



SACRED DISSERTATIONS
ON THE APOSTLES' CREED

HERMAN WITSIUS



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by Herman Witsius

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THE TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

AMONGST the numerous treatises, which have been published at different periods and in various languages, an what is usually styled the APOSTLES' CREED, there is a great diversity of merit. By all who have the least acquaintance with the subject, it will be readily admitted, that whilst some of them are extremely superficial and inaccurate, if not essentially defective or grossly erroneous, others are distinguished as well for soundness of doctrine and richness of sentiment, as for correctness of arrangement and elegance of language.

Of those to which the latter description applies, the EXERCITATIONS (or DISSERTATIONS, as with equal propriety they may be called,) of the celebrated WITSIUS on this ancient

summary of the Christian faith, unquestionably hold an eminent place. They form a work, which, with regard to its illustrations and defences of the grand articles which this summary embraces, is probably, at least, equal to the best and most popular publications on the Creed that have appeared in the English tongue; and, with regard to the piety of its spirit, its skilful application of doctrine to practice, and its powerful appeals to the conscience and the heart, is decidedly superior. Fervent piety, indeed, was so prominent a feature in the character of WITSIUS, that it tinged every discussion which occupied his pen, and gave an indescribable charm to all his works. It is not without reason that the devout and evangelical HERVEY commends him as "a most excellent author, all of whose works have such a delicacy of composition, and such a sweet savour of holiness, that I know not," he adds, "any comparison more proper to represent their true character than the golden pot which had manna, and was outwardly bright with burnished gold, inwardly rich with heavenly food"* A similar encomium is pronounced by the learned Dr JOHN GILL, who describes him as "a writer not only eminent for his great talents and particularly solid judgment, rich imagination, and elegance of composition, but for a deep, powerful, and evangelical spirituality, and savour of godliness."†

How far the DISSERTATIONS on the CREED may be expected to correspond with the general character which these distinguished Divines have given to the works of WITSIUS, the reader may be able, in some degree, to judge, from the author's own Dedication and Preface, in both of which he expressly states, that his original and principal design, in preparing these Discourses, was to furnish his pupils with a specimen of the practical tendencies of all the doctrines of the Christian religion.

Some years ago, it occurred to the Translator that part of his leisure could not be employed with greater pleasure to himself; or, perhaps, greater advantage to the Church, than in writing a Translation of this excellent treatise. After having made a little progress in the work, he mentioned his intention to a few friends, who approved of his design,

and encouraged him to proceed. To his Reverend Fathers and Brethren, who have attentively perused some parts of his manuscript, and concurred in recommending the Translation, and most of whom also favoured him with critical remarks on the version, or with general suggestions for its improvement, his unfeigned gratitude and cordial acknowledgments are due. It seems proper, at the same time, to state, that, as these respectable Clergymen have all of them read only specimens of this Translation, and no one has perused the whole, the Translator alone is responsible for its faults and defects. This remark applies, in particular, to the Notes subjoined; none of which, owing to circumstances which it is unnecessary to mention, have had the advantage of being submitted to the review of his Brethren.

The Translation is executed from the third edition, printed at Amsterdam in the year 1697, and probably the last that was corrected under the author's eye, collated with the first edition, which was printed at Franeker in the year 1681. A few unimportant sentences, which occur in the first edition, but are dropt by the author in the third, are also omitted in the version; whilst all the enlargements added to the third, which are considerably numerous and valuable, are faithfully retained. On the same principle, it seemed proper to retain the whole Preface to the third edition, which differs from the original Preface in the two following points.

In the first place, it concludes with some strictures which the venerable Author, in deference to the judgment of his friends, deemed proper to add, respecting the uncandid treatment which he had experienced from a Divine of some note, who differed from him on certain theological questions at that time warmly contested. Although that portion of the Preface may now appear to many somewhat uninteresting, it supplies a striking evidence that no attainments in learning or piety are sufficient to prevent the outrageous assaults of misguided zeal; and affords, at the same time, a happy instance of that amiable meekness and candour with which WITSIUS was disposed to treat the most virulent adversary.

The only other particular in which the third Preface deviates from the first, is that it omits a short apology, which had originally been made to the reader, for certain coincidences between this work and the treatise on the Covenants. Those coincidences, however, are few, and scarcely any of them required an apology, with the exception of the Dissertation on Saving Faith, a great part of which is nearly the same as the chapter on that subject in the other work. The fact is, that these two elaborate publications are, on the whole, quite distinct, and that both are necessary to form a complete system of theology. Not to mention various other important discussions peculiar to this Treatise, it contains ample and interesting illustrations of some of the most significant and delightful characters of our blessed Redeemer, and of the several steps of his abasement and exaltation, which the plan of his admirable work on the Covenants did not include. The characteristic excellence, in short, of the treatise on the Creed, and the circumstance which suggested the idea of making it accessible to the English reader, is its singular tendency to enrich the understanding with the knowledge, and to warm the heart with the love of that Saviour, who is "altogether lovely," and whose divinity and atonement constitute the grand basis of the Christian hope.

