civil societies, but loving communions, if used according to their natures? Did they not love each other, so many bees would never hive and work together, nor so many pigeons dwell peaceably in one dove-house, nor fly together in so great flocks. What is the whole Christian faith but, the doctrine of holy love, believed, for the kingdom and exercise of our love? What is faith itself but the bellows of love? What is the excellency of all good works, and gifts and endowments, but to be the exercises of love to God and man, and the incentives of our brethren's love? Without love all these are dead carcasses, and as nothing, and without it we ourselves are as nothing; yea though we give all that we have to the poor, or give our bodies like martyrs to be burnt, or could speak with the tongue (the orthodoxy and elegancy) of angels, we were but "as sounding brass, and as a tinkling cymbal." James knew what he said, when he declared that "Faith without works is dead," for without *love* it is dead, which those works are the body or the fruit of.

2. This life of love is the perfection of man's faculties as to their intended end and use. As all the operations of the lower faculties, vegetative and sensitive, are subordinate to the use and operations of the intellective part, which is the higher; so all the acts of the intellect itself, are but subservient and dirigent to the will, or to love and practice. The understanding is but the

eye by which the soul seeth what to love and to choose or refuse, and what to do or to avoid. Love is the highest act of our highest faculty, and complacency in the highest infinite good, is the highest of all the acts of love. This is the state of the soul in its ripeness and mellow sweetness, when it is delightful, embracing its most desired object; and is blessed in the fruition of its ultimate end. All other graces and duties are servants unto this: They are parts indeed of the same new creature, but the hands and feet are not the heart.

3. For love is the very foretaste of heaven; the beginning of that felicity which shall there be perfect. In heaven all saints shall be one; and all united to their glorious Head, disparities allowed, as he is united to the father. (John xvii. 24.) And what more united souls than those who love? Heaven is a state of joyful complacency; and what is that but perfect love? The heavenly work is perfect obedience and praise; and what are these but the actions and breath of love?

4. Therefore they that live this life of love, are fitter to die, and readier for heaven, than any others. Belief is a *foresight* of it; but love is a *foretaste*: the firstfruits, and our earnest and pledge. He that loveth God, and Christ, and angels, and saints, and perfect holiness, and divine praise, is ready for heaven, as the infant in the womb is ready for birth at the fulness of his time: But other Christians, whose love though true, is but little to their fears, damped by darkness, and too much love of the body and this world, these go as it were by untimely birth to

heaven; and those in whom the love of the body is predominant, come not thither, in that state at all. The God of Grace and glory will meet that soul with his felicitating embracements, who panteth and breatheth after him by love: and as love is a kind of union with the heavenly society, the angels who love us better than we love them, will be ready to convey such souls to God. As the living dwell not in the graves among the dead, and the dead are buried from among the living, so holy souls, who have this life of love, cannot be among the miserable in hell, nor the dead in sin, among the blessed.

Though glory be here but seminally in grace, and this world be but as the womb of that better world for which we hope, yet the life that is in the embryo and seed, is a confirming argument of the perfection which they tend to. O that men knew what holy love doth signify and foretel! As the embryo of a man becometh not a beast or serpent; so he that hath the habitual love of God, and heaven, and holiness is not capable of hell, no more than the lovers of worldliness and sensuality are capable of present communion with God, and of his glory. God doth not draw men's hearts to himself, nor kindle heavenly desires in them in vain. He that hath the Spirit of Christ, hath the witness in himself, that Christ and his promises of life are true. (1 John v. 10—12.) And what is this Spirit but the habit of divine and heavenly love, and its concomitants? May I but feel my soul inflamed with the fervent love of heavenly perfection, and surely it will do more to put me quite out of doubt of the certainty of that

blessed state, than all other arguments without that, can ever do.

6. Lastly, holy love is a pregnant, spreading, fruitful grace : it kindleth a desire to do good to others, and to draw men to love the same God and heaven and holiness which we love. It made God's Word to be to Jeremiah as a "burning fire shut up in his bones, he was weary of forbearing." (Jer. xx. 9.) As fire kindleth fire and is as I suppose, the active principle of vegetation, so love kindleth love, and is a kind of generative principle of grace. God's love is the first cause ; but man's love maketh them meet instruments of God's love : for love will be often praising that God and that holiness which is loved ; and earnestly desire that all others may love and praise the same. The soul is not indeed converted, till its love is won to God and goodness : a man may be terrified into some austerities, superstitions, or reformations ; but he is not further holy than his heart is won. And as LOVE is the heart of holiness, so must it be of all fruitful preaching and conversation : whatever the words or actions are, they are likely no farther to win souls, than they demonstrate the love of God, of holiness, and also that of the hearers or spectators.

Quest. ' But how should we reach this excellent life of holy love, which doth so far excel all knowledge ?'

Answ. I have said so much of this in the first part of my "Christian Directory," and other writings, that I must here say but little of it, lest I be overmuch guilty of repetitions. But briefly.

Direct. 1. Believe God's goodness to be equal

to his greatness. God's three great primary attributes are coequal, viz. his power, his wisdom, and his goodness: and then look up to the heavens, and think how great and powerful is that God that made and continueth such a frame, as that sun and stars, and those glorious unmeasurable regions where they are; think what a world of creatures God maintaineth in life on this lower orb of earth, both in the seas, and on the land. And then think, O what must be the goodness, which is equal to all this power!

Direct. 2. 'Consider how communicative this Infinite Goodness is: why else is he called LOVE itself?' Why else made he all the world? why did he make the sun so glorious? why else did he animate and beautify the universe with the life and ornaments of created goodness? All his works shine by the splendor of that excellency which he hath put upon them; all are not equal, but all are good, and their inequality belongeth to the goodness of the universe. The communicative nature with which God hath endowed all active beings, is an impress of infinite communicative LOVE. Fire would communicate its light heat and motion, to all passive objects which are capable of receiving it: how pregnant and fertile is the earth with plants, flowers and fruits of wonderful variety usefulness and beauty! what plant is not fitted for the propagation of its kind, yea, to a plentiful multiplication? How many seeds which are virtual plants, doth each of them bring forth at once; and yet the same plant, with all its offspring, perhaps liveth many years for further multiplication: so that did not the far greater

part of seeds yearly perish, there must be very many such earths to receive and propagate them : This earth hath no room for the hundreth part. The active natures even of vegetatives, do quite exceed in their pregnant communicative activity the receptive capacity of all passive matter, which teacheth us to observe that all created *patients* are inconceivably too narrow to receive such communicative influences, as Infinite LOVE can communicate, were there subjects to receive them.

It is wonderful to observe in all sorts of animals, the same multiplying communicative inclination. Uniting and communicative LOVE is in all creatures the incentive principle of life : What a multitude of young ones will some creatures procreate, especially fishes ! so that if other fishes, with men and other creatures, did not devour them, all the waters on earth could not contain them.

Yea, our moral communicativeness also hath the same indication : He that knoweth much, would fain have others know the same ; secret knowledge kept to ourselves hath its excellent use ; but it satisfieth not the mind, ' nisi te scire hoc sciat alter,' unless others know that you have such knowledge, and unless you can make them know what you know : Holy souls therefore have a fervent, but a regular desire, and endeavour by communicative teaching, to make others wise.

And even in affections, as well as knowledge, it is so : we would have others love those that we love, and hate that which we hate. But where through insufficiency, men must lose and

want that themselves, which they communicate to others, selfishness forbiddeth such communications.