Regarding fidelity as the most essential quality of any version, the Translator has attempted to produce an exact transcript in English of the original Latin. If he has ever, in any degree, misrepresented the sense of the Author, he can affirm, with confidence, that this is owing to misconception or inadvertency, not to design. He never lost sight of the principle, that, in translating, his business was not to express his own sentiments, but to state, without the slightest modification, the sentiments of another—of one, however, with whom he had the happiness, in almost every case, to agree. Yet, as tame servility is not essential but rather hostile to fidelity, he has freely made use of those necessary and reasonable liberties to which all Translators are entitled. He has endeavoured to supply the reader with an English book, perspicuously written, and composed in accordance with the genius and principles of the English tongue. In spite of his vigilance,

however, a critical eye, he doubts not, will be able to detect a variety of instances in which the Latin idiom is inadvertently retained, as well as other deviations from purity of stile.

There was, originally, no intention of subjoining Notes to this Translation. But the work was not far advanced when it appeared that a few Explanatory remarks would be necessary, in order to elucidate some arguments and expressions which to many readers might seem difficult and obscure. It was natural, in consequence, to proceed a step further, and to hazard some Critical observations on various passages which either obviously required, or easily admitted of them. In many instances the writer has cheerfully availed himself of the lights furnished by esteemed Authors, his obligations to whom are uniformly acknowledged; and, to prevent the Notes from extending to an undesirable length, he has frequently referred, on subjects of moment, to Critics and Divines who treat them fully. Such references, he presumes, may perhaps be acceptable to pious and intelligent youths, who delight in biblical and theological researches.

It has been his earnest wish, not only to direct the attention of such Students and Ministers of the Gospel as may have hitherto neglected them, to these instructive Dissertations of WITSIUS, but also to render them intelligible and useful to those classes of Christians, who have no pretensions to literature. For their sake he has inserted a number of Notes, which would otherwise have been unnecessary; and principally for their accommodation, too, an Index is appended of nearly all the Authors, ancient and modern, quoted in the course of the work, containing short notices of the character and history of most of them. The useful Indexes subjoined to the original are also preserved.

A few immaterial alterations, it may be right to mention, have been made in the form of the work. The numerous references to the Book, Chapter and Verse, in which the quotations from Scripture are to be found, are removed from the text to the bottom of the page. A few sentences, also, in different parts of the book, consisting chiefly of

verbal criticisms, which the English reader might not well understand, are transferred to the bottom. When short Notes are added in the course of the work, instead of being subjoined at the end of the Volumes, they are carefully distinguished from those transposed sentences which occur in the original.*

A MEMOIR of WITSIUS is prefixed, the materials of which are collected principally from the Oration delivered on occasion of his funeral by the celebrated Dr JOHN MARCK. It necessarily coincides, in a great measure, with "the Life of WITSIUS" prefixed to the Translation of the Economy of the Covenants, and with the account of him which appears in the fourth Volume of Middleton's "Evangelical Biography:"—the substance of both of which is avowedly extracted from the same original and authentic source.

That this attempt to render more extensively useful a highly valuable Work, may, by the blessing of God, be rendered, in some degree, conducive to the glory of the Saviour, and to the best interests of men, is the prayer of

THE TRANSLATOR.

RECOMMENDATIONS

"WE have perused part of Mr FRASER'S Translation of WITSIUS'S excellent and instructive Work on the CREED, and compared it in various places with the Original; and we do not hesitate to pronounce it a good Translation. It is faithful, not more free than the genius of the two languages requires, and conveys in good English not only the sense of the Author, but a considerable portion of his spirit and manner.

WITSIUS is known to the mere English reader, only by a very indifferent translation of his Economy of the Covenants, and by his

Irenical Animadversions translated a few years ago by the late Mr Bell of Glasgow. His Treatise on the Apostles' Creed is not inferior to either of these; and we feel much satisfaction in the prospect that a work which has so long benefited the student and divine, and which is so well calculated to give instruction and delight to every class of Christians, is now about to be given to our countrymen in their own tongue.

JAMES PEDDIE, D.D.

JOHN COLQUHOUN, D.D.

THOMAS M'CRIE, D.D.

DAVID DICKSON."

EDINBURGH, January 1st, 1822.