And doubtless all the creatures in their several ranks, have some such impresses from the Creator, by which his transcendent perfections may be somewhat observed. That God is now so communicative as to give all creatures in the world, all the being, motion, life, order, beauty, harmony, reason, grace, or glory, any of them possess, is past all question to considering, sober reason. Which tempted Aristotle to think that the world was eternal; and some Christians to think that though this present heaven and earth were created, as in Genesis i. is said; yet that from eternity some intellectual world at least, if not also corporeal, did flow from the Creator as an eternal effect of an eternal cause: or an eternal accident of the Deity: because they could not conceive that a God so unspeakably communicative now (who hath made the sun to be an emblem of his communicativeness) should from all eternity be solitary and not communicative. But these are questions which incapable mortals had far better let alone than meddle with, unless we desire rather to be utterly lost than to be blessed in the abyss of eternity and Infinite pregnant LOVE.

But it is natural for man and every animal, to love that love and goodness which is beneficent, (not only to us, but to all) rather than a mere self-love, that doth no good to others, and it must needs conduce much to our love of God, to consider that "he is good to all, and that his mercy is over all his works:" that as there

is no light in the air but from the sun, so there is no goodness but from God in all the world, who is more to the creation than the sun is to this lower world. And a sun that lighteth all the earth, is much more precious than ones candle: a Nile which watereth the land of Egypt, is more precious than a private well; it is the excellency of kings and public persons, that if they are good, they are good to many: and O what innumerable animals in sea and land, besides the far greater worlds of nobler beings do continually love! O let us for ever study the Universal, Infinite Love.

Direct. 3. But Especially study Divine love and goodness in the face of our Redeemer Jesus Christ, and all the grace which he hath purchased and conferreth. As we may see that magnitude of the stars in a telescope, which without it no eye can discern; so may we see that glory of the love of God by the Gospel of Jesus, which all common natural helps are insufficient to discover to such minds as ours. Love is the great attribute which Christ came principally to manifest. (John iii. 16; 1 John iii. 1; &c.) And love is the great lesson which he came to teach us; and love is the new nature which by his Spirit he giveth us. And love is the great duty, which by law and gospel he requireth of us. Love hath wrought its miracles in Christ to the posing of the understandings of men and angels. There we may see God in the nearest condescending unity with man: In Christ we may see the Divine wisdom and word incorporate in such flesh as ours, conceived in a virgin by the power of the Spirit of Love; by which Spirit this incorporate Word did live,

preach, converse familiarly with man, work miracles, heal diseases, suffer reproachful calamities and death, rising, triumphing, ascending, interceding, sending the embassies of love to the world, calling home the greatest sinners unto God, reconciling enemies, and making them the adopted sons of God, forgiving all sin to penitent believers, quickening dead souls, illuminating the blind, and sanctifying the wicked by the Spirit of life, and light, and love; and making it his office, his work, his delight and glory, to rescue the miserable captives of the devil, and to make heirs of heaven of those that were condemned to hell and had forsaken life in forsaking God. As this is shining, burning love, so it is approaching and self-applying love; which cometh so near us, in ways and benefits so necessary to us, and so exceeding congruous to our case, as that it is easier for us to perceive and feel it, than we can do things of greater distance. The clearer the eye of faith is, by which we look into this mysterious glass, the more the wonders of love will be perceived in it. He never knew Christ, nor understood the Gospel, that wondered not at redeeming, saving love; nor did he ever learn of Christ indeed, that hath not learned the *work* and *life* of love.

Direct. 4. Keep as full records as you can of the particular mercies of God to yourselves; and frequently peruse them, and plead them with your frozen hearts.

These are not the chief reasons of Christian love; because we are such poor inconsiderable worms, that to do good to one of us, is a far smaller matter, than many things else that we

have to think of for that end. But yet when love doth choose a particular person for its object, and there bestow its obliging gifts, it helpeth that person far more than others to returns of thankfulness and love: it is that place, that glass which the sun doth shine upon, which reflects its beams, rather than those that are shut up in darkness. Self-love may and must be regulated and sanctified, to the furthering of higher love. It is not unmeet to say with David, (Psal. cxvi. 1,) "I love the Lord, because he hath heard the voice of my supplication." We should say as heartily, I love the Lord because he hath prospered, recovered, comforted my neighbour; but this is not so easy as the other. And where God by personal application maketh our greatest duty easy, we should use his helps.

Object. 'But if it be selfishness, as some tell us, to love one that loveth us, better than another of equal worth, who doth not love us, is it not selfishness to love God on so low an account as his loving us?

Answ. 1. You may love another the more for loving you, on several accounts. 1. As it is a duty which God requireth him to perform (but so you must love him equally for loving others also). 2. As he rendereth himself more congruous and obliging to you, by choosing you for special object of his love, by which he taketh the advantage of your natural self-love, to make your love to him both due and easy, as is said of the reflection of the sun-beams before.

2. But two things you must take heed of, 1. That you undervalue not your neighbour's good, but love another for loving your neighbours also

and doing him good; and he that arriveth at that impartial unity, so as to make the smallest difference between his neighbour and himself, doth seem to me to be arrived at the state that is most like theirs that are *one* in heaven. 2. And you must not over-love any man by a fond partiality for his love to you: as if that made a bad man good, or fitter for your love; they that can love the worst that love them, and cannot love the best that set light by them (deservedly, or upon mistake), do only shew that self-love overcometh the love of God. But God cannot be loved too much, though he may be loved too selfishly and carnally. His greatest amiableness is his essential goodness and infinite perfection; the next is, his glory shining in his universe, and so in the heavenly society, especially Christ and all his holy ones; and so in the public blessings of the world and all societies: And next his goodness to yourselves, not only as parts of the said societies, but as persons, whose natures are formed by God himself to a capacity of receiving and reflecting love.

Who findeth not by experience that God is most loved, when we are most sensible of his former love to us, in the thankful review of all his mercies, and assured or persuaded of his future love in our salvation? Therefore make the renewed commemoration of God's mercies, the incentives of your continual love.

Direct. 5. 'But yet could you get a greater union and communion not only with saints, as saints, but with mankind as men, it would greatly help you in your love to God: for when you love your neighbours as yourselves, you would

love God for your neighbour's mercies, as well as for your own. And if you feel that God's love and special mercies to one person, even to yourself, can do so much in causing your love, what would your love amount to, if thousand thousands of persons to whom God showeth mercy, were every one to you as yourselves, and all their mercies as your own? Thus graces mutually help each other. We love man, because we love God; and we love God the more for our love to man.

Direct. 6. Especially dwell by faith in heaven where love is perfect, and there you will learn more of the work of love. To think believingly that mutual love is heaven itself, and that this is our union with God, and Christ, and all the holy ones, and that love will be an everlasting employment, pleasure and felicity, this will breed in us a desire to begin that happy life on earth. And as he that heareth excellent music will long to draw near, and join in the concert; so he that by faith doth dwell much in heaven, and hear how angels and blessed souls do there praise God in the highest fervours of rejoicing love, will be inclined to imitate them, and long to partake of their felicity.

Direct. 7. Exercise that measure of love which you have in the constant praises of the God of love. For exercise exciteth, and naturally tendeth to increase, and praise is the duty in which pure love to God above ourselves and all, even as good and perfect in himself, is exercised. As love is the highest grace, or inward duty, so is praise the highest outward duty, when God is praised both by tongue and life.

And as soul and body make one man, of whose existence generation is the cause; so love and praise, of mouth and works, do make one saint, who is regenerated such by believing in the Redeemer, who hath power to give the Spirit of holiness to whom he pleaseth.

CHAP. XII.

EXHORT. 3. PLACE YOUR COMFORTS IN HEALTH AND SICKNESS IN MUTUAL DIVINE LOVE. SEE THAT YOU SINCERELY LOVE GOD. HOW KNOWN? DOUBTS ANSWERED.

IT is of the greatest importance to all mankind, to know what is best for them, and in what they should place and seek their comforts: to place them most with the proud, in the applauding thoughts or words of others, that magnify them for their wit, their beauty, their wealth, or their pomp and power in the world, is to choose somewhat less than a shadow for felicity, and to live on air, even an unconstant air. And will such a life be long or happy? Should not a man in misery rather take it for a stinging deriding mockery or abuse, to be honoured and praised for that which he hath not, or for that which is his snare and calamity? Would not a malefactor at the gallows take it for his reproach to hear an oration on his happiness? Will it comfort them in hell to be praised on earth? This common reason, may easily call an empty vanity.