"WE have perused, with much pleasure, a part of Mr Fraser's Translation of WITSIUS on the CREED, and consider it as a faithful expression of the sense of the original. We recommend the work to the public as a scriptural, luminous, and pious exposition of that short summary of the Christian faith.

JOHN DICK, D.D.

JOHN MITCHELL, D.D."

GLASGOW, November 15th, 1821.

"To all who are in some measure familiar with the writings of the orthodox continental Divines, it must often have been the subject of regret, that, from their being composed in a dead language, the stores of theological learning and evangelical truth with which they are so liberally replenished, are in a great measure inaccessible to Christians in this country. Among these theologians, few occupy a higher place than WITSIUS—who, to profound learning and fervent

piety, added a taste for classical elegance, in his days rather uncommon among his countrymen. Of his voluminous and valuable works, none, so far as we know, have ever been translated into English, except his *Œconomia Fœderum* and his *Animadversiones Irenicæ*, both of which have been favourably received by the religious public. His work on the Apostles' CREED appears to us to have at least equal claims on a kind reception. It is learned, perspicuous, pious and practical, and free of that tediousness which often characterises the Dutch divines. In Mr Fraser, (part of whose Manuscript we have had the satisfaction of perusing,) Witsius has met with a Translator, capable, in no ordinary degree, of transfusing not merely the meaning, but the spirit of his original into his version. Though not a slavish, he is a faithful interpreter; and while the reader is furnished with the sentiments of Witsius, he is not frequently reminded by the foreign turn of expression, that he is not reading an original work.

We have no hesitation in saying, that the original work of Witsius is equally worthy of the public patronage as any of that Author's treatises which have yet been translated, and that the Version is superior in merit to that of either of his works which have appeared in an English dress.

JOHN BROWN, Whitburn.

JOHN BROWN, JUN. Biggar."

WHITBURN, November 12th, 1821.

MEMOIR OF HERMAN WITSIUS, D.D.

THIS eminent Divine was born on the 12th of February, 1686, at Enchuysen in the province of WEST FRIESLAND,—a town distinguished not only by the magnanimous efforts made by its inhabitants in the cause of liberty, when the United Provinces threw off the yoke of Spain, but also by their zealous attachment to learning and religion. Several individuals who attained celebrity in the religious and literary world, were natives of Enchuysen.

The parentage of Witsius was highly respectable. His father NICHOLAS WITS, or WITSIUS, was universally beloved by his fellow-citizens as a man of unfeigned piety and primitive simplicity; and sustained, with much reputation, the character of a deacon and an elder in the Church, as well as some honourable offices in the state with which he was successively invested. To the laudable attention of this good man, the Church of Holland was indebted for an excellent collection of Sacred Songs. JOHANNA, his wife, a godly and prudent woman, was the daughter of HERMAN GERARD, who, after experiencing numerous vicissitudes, and escaping the most imminent dangers, obtained a peaceable settlement as a Minister of the Gospel at Enchuysen, and exercised his office in that place for more than thirty years, with great fidelity and zeal. The subject of this Memoir was not the only child of his parents. They had at least one son more, viz. JAMES, who died at Enchuysen in the prime of life, leaving a family of amiable daughters, who proved a comfort to their uncle.

Witsius, it is said, was, even previously to his birth, devoted by his parents to the service of God and the Church; and they gave him the name of his mother's Father, earnestly praying that their young Herman might equal or even surpass his Grandfather in gifts and graces, inherit his excellencies, and imitate his example. His birth, it appears, was premature, and had almost cost both mother and son their lives. On his first appearance, he was so uncommonly small and feeble, that it was concluded he could not live above a few hours. It pleased God, however, to disappoint the fears of his relatives, and not merely to preserve alive this puny infant, but to make him at

length a truly great man, distinguished for mental vigour, though not for corporeal size and strength, and renowned throughout the whole Christian world for his valuable labours and useful writings.

His parents, whilst they found it necessary to take particular care of his health, did not neglect his education. In conformity with their vows and prayers, they were at pains, above all, to instruct him early in the first principles of the Christian religion. In his sixth year they sent him to the public school of his native town, to learn the rudiments of Latin. After he had been kept there three years, and promoted to the highest class, PETER GERARD, his mother's brother, a learned and devout man, took him to his own house, and favoured him with his immediate tuition. Under the care of this venerable uncle, who treated him as his own son, Witsius made so rapid a progress, that before he was fifteen years old, he could not only speak and write the Latin language correctly, but was minutely acquainted with Greek and Hebrew. With the utmost facility, he could read and interpret the Scriptures in the original tongues, as also the Orations of Isocrates, and the Hebrew Commentaries of Samuel. He had now acquired, also, a tolerable knowledge of Logic, Metaphysics, Ethics, and Natural Philosophy, and had accurately studied Windelin's Compendium of Theology. The pious conversation of the good uncle, his ready command of the Scriptures in the Greek and Hebrew, and his happy talent in accommodating pertinent passages to the ordinary occurrences of life, had a salutary effect upon the dispositions and habits of the nephew, and laid the foundation of that intimate acquaintance with the sacred volume for which he was distinguished in the subsequent periods of life. "O rare felicity of Witsius," exclaims Dr Marck, "and nobly improved! Were similar preparations to be made in the present age, many would enter the University far better instructed than they now are, when they leave it to engage in the various pursuits of life."