To place our comfort in the delights of sensuality, had somewhat a fairer show of reason,

if reason were made for nothing better, and if these were the noble sort of pleasures that advanced man above the brutes and if they would continue for ever, and the end of such mirth were not heaviness and repentance, and they did not deprave and deceive men's souls; and leave behind them disappointment and a sting. But he is unworthy the honour and pleasures of humanity, who preferreth the low pleasures of a brute, when he may have those of a rational being.

To place our comforts in those riches which do but serve this sensuality with provisions, and leave posterity in as vain and dangerous a state as their progenitors were, is but the foresaid folly aggravated.

To place them in domination, and having our wills above others, and being able to do hurt, and exercise revenge, is but to account the devils happier than men, and to desire to be as the wolf among the sheep, or as the kite among the chickens, or as the great dogs among the little ones.

To place them in much knowledge of arts and sciences, as they concern only the interests of the body in this life, or as knowledge is but the delight of the natural fantasy or mind, doth seem a little finer, and more sublime and manly; but it is of the same nature and vanity as the rest. For all knowledge is for the guidance of the will and practice: and therefore the mere knowing matters that tend to pride, sensuality, wealth, of domination, is less than the enjoyment of sensual pleasures in the things themselves. And the contemplation which hath no other end than the delight of knowing, is but a more refined

sort of vanity, and like the mind's activity in a dream.

But whether it be the knowledge or the love of God, that man should place his highest felicity in, is become among the schoolmen and some other divines, a controversy that seemeth somewhat hard. But indeed to a considering man, the seeming difficulty may be easily overcome: the understanding and will and executive activity, are not several souls, but several faculties of one soul; and their objects and order of operation easily tell us which is the first, and which the last, which tendeth to the other as its end, and which object is the most delightful and most felicitating to the man, viz. That truth is for goodness, and that good *as good* is the amiable, delectable and felicitating object; and therefore that the intellect is the guide of the will, and that faith and knowledge are for love and its delight. And yet that man's felicity is in both, and not one alone, as one faculty alone is not the whole soul, though it be the whole soul that acteth upon that faculty. Therefore the latter schoolmen have many of them well confuted Aquinas in this point.

And it is of great importance to our Christian practice. As the desire of knowledge first corrupted our nature, so corrupted nature, is much more easily drawn to seek after knowledge than after love. Many men are bookish that cannot endure to be saints: many men spend their lives in the studies of nature and theology, and delight to find increase of knowledge, who are strangers to the sanctifying, uniting, delightful exercise of holy love. Appetite is the 'pon-

dus' or first spring of our moral actions, yea and of our natural, though the sense and intellect intronit or illuminate the object. And the first act of natural appetite, sensitive and intellectual, is necessitated. And accordingly the appetite as *pleased* is as much the end of our acts and objects, as the appetite as *desiring* is the beginning: even as ('*si parvis magno,*' &c.) God's will as *efficient* is the absolutely first cause, and his will as *done and pleased* is the ultimate end of all things. It is love by which man cleaveth unto God as good, and as our ultimate end. Love ever supposeth knowledge; and is its end and perfection. Neither alone, but both together are man's highest state; *knowledge* as discerning what is to be loved, and *love* as our uniting and delighting adherence to it.

1. Labour with all your might to know God, that you may love him; it is that love which must be your comforting grace, both by signification, and by its proper effective exercise. 1. True love will prove that your knowledge and faith are true and saving, which you will never be sure of, without the evidence of this and the consequent effects. If your expressive art or gifts be never so low, so that you scarcely know what to say to God or man, yet if you so far know God as sincerely to love him, it is certainly true saving knowledge, and that which is the beginning of eternal life. Knowledge, belief, repentance, humility, meekness, patience, zeal, diligence, &c. are so far and no further sure marks of salvation, than as they cause or prove true love to God and man predominant. It is a hard thing otherwise to know whether our knowledge, repentance,

patience, zeal, or any of the rest, be any better than what an unjustified person may attain: But if you can find that they cause or come from or accompany a sincere love of God, you may be sure that they all partake of sincerity, and are certain signs of a justified soul. It is hard to know what sins for number, or nature, or magnitude, are such as may or may not consist with a state of saving grace: He that considereth of the sins of Lot, David, Solomon, and Peter, will find the case exceeding difficult: But this much is sure, that so much sin may consist with a justified state, as may consist with sincere love to God and goodness. While a man truly loveth God above all, his sin may cause correction but not damnation; unless it could extinguish or overcome this love. Some question whether that the sin of Lot or David, for the present stood with justification: If it exclude not predominant habitual love, it intercepteth not justification: If we could tell whether any or many heathens that hear not of Christ, have the true love of God and holiness, we might know whether they are saved or not.

The reason is, because that the will is the man in God's account; and as voluntariness is essential to sin, so a holy will doth prove a holy person. God hath the heart of him that loveth him. He that loveth him would fain please him glorify him and enjoy him: and he that loveth holiness would fain live a holy life.

Therefore it is that divines say, that desire of grace is a certain sign of grace, because it is an act of will and love. And it is true, if that desire be greater or more powerful than our

averseness, and the desire after contrary things, that so it may put us on our necessary duty, and overcome the lusts and temptations which oppose them : though cold wishes which are conquered by greater unwillingness and prevailing lusts, will never save men.

2. And as love is our more comforting evidence, so it is our most comforting exercise. Those acts of religion which come short of this, come short of the proper life and sweetness of true religion. They are but either lightnings in the brain that have no heat ; or a feverish zeal, which destroyeth or troubleth, but doth not perform the acts of life ; or else even where love is true, but little, and oppressed by fears, and grief and trouble ; it is like fire in green wood, or like young green fruit, which is not come to mellow ripeness. Love of vanity is disappointing unsatisfactory and tormenting : most of the calamities of this life proceed from creature-love. The greatest tormentor in this world, is the inordinate love of life ; and the next, is the love of pleasures and accommodations of life : which cause so much care to get and keep, and so much fear of losing, especially the fear of dying ; were it not for this, our lives would be much easier to us (as they are to the fearless sort of brutes). And the next tormenting affection is the love of children, which prepareth men for all the calamity that followeth their miscarriages in soul and body : Their unnatural ingratitude, prodigality, folly or impiety would nothing so much torment us, were they no more loved than other men. And our dearest friends do usually cost us much dearer than our sharpest enemies. But

the love of God and satisfying everlasting good, is our very life, our pleasure, our *heaven on earth*. As it is purest and highest above all other, because of the object, so is it yet more pleasant and contenting; because it includeth the hopes of more, even of those greater delights of heavenly, everlasting love, which, as a pledge and earnest, it doth presignify. As in nature, conception supposes that same life is begun, which must shortly appear and be exercised in the open world; so the stirrings of holy love and desires towards God, do signify the beginning of the heavenly life.

Humility and patience, and diligent obedience, comfort us by way of evidence, and as removing many hindrances of our comfort; and somewhat further do they go. But faith, hope, and love, still comfort us by way of direct efficiency: faith seeth the matter of our joy; love first tasteth it, so far as to stir up desires after it; then hope giveth some pleasure to us in expecting it. And lastly, complacential love delightfully embraceth it, and is our very joy itself, and is that blessed union with God and holy souls, the amiable objects of true love, which is felicity itself.