In the year 1651, and the fifteenth of his age, he was sent to the University of Utrecht; where he studied Philosophy under Paul Voetius; the oriental languages, Hebrew, Syriac and Arabic, under

the celebrated Leusden; and Theology under Gisbert Voetius, John Hoornbeeck, Walter Bruinius, and Andrew Essenius. Maatsius, another excellent Professor of divinity, died just before his arrival; and he had only the melancholy satisfaction of hearing Hoornbeeck pronounce the funeral oration over his lamented colleague. Here Witsius applied himself with unwearied assiduity to oriental learning; and he gave a specimen of his proficiency, by composing an elegant oration in the Hebrew language On the Messiah of the Jews and the Christians, which, at the request of Leusden his master, he pronounced with great applause before the University, in the eighteenth year of his age.

In the year 1654, attracted by the fame of Samuel Maresius, he repaired to the University of Groningen, where he devoted himself wholly to divinity. Under the guidance of that eminent Professor, he engaged in the usual exercises preparatory for preaching, and performed them in the French tongue, to the entire satisfaction of his teacher. Having continued a whole year at Groningen, he returned to Utrecht. While now, as formerly, he heard with attention the different Professors of divinity both in public and private, he cultivated a peculiar familiarity with Justus van der Bogaerdt, a man of uncommon judgment, gravity, and piety. The admirable gifts of Bogaerdt, and the savour of evangelical and vital religion, which pervaded alike his public discourses, his prayers, and his private conversation, greatly endeared him to Witsius. According to his own acknowledgment, it was chiefly by the divine blessing on the instructions of this excellent divine, that he was preserved from the pride of science, taught to receive the kingdom of heaven as a little child, led beyond the outer court in which he had previously been inclined to linger, and conducted to the sacred recesses of vital Christianity. His increased attention to spiritual religion, however, was far from abating his ardour or retarding his progress in literary pursuits. About this time he wrote, and publicly debated in the University, under the presidency of Leusden, his Theses on the Trinity; in which, with great learning and ability, he proved that important doctrine from the writings of the ancient Jews, and

showed how far their descendants have degenerated in that article from the sentiments of their ancestors.

The time was now come, when it was proper for Witsius to enter on the public service of the Church. Accordingly, having received ample testimonials from the Professors at Groningen and Utrecht, he presented himself for what is called the preparatory examination at Enchuysen in the month of May 1656. He gave full satisfaction to the Ministers, and was licensed to preach the Gospel. His endowments as a Preacher were soon perceived, and procured for him the cordial approbation of the churches. At the instigation of that excellent man, John Boius, Minister of the French Protestant church at Utrecht, Witsius, too, though naturally bashful and diffident, was prevailed with to apply to the French divines assembled at Dort for license to preach publicly, and in the French language, in their churches. This he easily obtained, partly from the influence of the celebrated Anthony Hulsius, to whom, at the request of Boius, he had written an excellent epistle in Hebrew. Availing himself of the privilege thus acquired, he often preached in French at Utrecht, Amsterdam, and other places. He entertained a design, also, of taking an excursion to France, that he might visit the eminent Divines of that country, and make further improvements in the language. Providence, however, prevented the execution of that design.

Having received a regular call from the church of West-wouden, he was ordained on the 8th of July 1657, in the 21st year of his age. For the space of four years and a-half, he laboured here with much alacrity, zeal, and success. The young people of his charge obtained his particular attention. In catechising and exhorting them, he accommodated himself, with great suavity and condescension, to their tender capacities; and such was their progress in knowledge, and such the accuracy with which they confirmed the doctrines of Christianity by appropriate passages of Scripture, and repeated the substance of the discourses they heard, that their parents and other elderly people around them at once blushed and rejoiced.