I. In health and prosperity, as you live upon God's love, be sure that you do not atheistically overlook it, but take all as springing from it, and savouring of it. The hand of Divine love perfumeth each mercy with the pleasant odour of itself which it reacheth to us: every bit that we eat is a love-token: and every hour or minute that we live: all our health, wealth, friends, and peace, are the streams which still flow from the spring

of unexhausted love. Love shineth upon us by the sun ; love maketh our land fruitful, our cattle useful, our habitations convenient for us, our garments warm, our food pleasant and nourishing : Love keepeth us from a thousand unknown dangers night and day ; it giveth us the comforts of our callings, our company, our books, our lawful recreations : it blesseth means of knowledge to our understandings, and means of holiness to our will, and means of health and strength to our bodies. Mercies are sanctified to us, when we taste God's love in them, and love him for them, and are led up by them to himself ; and so love him ultimately for himself, even for his infinite essential goodness. As God is the *efficient* life of our mercies, (and all the world without his love could never give us what we have ;) so is God's love the *objective* life of all our mercies, and we should love them as such, if we love not in them the love that giveth them.

II. And even in adversity, and pain, and sickness, whilst God's love is unchanged, and is but changing the way of doing good, our thoughts of it should be unchanged also. We must not think that the sun is lost when it is set or clouded : we live by its influence in the night, though we see not its light, unless as reflected from the moon.

To live upon the comforts of Divine love in sickness, and when death approacheth ; is a sign that it is not the welfare of the body that we esteem ; and that we rejoice not in God only as the preserver and prosperer of our flesh, but for himself and the blessings of immortality.

It is a mercy indeed, which a dying man must with thankfulness acknowledge, if God has given him a clear understanding of the excellent mysteries of salvation. Knowledge, as it kindleth and promoteth love, is a precious gift of grace, and is with pleasure exercised, and may with pleasure be acknowledged. But all other knowledge is like the vanities of this world, which approaching death doth take down our esteem of, and causes us to number with other forsaking and forsaken things. All the unsanctified learning and knowledge in the world, will afford no solid peace at death; but rather aggravate nature's sorrows, to think that this also must be left. But love and its comforts, if not hindered by ignorance or some strong temptation, do then shew their immortal nature: and even here we feel the words of the apostle verified, of the vanishing nature of knowledge, and the perpetuity of holy love; whilst all our learning and knowledge will not give so much comfort to a dying man, as one act of true love to God, and holiness kindled in us by the communion of his love. Make it therefore the work of your religion and the work of your whole lives, to possess your minds with the liveliest sense of the infinite goodness and amiableness of God, and thereby to live in the constant exercise of love.

III. And though some men hinder love, by an over-fearful questioning whether they have it, and spend their time in doubting and complaining that they have it not, which they should spend in exciting and exercising it; yet reason requireth us to take heed lest a carnal mind deceive us with any counterfeits of holy

love. Of this I having written more in my "Christian Directory," I shall here give you these brief instructions following.

It is of grand importance, I. To have a true conception of God as he must be loved. II. And to know practically how it is that love must be exercised towards him.

I. GOD must be conceived at once, both 1. As in his essence. 2. And as in his relations to the world, and to ourselves. 3. And as in his works. Those that will separate these, and while they fix only on one of them, leave out the other, do not indeed love God as God, and as he should be loved.

1. To think in general, that there is an Infinite Eternal Spirit of Life, Light and Love; and not to think of him as related to the world as its Creator, Preserver, and Governor; nor as related to us and to mankind as our Owner, Ruler and Benefactor; is not to think of him as a God to us, or to any but himself: and a love thus exercised, cannot be true saving love.

2. And because his relations to us result from his works, either which he hath done already, or which he will do hereafter; therefore without the knowledge of his works, and their goodness, we cannot truly know and love God in his relations to us.

3. And yet when we know his works, we know but the medium, or that in which he himself is made known to us: and if by them we come not to know him, and to love him in his perfect essence; it is not God that we know and love. And if we knew him only as related to us and the world, (as that he is our Creator,

Owner, Mover, Ruler and Benefactor;) and yet know not what it is in his essence, that is thus related; (viz. that he is the Perfect First—Being—Life, Wisdom and Love;) this were not truly to know and love him as he is God. These conceptions therefore must be conjunct.

God is not here known to us, but by the revelation of his works and word; nor can we conceive of him, but by the similitude of some of his works: Not that we must think that he is just such as they, or picture him like a creature; for he is infinitely above them all: but yet it is certain that he hath made some impressions of his perfections upon his works; and in some of them so clear, as that they are called his own image.

Nothing is known to us, either, 1. By sense immediately perceiving things external, and representing them to the fantasy and intellect. Or, 2. By the intellect's own conceiving of other things by the similitude of things sensed. 3. Or by immediate internal intuition or sensation of the acts of the soul in itself. 4. Or by reason's collection of the nature of such perceived operations.

I. By the external senses we perceive all external sensed things, and we imagine and know them as so perceived.

II. By the intellection of these, we conceive of other things as like them; forming universal conceptions, and applying them to such individuals as are beyond the reach of our senses. (As we think of men, trees, beasts fishes, in the Indies, as like those which we have seen; and of sounds there, as like those which we have heard, &c.)

III. How sense itself, intellection itself, volition itself, and internal affections are perceived, is no small controversy among philosophers. That we do perceive them, by the great wisdom and goodness of our Creator, we are sure; but how we do it, we can scarcely describe; as knowing it better by the experience of that perception itself, than by a knowledge of the causes and nature of the acts. It is most commonly said, that the intellect knoweth its own acts by reflection, or, as Ockam saith, by intuition: and that it knoweth what sense is, and what volition is, by some species or image of them in the fantasy which it beholdeth. But such words give no man a true knowledge of the thing inquired of, unless withal he read the solution experimentally in his own soul. I know not what the meaning of a reflect act is: is it the same act that is called direct and reflect? and doth the intellect know, that it knoweth, by the very same act by which it knoweth other things? If so, why is it called reflect; and what is that reflection! But the contrary is commonly said, that divers objects make divers acts; and therefore to know *e. g.* that this is paper, and to know that I know this, are two acts, and the latter is a reflecting of the former. But the former act is gone, and nothing, in the instant that it is done; and therefore is in itself no intelligible object of a reflecting act: But, as remembered, it may be known; or rather, that remembering is knowing what is past, by a marvellous retention of some impress of it, which no man can well comprehend, so as to give an account of it. And why may not the same memory, which retaineth

the unexpressible record of an act past in an hour or many years ago, be also the book where the intellect readeth its own act as past immediately in the foregoing instance? But surely this is not the first knowing, that we know. Before the act of memory, the intellect immediately perceiveth its own particular acts; and so doth the sense. By one and the same act, we see, and perceive we see; and by one and the same act, I think that we know, and *know that we know*; and this by a consciousness or internal sense, which is the immediate act of the essence of the faculty.

IV. The soul thus knowing or feeling its own acts, doth in the next place rationally gather, 1. That it hath power to perform them, and is a substance so empowered. 2. That there are other such substances with the like acts. 3. And that there is one prime transcendant substance, which is the cause of all the rest and that hath infinitely nobler acts than ours.

And thus sense and reason concur to our knowledge of God, by perceiving and shewing us that image, in which by similitude we must know him. The fiery, etherial or solar nature, is at least the similitude: God in Scripture is called LIGHT, and the FATHER of LIGHTS in whom is no darkness, allowing and inviting us to think of his glory by the similitude of the sun or light. But intellectual spirits are the highest nature known to us, and these we know intimately by most near perception; by the similitude of these therefore we must conceive of God.

A soul is a self-moving life or vital substance,

actuating the body to which it is united. God is super-eminent essential life, perfect in himself, as living infinitely and eternally, and giving being to all that is, and motion to all that moveth, and life to all that liveth.

A reasonable soul is essentially an understanding power : and God is super-eminently an infinite understanding, knowing himself and all things perfectly.

A reasonable soul is essentially a rational appetite or will, necessarily loving itself, and all that is apprehended every way, and congruously good. God is super-eminently an infinite will or love, necessarily loving himself ; and his own image, which yet he freely made by communicative love.

All things that were made by this Infinite Goodness, were made good and *very good*. All his works of creation and providence (however misconceived of by sinners) are still very good. All the good of the whole creation is as the heat of this Infinite Eternal Fire of Love. And having made the world good, in the good of nature, and the good of order, and the good of mutual love, he doth by his continual influx maintain and perfect it. His power moveth, his wisdom governeth, and his love felicitateth. And man he moveth as man, he ruleth him by moral laws as man ; and he is his perfect lover, and perfect amiable object and end :—As our Creator, making us in this natural capacity and relation ; as our Redeemer, restoring and advancing us to blessed union with himself ; and as our sanctifier and glorifier preparing us for, and bringing us to, celestial perfection. And thus must God

be conceived of that we may properly love him : false and defective conceptions of him, are the great impediments of our love : and we love him so little, because we so little know him : therefore it is not the true knowledge of God which St. Paul here maketh a competitor with love.

II. And as we know God by ascending from his works and image, in the same order must our love ascend. The first acts of it will be towards God in his works, and the next will be towards God in his relation to us, and the highest towards God as essentially perfect, and amiable in himself.

I will therefore now apply this to the soul that feareth lest he love not God, because he perceiveth not himself either to know or love him immediately in the perfection of his essence.

1. Do you truly love the image of God on the soul of man ? that is a heavenly life, and light, and love ! Do you not only from bare conviction commend, but truly love a soul devoted to God, full of his love, and living in obedience to his laws, and doing good to others according to his power ? This is to love God in his image ! God is infinite power, wisdom and goodness, or love : to love true wisdom and goodness as such, is to love God in his works.

Especially with these two qualifications ; 1. Do you love to possess wisdom and goodness ? —Is your love as universal as possible ? Do you long to have families, cities, kingdoms, and all the world, made truly holy, wise, and united in love to one another ? The most universal wisdom and goodness is most like to God ; and to love this is to love God in his image.

2. Do you love wisdom and goodness in yourselves, and not in others only? Do you long to be most like to God in your capacity, and more near to him and more united to him? that is, do you long to know him, and his will more clearly, to enjoy a holy communion with him, and his holy ones in the fullest mutual love, (loving and being beloved) and to delight your souls in his joyful praises in the communion of saints? **THIS IS CERTAINLY THE LOVE OF GOD.** Our union is by love: He that would be united to God and his saints in Jesus Christ,—that would fain know him more, and love him better, and praise and obey him joyfully in perfection, doth undoubtedly love him.

And here I would earnestly caution you against two common deceits of men by counterfeit love.

1. Some think that they love God savingly, because they love him as the God of nature, and the cause of all the being, order and goodness which is in the whole frame of heaven and earth; this is to love somewhat of God, or to love him 'secundum quid,' in one respect: but if they love him not also as he is the **WISE** and **HOLY**, and **RIGHTEOUS** Ruler of mankind, and as he requireth us to be holy, and would make us holy: and regard not to please his governing will; they love him not as God with a saving love. I have elsewhere mentioned the saying of Adrian (afterwards Pope) in his *Quod lib*: that an unholy person may not only love God, as he is the glorious cause of the world and of natural good, but may rather choose to be himself annihilated, and be no man, than that there should be no God, were it a thing that could be made the matter of

his choice : and indeed I dare not say that every man is holy, who had rather be annihilated than that one kingdom should be annihilated, when many heathens would die to save their country or their prince ; much less dare I say that all shall be saved that had rather be annihilated than there should be no world, or be no God : but, saith the aforesaid schoolman, it is the love of God as our Holy Governor, and a love of his holy will, and of our conformity thereto, that is saving love.

II. And I fear that no small number do deceive themselves in thinking that they love holiness, as the image of God in themselves and others, when they understand not truly what holiness is, but take something for it that it is not. Holiness is a uniting love to God and man and a desire of more perfect union ! To love holiness, is to love this love itself ; to love all of God that is in the world, and to desire that all men may be united in holy love to God and one another, and live in his praise, and the obedience of his will. But I fear too many take up some opinions that are stricter than other men's, and call some things sin, which others do not, and get a high esteem of some particular church, order and form, or manner of worshipping God, which is not the essence of holiness, and then they take themselves for a holy people, and other men for loose and profane, and so they love their own societies, for this which they mistake for holiness : and instead of that uniting love which is holiness indeed, they grow into factious enmity to others, reproaching them and rejoicing in their hurt, as taking them for the enemies of God.

2. And as God must be loved in his image on his servants, so must he in his image on his Word. Do you love the holy laws of God, as they express that holy wisdom and love, which is his perfection? Do you love them as they would rule the world in holiness, and bring mankind to true wisdom and mutual love? Do you love this Word as it would make you wise and holy; and therefore love it most when you use it most, in reading, hearing, meditation and practice. Surely to love the wisdom and holiness of God's laws and promises, is to love God in his image there imprinted, even in that glass where he hath purposely shewed us that of himself which we must love.

3. But no where is God's image so refulgent to us, as in his Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ; in him therefore must God be loved: Though we never saw him, yet what he was, even the holy Son of God, separate from sinners, the Gospel doth make known to us: as also what wondrous love he hath manifested to lost mankind: in him are all the treasures of wisdom and goodness: both an example, and a doctrine, and a law of wisdom. Holiness and peace, he hath given to the world: In this Gospel faith seeth him, yea, seeth him as now glorified in heaven, and made Head over all things to the Church; the King of Love, the great High Priest of Love, the Teacher of Love, and the express Image of the Father's person. Are the thoughts of this glorious image of God now pleasing to you, and is the wisdom, holiness, and love of Christ now amiable to you in believing? If so, you love God in his blessed Son: And as he that hath seen

the Son hath seen the Father, so he that loveth the Son, loveth the Father also.

4. Yet further, the glory of God will shine most clearly in the celestial glorified Church, containing Christ and all the blessed angels and saints, who shall for ever see the glory of God, and love, obey and praise him, in perfect unity, harmony and fervency! You see not this heavenly society and glory, but the Gospel revealeth it, and faith believeth it: doth not this blessed company, and their holy work seem to you the most lovely in all the world? Is it not pleasing to you to think in what perfect joy and concord they love and magnify God, without all sinful ignorance, disaffection, dullness, discord, or any other culpable imperfection? I ask not only whether your opinion will make you say that this society and state is best; but whether you do not so really esteem it, as that it hath the pleasing desires of your souls? Would you not fain be one of them, and be united to them, and join in their perfect love and praise? If so, this is to love God in that most glorious appearance, where he will shew forth himself to man, to be beloved.

But here true believers may be stopped with doubting, because they are unwilling to die, and until we die, this glory is not seen. But it is one thing to love heaven and God there manifested, and another thing to love death which standeth in the way. Nature teacheth us to loathe death as death, and to desire if it might be, that this cup might pass by us. Though faith make it less dreadful, because of the blessed state that followeth: but he hath loveth not blood-letting, or physic, may love *health*. It is not death, but

God and the heavenly perfection in glory which we are called to love. What if you could come to this glory without dying, as Enoch and Elias did, would you not be willing to go thither?

5. And he that loveth God in all these his appearances to man in his works: and in the image on his saints in the wisdom, holiness and goodness of his word, in the wisdom, love and holiness of his Son, and in the perfection of his glory in the heavenly society; doth certainly also love him in the highest respect; even as he is himself that blessed Essence, that perfect Greatness, Wisdom and Goodness, or Life, Light and Love, which is the beginning and end of all things, the most amiable object of all illuminated minds, and of every sanctified will, and of all our harmonious and delightful praise for ever. For whatever become of that dispute, whether we shall see God's essence in itself, as distinct from all created glory, (the word *seeing* being here ambiguous) it is sure that we can even now have abstracted thoughts of the essence of God as distinct from all creatures, and our knowledge of him then will be far more perfect.