The growing reputation of Witsius attracted the notice of other churches. The church of Wormeren in the same tract of North Holland, a very numerous society but at that time distracted by intestine jars and animosities, thought they could not choose a pastor better qualified than Witsius to restore unanimity, and edify their souls. Judging it his duty to acquiesce in the call of that church, he was translated in October 1661. In this new sphere of usefulness, he exerted himself with exemplary discretion and fidelity, and not without remarkable success. He was universally esteemed and beloved; and although the people of Sluice in Flanders earnestly solicited him to come to them and preach the Gospel both in Dutch and French, he could not think of removing. He considered it right, however, to accept of a call which he afterwards received from the congregation of Goes in Zealand, and accordingly he was translated to that town in the year 1666.

At Goes his labours were signally acceptable and useful. Enjoying favourable opportunities for retirement and study, and blessed with three excellent Colleagues, of whom he venerated two as his fathers, and loved the third as a brother, he often wished to live to old age in that tranquil retreat. But in November 1667, a most earnest and affectionate invitation was given to him by the church of Leewarden, the capital of West Friesland; and, after mature deliberation, he accepted their call, and commenced his ministry amongst them in the month of April 1668. The fidelity, prudence, and vigilance, which he discovered in this important station, and the courage and firmness he displayed in a season of extraordinary difficulty, when the United Provinces were harassed and alarmed by the tumults of war and the incursions of the enemy, commanded universal admiration. Dr Marck, who was then a student, and residing in that district, affirms that he knew no other man of God, whose labours were more abundantly blessed. To the church, the nobility, and the court, his services were equally grateful. Nor should it be omitted, that he was for some time tutor to HENRY CASIMIR, the most serene Prince of NASSAU, who was cut off by an early death;—that, with happy effect, he instructed AMELIA, the sister of HENRY, a

Princess of eminent piety, who afterwards gave her hand to the Duke of SAXE-EISENACH;—and that he had the honour to preside when, in the presence of their illustrious mother ALBERTINA, both of them, much to the edification of the church, made a public profession of faith.

In the year 1675, in order to repair the heavy losses sustained by the death of the venerable CHRISTIANUS SCHOTANUS, and that of JOHN MELCHIOR STEINBERG, Witsius was elected Professor of divinity in the University of FRANEKER, and also invited to take the pastoral charge of the church in that city. He removed, in consequence, to Franeker, where, after being honoured with the degree of Doctor in Divinity, he was installed Professor, April 15th; on which occasion he delivered before a numerous audience an excellent oration upon the character of a True Divine. In this new situation, he filled both the pulpit and the academical chair with great dignity and extensive success; and the most perfect cordiality subsisted between him and NICHOLAS ARNOLD, his aged and venerable colleague.

But the superior endowments, and increasing celebrity of Witsius, procured for him further honours. In the year 1679, he was invited by the patrons of the University of GRONINGEN to succeed the excellent JAMES ALTINGIUS, as well in the theological and philological chairs, as in the university-church. This proposal, however, he was prevailed with to decline. But at the beginning of the year immediately following, after the death of the celebrated BURMAN, the citizens of UTRECHT despatched an honourable deputation to Franeker, to importune him to adorn their university and church with his residence; and notwithstanding the opposition made to his removal by his friends in Friesland, he considered himself bound in duty and gratitude to embrace the opportunity thus presented, of advancing the interests of literature and religion in a city to which he had been indebted for inestimable advantages in the days of youth. Accordingly, having come to that city, he was invested with the ministry of the church on the 25th of April, and, four days

after, commenced Professor of Divinity. He introduced himself to his academical labours with an elegant oration on the excellence of Evangelical Truth, which fully equalled the high expectations previously formed. At Utrecht he spent more than eighteen* years of his valuable life, discharging his various functions with indefatigable industry, and enjoying great happiness in the society of JOHN LEUSDEN his former tutor, PETER MAESTRICHT that illustrious divine, and his other learned and pious colleagues in the university, and in the church. His public sermons produced strong impressions on his audiences; his academical lectures were numerously attended, and exceedingly valued; his talents, integrity, and prudence, secured universal esteem. He was twice honoured with the supreme government and headship of the university; first in the year 1686, and afterwards in 1697. It deserves also to be recorded, that in the year 1685, when the States of Holland sent a splendid embassy to James II. King of Great Britain, who at that time was pursuing measures which led to his ruin, the three Ambassadors, at the suggestion of Lord DYKEVELT, himself one of the three, agreed in making choice of Witsius to accompany them to England, in the capacity of chaplain. In this appointment he cheerfully acquiesced; and after a stay of four months in England, he expressed, on his return, a sincere regard for the English divines, both conformists and dissenters, and acknowledged that he had found their company at once agreeable and highly instructive. The English, too, thought themselves happy in that opportunity of becoming more intimately acquainted with Witsius, and did not conceal the great respect and esteem in which they subsequently held him. One striking expression of the veneration which the Divines of England bore for him, was, that towards the conclusion of the seventeenth century, when controversies respecting several articles of faith were keenly agitated amongst them, under the discordant names of Antinomians and Neonomians, they agreed to refer their differences to him as an able and impartial umpire. Nor did Witsius perform a slight office of kindness to them, when, after carefully perusing the books they sent to him on each side of the question, which, from his imperfect acquaintance with the English language, cost him considerable