It should be more pleasant to every believer to think that God is; even that such a perfect glorious being is existent: than as if we heard of one man in another land, whom we were never likely to see, who in wisdom, love, and all perfections excelled all men that ever were in the world; the thoughts of that man would be pleasing to us, and we should love him, because he is amiable in his excellency: And so doth the holy soul when it thinketh of the infinite amiableness of God.

6. But the highest love of the soul to God, is

in taking in all his amiableness together, and when we think of him as related to *ourselves*, as our Creator, Redeemer, Sanctifier and Glorifier, and as related to all his Church, and *to all the world*, as the cause and end of all that is amiable ; and when we think of all those amiable works which these relations respect, his creation and conservation of the whole world, his redemption of mankind, his sanctifying and glorifying of all his chosen ones, his wonderful mercies to ourselves in soul and body, his mercies to his Church on earth, his inconceivable mercies to the glorified Church in heaven, the glory of Christ, angels, and men, and their perfect knowledge, love, and joyful praises ; and then think what that God is in himself that doth all this : such considerations causeth the fullest love to God, and though unlearned persons cannot speak or think of all these distinctly and clearly, as the Scripture doth express them, yet all this is truly the object of their love, though with confusion of their apprehensions of it.

CHAP. XIII.

THE SECOND PART OF THE EXHORTATION :—

REST IN THIS, THAT YOU ARE KNOWN WITH
LOVE TO GOD.

2. To be KNOWN OF GOD here signifieth to be approved and loved of him, and consequently that all our concerns are perfectly known to him and regarded by him.

This is the full and final comfort of a believer. Our *knowledge* and *love* of God, in which we

are agents, are, 1. That we are known with love to God, by way of comfort and evidence. 2. And they are our comfort in their very exercise. But the chief part of our comfort is from God, not only as the object of our love, but as the lover of us and all his saints, even in our passive receiving of the blessed effects of his love for ever: when a Christian therefore hath any discerning of his interest in this love of God, by finding that he loveth *God and goodness*, here he must finally anchor his soul, and quietly rest in all temptations, difficulties and tribulations.

1. Our enemies know us not, but judge of us by blinding interest, and the bias of their false opinions, and by an easy belief of false report, or by their own ungrounded suspicions: therefore we are odious to them, and abused, slandered and persecuted by them. But God knoweth us, and will justify our righteousness, and bring all our innocency into light, and stop the mouth of all injustice and iniquity.

2. Strangers know us not, but receive such characters of us as are brought to them with the greatest advantage: and even good men may think and speak evil of us (as Bernard and others did of the Waldenses, and as many of the fathers did many godly men that were called heretics, and many called such fathers heretics). But to us it is a small thing to be judged of man, who is not our final judge and knoweth not our cause, and is ready to be judged with us; we have one that judgeth us and them, even the omniscient God, who "knoweth whereof we are made," and every circumstance concerning us.

3. Our very friends know us not ; no not they that dwell with us : in some things they judge us better than we are, and in some things worse : for they know not our hearts ; and interests and cross dispositions may deceive them ; and even our bosom friends may slander us and think they speak the truth.

And when they entirely love us, their love may hurt us, while they know not what is for our good ; but God knoweth us perfectly, and knoweth how to counsel us, conduct us, and dispose of us ; he seeth the inward and the outward, the full state of our case, which our dearest friends are utter strangers to.

4. We know not ourselves thoroughly, nor our own concerns : we oft take ourselves to be better or worse than indeed we are : we are oft mistaken in our own hearts, and our own actions, and in our own interest : we oft take that to be good for us that is bad, and that to be bad which is good and necessary. We long for that which would undo us, and fear and fly from that which would save us : we oft rejoice when we are going to the slaughter, or are at least in the greatest danger ; and we lament and cry when God is saving us, because we know not what he is doing. Paul saith, " I know nothing by myself, I judge not my ownself : " That is, though I have a good conscience, yet that is not my final judge : it must go with me as God judgeth of me, and not as others or myself.

Is it not then an unspeakable comfort in all these cases, that we are known of God ?

Desiring to know inordinately for ourselves, was our first sin ; and this sin is our danger, and

our constant trouble : but to be to God as a *child* to his *father*, who taketh care to love him and obey him, and in all things trusteth his father's love, as knowing that he careth for him, this is our duty, our interest, and our only peace.

Remember then with comfort, O my soul, 1. Thy father knoweth what it is fittest for thee to do. His precepts are wise, and just, and good : thou knowest nothing but by his word. Love, therefore, and submit to all his laws : the strictest of them are for thy good : Thy Guide, and not thou, must lead the way ; go not before him, nor without him ; nor stay behind him : in this night and wilderness, if thou have not his light and presence, how forlorn, erroneous and comfortless wilt thou be ? He knoweth thy heart, and knoweth thy enemies, temptations and dangers, and therefore best knoweth how to guide thee, and how to frame his laws and thy duty.

2. He knoweth what place, what state of life, of health, of wealth, of friends is best for thee. None of these are known to thee : He knoweth whether ease or pain be best : the flesh is no fit judge, nor an ignorant mind : that is best which will prove best at last : And that he that foreknoweth all events only knoweth. That, therefore, is best which Infinite Wisdom and Love doth choose. Ease and pain will have their end : it is the *end* that must teach us how to estimate them : and who but God can foretel thee of the end ?

He knoweth whether liberty or imprisonment be best : Liberty is a prison, if sin prevail, and God be not there. A prison is a palace, if God by his love dwell there with us. There is

no thralldom but in sin and God's displeasure ; and no true liberty but in his love.

3. He knoweth whether honour or dishonour be best for thee : If the esteem of men may facilitate their reception of the saving truth of God which is preached to them, God will procure it, if he have work to do by it ; if not, how little is it to be regarded ! What doth it add to me to be highly esteemed or applauded by men, who are hasting to the dust, where their thoughts of me and all the world are at an end ? When I see the skulls of the dead, who perhaps once knew me, how little doth it now concern me what thoughts of me were once within that skull ? And as for the immortal soul, if it be in the world of light, it judgeth by his light as God judgeth : if in hell, I have no more cause to be troubled at their malice than at the devil's ; and I have little cause to rejoice that such damned souls did once applaud me.

O miserable men, that have no better than the hypocrites' reward, to be seen and honoured of men ! God's approbation is the felicitating honour ! He will own all in me that is his own, and all that he owneth is everlastingly honoured. " The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous ; " (Psal. i. 6 ;) for it is his way ; the way which he prescribed them, and in which he did conduct them. Good and evil are now so mixed in me, that it is hard for me fully to discern them : but the all-seeing God doth discern them, and will separate them.

4. Thy heavenly Father knoweth whether it be best for thee to abound or want : and with what measure of worldly things it is fittest for thee to

be intrusted. Abundance hath abundant snares, and cares, and troubling employments which divert our thoughts from things of real and perpetual worth : provision is desirable according to its usefulness to our work and end : It is far better to need little and have little, than to have much, and need all ; for it cannot be got, or kept, or used, without some troublesome and hurtful effects of its vanity and vexation. Let the foolish desire to be tired and burdened with provision, and lose the prize by turning their helps into a snare, and miss the end by overloving the way : my Father knoweth what I want, and he is always able to supply me with a word : it doth not impoverish him to maintain all the world. His store is not diminished by communication. "The Lord is my Shepherd, what then can I need?" (Psal. xxii. 1.) How often have I found that he careth for me, and that it is better to be at his keeping and provision, than to have been my own carver, and to have cared for myself ! Blessed be my bounteous Father who hath brought me so near to the end of my race, with very little care for provision in my way, and with less want : necessaries I never wanted, and superfluities are not required. Blessed be that wise and gracious Lord that hath not given me up to greedy desires, nor insnared and burdened me with needless plenty. How safe, how easy and comfortable a life is it, to live in the family of such a Father, and with a thankful carelessness to trust his will, and take that portion as best which he provideth for us ! and into what misery do foolish prodigals run, who had

rather have their portion in their own hand than in their father's!