labour, and after thoroughly unraveling the subtleties and intricacies in which the question was involved, he wrote his "Conciliatory Animadversions," which were first printed at Utrecht in the year 1696; and which, from the judgment, candour, impartiality, and perspicuity with which they are composed, were excellently calculated to unite the sentiments and allay the animosities of the contending theologians.

In the year 1698, when the death of SPANHEIM seemed to be approaching, the governors of the university of LEYDEN resolved to give Witsius an invitation to succeed that great man, in the professorship of divinity. And, notwithstanding his obligations to the citizens of Utrecht, and their unwillingness to part with him, he complied with the invitation to Leyden; partly because he was informed by HEINSIUS, the administrator of Holland, that it had the marked approbation of WILLIAM III., Stadtholder of the United States and King of Great Britain, a Prince for whom he entertained a profound respect,* and who afterwards assured him, in a personal conference with which he was honoured, that he was highly pleased with his acquiescence in that call, and that himself had been the first mover of it; and partly because he deemed it equally conducive to the interest of the Church and his own comfort, that he should now desist from the labours of the pulpit, and devote exclusively his few remaining years to academical employments. He commenced the duties of his office at Leyden on the 16th of October 1698, by delivering an oration on the character of a candid and modest Divine; and for the space of ten years he continued to perform them, with unwearied diligence, and universal applause. Here he was attended, as he had formerly been at Franeker and Utrecht, by a numerous circle of promising youths from every part of the Protestant world, who listened with delight to his pious, learned, and eloquent instructions. Many candidates for the ministry from Holland, Germany, France, Poland, Prussia, Switzerland, and Great Britain, and even individuals from America, amongst whom, too, were some native Indians, resorted to the seats of learning where he successively taught; and after finishing their studies, returned to

their several native countries, equally built up in piety, and improved in learning. Even Doctors in divinity and Professors of the sciences, in great numbers, did him the honour to hear him daily. His acquaintance, too, was prized and solicited by the learned SELDEN, and by many eminent scholars and divines throughout Europe.

Scarcely had he passed one year at Leyden, when, in compliance with the importunate request of the States of Holland and West Friesland, he reluctantly accepted the office of Regent of the theological college in the room of MARK ESSIUS, then just deceased. In this arduous and honourable office, he discovered strict fidelity, tempered with uncommon mildness and affection towards his pupils. He retained it till the 8th of February 1707, when, upon account of his advanced years and increasing infirmities, he resigned the situation with all its emoluments. At his own earnest request, he was, at the same time, exempted from the public duties of his professorship in the university, for discharging which with his former accuracy and spirit, he found himself, notwithstanding the unimpaired vigour of his mind, in a great degree disabled by bodily indisposition. On that occasion, he often declared to an intimate friend, that he thought it much better to desist altogether from his work, than not to perform it in a becoming manner.

Amidst the arduous and incessant labours, of his useful life, Witsius was blessed with all that is soothing in domestic felicity. In the year 1660, he married ALETTA VAN BORCHORN, daughter to WESSAL VAN BORCHORN, a citizen and merchant of good character at Utrecht, and an esteemed elder in the church. With this excellent woman, who was equally eminent for the sweetness of her natural temper, and the amiable graces which adorn the Christian, he lived in uninterrupted harmony till the year 1684, when, after a painful and lingering illness, she died in a manner ornamental to the gospel. He was no less happy in his children. Not to mention two sons who died young, he had three pious and accomplished daughters, who showed their venerable father every possible mark of filial affection and respect. Two of them, to wit, MARTINA and JOHANNA, were

respectably married some time before his death. PETRONELLA, however, determined to remain with him to the last, and continued, with the most affectionate solicitude, to attend and comfort him, amidst the growing infirmities of age.

Witsius never had the advantage of a vigorous constitution, or of a long course of confirmed health. He was often afflicted with certain painful and alarming distempers, which threatened an early dismissal from the service of the Church on earth. In advanced life, he had several violent attacks of the gout and the stone: and six years previous to his death, whilst sitting in the Professor's chair and delivering an academical lecture, he was seized, for the first time, with a temporary dizziness, accompanied with a suspension of memory and absence of thought. These disorders, though mitigated by medicine, were never thoroughly cured. It is perhaps worthy of notice that, notwithstanding his other ailments, arising, no doubt, in a great degree, from his long continued habits of intense application to reading and writing, he retained his eyesight in such perfection, that, within a few months of his death, he was able, by moon-light, and without the assistance of spectacles, to read the Greek New Testament in the smallest type. His last illness was ushered in by an universal languor, and, according to the accounts of the celebrated BOERHAAVE, it commenced in a fever, with which he was suddenly seized on the 18th of October 1708, about one o'clock in the morning; and which, although it soon subsided, was followed by an extreme debility of body and torpor of mind. The good man, perceiving these symptoms, with great serenity and composure told the physician and others around him, that he knew he had but few days to live. Nor was he mistaken. His senses were gradually weakened by repeated slumbers, whilst his soul was fixed on invisible objects, and sustained by the hope of a blessed immortality. In his very last hour, when Dr Marck stood by administering consolation to his much-revered friend, he signified his perseverance in the same faith and hope which he had often expressed before; and then, about noon, on the 22d of October 1708, he sweetly departed this life, and entered

into the joy of his Lord, in the 73d year of his age, and 52d of his ministry.

His death was deeply regretted by the friends of religion in Holland and other countries. And on the 29th of October, after his mortal remains had been committed to the dust amidst the tears of a vast concourse of mourners, Dr Marck, the same worthy Divine who attended him in his last moments, by appointment of the Professors of the university of Leyden, pronounced a Funeral oration, which contains interesting details of his history. In the course of that oration, he takes occasion to specify, with much feeling, the friendly services which Witsius had done to himself, and the great advantages which he had derived, in youth, from the public discourses, academical lectures, personal intercourse, salutary counsels, and engaging example of this eminent man of God.

It only remains to present the reader with a rapid sketch of his Character, and a short notice of his Works.

His talents were of the first order. The force of his genius, the accuracy of his judgment, the strength of his memory, and the charms of his eloquence, were extensively known and admired. His learning was various and profound. Deeply skilled in languages, philosophy, and history, he improved them to the noblest purposes. He discovered an uncommon dexterity in availing himself of the aids of human literature for the elucidation of divine truth, and in bringing forth from his copious treasures whatever seemed most conducive to the illustration of the subject before him. With Theology in all its departments, he possessed an intimate acquaintance. He devoted himself, in particular, to the study of the BIBLE. Few have ever acquired either so complete a command of the expressions of Scripture in the original tongues, or so great a facility in expounding its most difficult passages. Instead of relying upon human authority, or suffering himself to be led by the greatest names, whether ancient or modern, he constantly appealed to the sacred volume as the only infallible standard, and implicitly

acquiesced in the dictates of the Holy Spirit. His zeal for "the faith once delivered to the saints" conspicuously appeared in his discourses and writings. When dangerous opinions in philosophy and divinity prevailed, and when reason was extolled to the prejudice of faith and to the overthrow of the essential doctrines of the Christian religion, he vindicated the cause of truth with pious ardour and unshaken fidelity, most happily blended with meekness and prudence. With regard to the less important differences of sentiment which took place among sound and faithful theologians, no one could exercise greater mildness and forbearance. He was an admirer of that excellent saying; "Unanimity in what is necessary, liberty in what is not necessary, in all things prudence and charity." To heal the breaches of Zion and promote peace and concord amongst brethren, was to him a delightful office, In suavity of disposition and benignity of manners, few have equalled, and perhaps none surpassed him. CAN-DIDZ' was the motto inscribed upon his seal, and CAN-DOUR shone forth in his temper and conduct. Even towards those from whom he had suffered the most virulent reproach and abuse, he discovered an exemplary spirit of meekness. It was observed, that he either made no mention of them, or repaid their calumnies by giving them those commendations, of which, on other accounts, he considered them deserving. Under all the diversified sufferings of life he displayed admirable fortitude and patience; and such was his contentment with his lot, that he often declared to his friends he would not exchange his place in the Church and University, for all the power and splendour of which kings and emperors can boast. Those habits of activity which he formed in youth, he retained to the last. In the prime of life, he spent many nights totally without sleep, and spared no effort or fatigue by which he might advance the interests of literature and piety. His great labours and frequent watchings, indeed, ill suited to a feeble constitution, were probably carried to an injudicious excess. Amidst all his attainments and exertions, unaffected humility and modesty adorned him. It was evident that he indulged no vain conceit of his own capacities or performances; and when his most intimate friends began to address him in the language of praise, he immediately checked them. He was