5. Thy heavenly Father knoweth with what kind and measure of trials and temptations it is fit that thou shouldest be exercised: it is his work to permit them: it is thy work to beg his grace to overcome them, and watchfully and constantly to make resistance, and in trial to approve thy faithfulness to God: "Blessed are they that endure temptations; for when they are tried they shall receive the crown of life." (James i.) If he will try thee by bodily pain and sickness, he can make it turn to the health of thy soul: perhaps thy bodily diseases have prevented some mortal soul-diseases which thou didst not fear. If he will try thee by men's malice, injury or persecutions, he knoweth how to turn it to thy good; and in season to bring thee out of trouble: he will teach thee by other men's wickedness to know what grace hath cured or prevented in thyself; and to know the need of trusting in God alone, and appealing to his desirable judgment: he that biddeth thee, when thou art reviled and persecuted and loaded with false reports for righteousness sake, to rejoice and be exceedingly glad because of the great reward in heaven: can easily give thee what he doth command, and make thy sufferings a help to this exceeding joy.

If he will try thee by Satan's molesting temptations, and suffer him to buffet thee, or break thy peace by melancholy disquietments and vexatious thoughts, from which he hath hitherto

kept thee free, he doth but tell thee from how much greater evil he hath delivered thee, and make thy fears of hell a means to prevent it, and call thee to thy Saviour to seek for safety and peace in him.

If it please him to permit the malicious tempter to urge thy thoughts to blasphemy, or other dreadful sin (as it ordinarily falleth out with the melancholy), it telleth thee from what malice grace preserveth thee, and what Satan would do were he let loose: it calleth thee to remember that thy Saviour himself was tempted by Satan to as great sin as ever thou wast, even to worship the devil himself; and that he suffered him to carry about his body from place to place, which he never did by thee: it tells thee therefore that it is not sin to be tempted to sin, but to consent, and that Satan's sin is not laid to our charge: and though our corruption is such, as that we seldom are tempted, but some culpable blot is left behind in us, for we cannot say as Christ, that Satan hath nothing in us; yet no sin is less dangerous to man's damnation, than the melancholy thoughts which such horrid vexatious temptations cause; both because the person being distempered by a disease, is not voluntary in what he doth; and also because he is so far from loving and desiring such kind of sins, that it is the very burden of his life; they make him weary of himself, and he daily groaneth to be delivered from them. It is certain that affection and desire is the damning malignity of sin; that there is no more sin than there is will; and that no sin shall damn men which they had rather leave than keep; and therefore forgiveness is

joined to repentance: drunkards, fornicators, worldlings and ambitious men, love their sin: but a poor melancholy soul that is tempted to ill thoughts, or to despair, or terror, or to excessive griefs, is far from loving such a state. The case of such is sad at present: but O how much sadder is the case of those that are lovers of pleasure more than of God, and who revel and delight in sin.

6. God knoweth how long it is best for us to live. Leave then the determination of the time to him; all men come into the world on the condition of going out again: die we must, and is it not fitter that God choose the time than we? Were it left to our wills how long we should live on earth, alas, how long should many of us be kept out of heaven, by our own desires! And too many would stay here till misery made them impatient of living. But our lives are his gift, and in his hand who knoweth the use of them, and knoweth how to proportion them to that use which is the just measure of them. He chose the time and place of my birth,—and he chooseth best: why should I not also willingly leave to his choice the time, and place, and manner of my departure. I am known of him; and my concerns are not despised by him: He knoweth me as his own, and as his own he hath used me, and as his own he will receive me. “The Lord knoweth the days of the upright, and their inheritance shall be for ever.” (Psal. xxxvii. 18.) And if he bring me to death through long and painful sickness, he knoweth why it is; that all may end in my salvation. “He knoweth the way that is with me, and when he

hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." (Job xxiii. 10.) He forsaketh us not in sickness or in death. "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him; for he knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are dust: as for man his days are as grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth: for the wind passeth over it, and it is not, and the place thereof, shall know it no more: but the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting to them that fear him." If the ox should not know his owner, nor the ass his master's crib, the OWNER will know his OWN and seek them. That we understand and know the Lord, is matter of greater joy and glorying, than all other wisdom or riches in the world. (Jer. ix. 24.) But that he knoweth us in life and death, on *earth* and in *heaven*, is the top of our rejoicing. "The Lord is good; and our strength in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him." (Nah. i. 7.) Sickness may so change my flesh that even my neighbours shall not know me; and death will make the change so great, that even my friends will be unwilling to see so unpleasing, and loathsome a spectacle: but while I am carried by them to the place of darkness, that I may not be an annoyance to the living, I shall be there in the sight of God, and my bones and dust shall be owned by him, and none of them shall be forgotten or lost.

7. It may be that under the temptations of Satan, or in the languishing weakness or distempers of my flesh, I may doubt of the love of God, and think that he hath withdrawn his mercy from me; or at least may be unmeet to taste the

sweetness of his love, or to meditate on his truth and mercies: but God will not lose his knowledge nor turn away his mercy from me. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his; and let him that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." (2 Tim. ii. 19.) He can call me his child, when I doubt whether I can call him Father: he doubteth not of his right to me, nor of his graces in me, when I doubt of my sincerity in him. "Known unto God are all his works." (Acts xv. 18.) What meaneth Paul thus to describe a state of grace. (Gal. iv. 9.) "Now after ye have known God, or rather are known of God?" but to notify to us, that though our knowledge of God be his grace in us, and our evidence of his love and the beginning of life eternal, (John xvii. 3,) yet that we are loved and known of him is the first and last, the foundation and the perfection of our security and felicity. He knoweth his sheep, and none shall take them out of his hand. When I cannot through pain or distemper remember him, or not with renewed joy or pleasure, he will remember me and delight to do me good, and to be my salvation.

8. And though the belief of the unseen world be the principle by which I conquer this, yet are my conceptions of it lamentably dark: a soul in flesh, which acteth as the form of a body, is not furnished with such images, helps or light, by which it can have clear conceptions of the state and operations of separated souls: but I am known of God, when my knowledge of him is dark and small: and he knoweth whither

he will take me, and what my state and work shall be! He that is preparing a place for me with himself, is well acquainted with it and me; all souls are his, and therefore all are known to him: He that is now the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, as being living with him while they are dead to us, will receive my departing soul to them, and to himself, to be with Christ, which he hath instructed me to commend into his hands, and to desire him to receive.—He that is now making us living stones for the New Jerusalem, and his heavenly Temple, doth know where every one of us shall be placed: And his knowledge must now be my satisfaction and my peace. Let unbelievers say, “How doth God know?” (Psal. lxxiii. 11.) But shall I doubt whether he that made the sun, be Father of Lights, and whether he know his dwelling, and his continued works? Be still, O my soul, and know that he is God, (Psal. xl. 10,) and when he hath guided thee by his counsel, he will take the glory; and in his light thou shalt have light: and though now it appear not, to sight, but to faith only, what we shall be, yet we know that we shall see him as he is, and we shall appear with him in glory.

And to be KNOWN of God, undoubtedly includeth his PRACTICAL LOVE, which secureth our salvation and all that tendeth thereunto. It is not meant of such a knowledge only as he hath of all things, or of such as he hath of the ungodly. Why then should it be hard to thee, O my soul, to be persuaded of the love of God?

Is it strange that he should love thee who is Essential Infinite Love, any more than the sun

should shine upon thee, which shineth upon all capable, recipients though not upon the incapable, which through interposing objects cannot receive it? To believe that Satan or wicked men, or deadly enemies should love me, is hard: but to believe that the God of Love doth love me, should in reason be much easier than to believe that my father or mother, or dearest friend in the world, doth love me: if I do not make and continue myself incapable of his complacency by my wilful continued refusing of his grace, it is not possible that I should be deprived of it. (Prov. viii. 17.) "I love them that love me." (Psal. cxlvi. 8.) "The Lord loveth the righteous." John xvi. 27.)

2. Why should it be hard to thee to believe that He loveth thee, who doth good so universally to the world, and by his love doth preserve the whole creation, and give all creatures all the good which they possess? When "his mercy is over all his works," and his goodness is equal to his wisdom and his power, and all the world is beautified by it, shall I not easily believe that it will extend to me? "The Lord is good to all." (Psal. cxlv. 9; Luke xviii. 19.) None is good (essentially, absolutely and transcendently,) but he alone. "The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord." (Psal. xxxiii. 5.) "The goodness of God endureth continually." Psal. lii. 1.) "He is good and doth good." (Psal. cxix. 68.) And shall I not expect good from so good a God, the cause of all the good that is in the world?

3. Why should I not believe that He will love me, who so far loved the world, yea, his enemies,

as to give his only begotten Son, "That whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John iii. 16.) Having given me so precious a gift as his Son, will he think anything too good to give me? (Rom. viii. 32.) Yea, still he followeth his *enemies* with his mercies, not leaving himself without witness to them; but filling their hearts with food and gladness, and causing his *sun to shine on them*, and his *rain to fall on them*, and by his goodness leading them to repentance.

4. Why should I not easily believe his love, which he hath sealed by that certain gift of love, the Spirit of Christ, which he hath given? "The giving of the Holy Ghost is the shedding abroad of his love upon the heart." (Rom. 5.) I had never known, desired, loved, nor served him sincerely, but by that Spirit: and will he deny his name, his mark, his seal, his pledge, and earnest of eternal life? Could I ever have truly loved him, his word, his ways and servants, but by the reflection of his love? Shall I question whether he loves those whom he caused to love him? When our love is the surest gift and token of his love; shall I think that I can love him more than he loveth me; or be more willing to serve him than he is willing and ready to reward his servants? (Heb. xi. 6; 1 John iii. 24; iv. 13.)

5. Shall I not easily hope for good from Him, who hath made such a covenant of grace with me in Christ? Who giveth me what his Son hath purchased, who accepteth me in his most beloved, as a member of his Son? Who hath bid me ask, and I shall have? And hath made

to *godliness*, the promise of this life, and that to come; and will withhold no good thing from them that walk uprightly? Will not such a Gospel, such a covenant, such promises of love, assure me that he loveth me, while I consent to his covenant terms?

6. Shall I not easily believe that he will love me, who hath loved me while I was his enemy, and called me home when I went astray, and mercifully received me when I returned? Who hath given me a life full of precious mercies, and so many experiences of his love as I have enjoyed, who hath so often signified his love to my conscience; so often heard my prayers in distress, and hath made all my life, notwithstanding my sins, a continual wonder of his mercies. O unthankful soul, if all this will not persuade thee of the love of him that gave it! I that can do little good to any one, yet have abundance of friends and hearers, who easily believe that I would do them good, were it in my power; and never fear that I should do them harm. And shall it be harder to me to think well of Infinite Love and Goodness, than for my neighbours to trust me, and think well of such a wretch as I? O what abundance of love-tokens have I yet to show, which were sent me from heaven, to persuade me of my Father's love and care!

7. Shall I not easily believe and trust His love, who hath promised me eternal glory with his Son, and with all his holy ones in heaven! Who hath given me there, a great Intercessor to prepare heaven for me, and me for it; and there to appear for me before God. Who hath already

brought many millions of blessed souls to that glory who were once as bad and as low as I am! And who hath given me already the seal, the pledge, the earnest and the firstfruits of that felicity!

Therefore, O my soul, if men will not know thee;—if hated of all men for the cause of Christ and righteousness;—if thine uprightness be imputed to thee as an odious crime; if thou be judged by the blind malignant world, according to its gall and interest; if friends misunderstand thee; if faction, and every evil cause which thou disownest, do revile thee, and rise up against thee; it is enough, it is absolutely enough, that thou art known of God. God is all: And all is *nothing* that is against him, or without him. If God be for thee, who shall be against thee? How long hath he kept thee safe in the midst of dangers; and given thee peace in the midst of furious rage and wars? He hath known how to bring thee out of trouble, and to give thee tolerable ease; while thou hast carried about thee night and day, the *usual causes* of continual torment! “His loving kindness is better than life,” (Psal. lxxiii. 3.) but thou hast had a long unexpected life, through his loving kindness. “In his favour is life,” (Psal. xxx.) and life thou hast had by and with his favour. Notwithstanding thy sin while thou canst truly say thou lovest him, he hath promised, “that all shall work together for thy good,” (Rom. viii. 28.) and he hath long made good that promise. Only ask thyself again and again, as Christ did

Peter, whether indeed thou love him ? And then take his love as thy full, and sure, and everlasting portion, which will never fail thee, though flesh and heart do fail : “ For thou shalt dwell in God, and God in thee now and for evermore. Amen. (1 John iv. 12, 15, 16.)

THE END.

LONDON :—W. BRACE, PRINTER
Johnson's-court, Fleet-street.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Dr. Adam Clarke's Life and Character of the Author	3
The Editor's Preface	9
The Author's Address to the Reader	12

KNOWLEDGE AND LOVE COMPARED.

PART I.

OF FALSELY PRETENDED KNOWLEDGE.

What Philosophy the Apostle depresseth : and why?	13
What Wisdom and Esteem of it, are not here con- demned	24
What pretended Knowledge is condemned	26
What are the <i>Certainties</i> that must be known and held fast	36
Of the several Degrees of Certainty	48
<i>Inference 1.</i> The true Preservative of puzzled Christians against false Teachers	56
<i>Inference 2.</i> What is the great Plague and Divider of the Church	65
The mischievous Effects of a proud Pretence to Knowledge	74
Advantages of a suspended Judgment	77

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Proofs of the little Knowledge that is in the World	79
<i>Inference</i> 3. That it is not the Dishonour, but the Praise of Christ and his Apostles, that they speak in a plain Manner	96
Causes of the disease of Perfidence, or proud pretended Knowledge	100
Directions for the Cure of pretended Knowledge .	104

PART II.

OF TRUE SAVING KNOWLEDGE.

<i>Doctrine</i> 1. Knowledge is a Means to a higher End	119
<i>Doctrine</i> 2. The End of Knowledge is to make us Lovers of God	123
<i>Doctrine</i> 3. Knowledge is to be sought, valued and used to that End	138
<i>Doctrine</i> 4. Those are the wisest and best, that love God most	142
<i>Inference</i> 1. By what Measures to estimate Men's Knowledge	147
<i>Inference</i> 2. Aptness of the Teachings of Christ to ingenerate love and Holiness	149
<i>Inference</i> 3. What Cause we have to be thankful for the Constitution of the Christian Religion	152
<i>Inference</i> 4. How little Reason ungodly Men have to be proud of their Learning	157
<i>Inference</i> 5. Why the ungodly World hate Holiness and not Learning	159
<i>Exhortation</i> 1. Plead not your Knowledge or Gifts, against Love or the Works of Love .	161

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
<i>Exhortation 2.</i> Bend all your Studies and Labours to the increase of Love and good Works	166
<i>Exhortation 3.</i> Place your Comfort, in Health and Sickness, in mutual Divine Love. — How known that you love God	180
<i>Exhortation 3. continued.</i> Let it be the chief of your Comfort that you are known of God. —What Comfort this affordeth, and what frame of Soul it bespeaketh in Life and Death	200

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