a real Christian, in short, as well as a great Divine. Sincere and exalted piety was the foundation of all his virtues. Animated by that "faith which worketh by love," he delighted in the various exercises of religion. To a regular and devout attendance on public worship, he added a conscientious performance of the more retired duties of the family and the closet. He never was happier than when he enjoyed fellowship with Heaven in spiritual meditation, and in stated and ejaculatory prayer. In singing praises to his Saviour and his God, he found a similar pleasure; and with a view to assist himself and his friends in that noble exercise, he composed several beautiful Hymns. The objects of eternity, in fact, were habitually present to his mind; and it was the wish of his heart to promote the highest interests of his pupils, and the people of his charge. The whole tenour of his conduct served to evince, that he was himself "spiritually minded," and that he aspired at nothing less, on behalf of all of whom he had the oversight, than to guide them, by the united influence of precept and example, to "the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." The religion of which Witsius was so able a teacher and so bright a pattern, be it remarked in conclusion, was equally at variance with that of the cold formalist, and the proud self-righteous devotee. With him it was a fundamental maxim, that Christ "in all things must have the pre-eminence;" and free and sovereign grace, reigning through the person and righteousness of the great Immanuel, he cordially regarded as at once the source of all our hope, and the grand incitement to a holy practice.

This extraordinary man, though dead, yet speaks by his writings; most of which, it is hoped, will continue, through many succeeding ages, to give instruction and delight to the lovers of sacred truth. In the year 1660, about three years after his entrance on the ministry, he published a learned and ingenious Treatise in Latin, which is now extremely scarce, entitled "Judæus Christianizans circa principia fidei et S. S. Trinitatem," i.e. "The Jew resembling the Christian with regard to the principles of faith and the doctrine of the Holy Trinity." In the year 1665, he gave to the public, in the vernacular language of Holland, "The practice of Christianity, with a spiritual

representation, first, of what is laudable in the unregenerate, and then, of what is culpable in the regenerate." He afterwards published, in the same language, "The Lord's Controversy with his vineyard," and a defence of that treatise against some who impugned its tenets. His subsequent works in Latin were first given to the world at different dates, whilst he filled the theological chair successively at Franeker, Utrecht, and Leyden; and were afterwards collected in six Quarto Volumes. The first contains his celebrated work on the Covenants, which was early translated into Dutch by HARLINGIUS, a Minister of the Gospel at Hoorn, and of which an English Version has for nearly sixty years been in the hands of the public. The second Volume includes the Dissertations on the Creed, and on the Lord's Prayer. Those on the Creed were turned into Dutch soon after their publication, by Mr COSTERUS at Delft. His third Volume consists principally of a very learned treatise entitled *Ægyptiaca*. Its subject is the sacred rites of the Egyptians compared with those of the Hebrews; and the Author's design is to refute the sentiments of those who hold, that the ceremonies of the Mosaic ritual were borrowed from the idolatrous observances of ancient Egypt. The same Volume includes, also, the Decaphylon, or an Inquiry into the fortunes of the ten tribes of Israel, and an Essay on the Thundering Legion under Aurelius Antoninus. The general title of Volumes fourth and fifth is *Miscellanea Sacra*, "Sacred Miscellanies." The Prophets and Prophecies of Scripture, the mysteries of the Levitical tabernacle, and the heresy of the Donatists, form the principal subjects of the fourth. The fifth, besides twenty-three Dissertations on a vast variety of topics, biblical, historical, and theological, comprises several public Orations, and the *Irenicum*, or "Conciliatory Animadversions" formerly noticed. A faithful Translation of this excellent little work, followed with judicious Notes, by the late Rev. Thomas Bell of Glasgow, was published in that city, in the year 1807. The sixth and last Volume contains the most of those performances of the author which were originally published during his residence at Leyden. It consists of academical Lectures on the life of the Apostle Paul, twelve Dissertations on various topics, and a Commentary on the Epistle of Jude.

It would be improper to protract this Memoir by a more particular account of these instructive Volumes. The brief sketch of their contents now given will enable the English reader to form some idea of their value and extent. At their first appearance they were eagerly sought after in every Protestant country, and underwent numerous impressions. The lapse of more than a century has neither consigned them to oblivion nor impaired their worth; and many learned and good men have expressed their persuasion, that the Works of Witsius are immortal, and that they will never cease to be admired for the classical elegance with which they are written, the profound and varied erudition they discover, and the spirit of ardent and evangelical piety which they uniformly breathe.

**TO THE
MOST NOBLE AND MOST
HONOURABLE,
THE CONSULS AND SENATORS,
OF THE
ILLUSTRIOUS REPUBLIC OF UTRECHT,
NURSING FATHERS OF THE CHURCH,
AND**

**PATRONS OF THE UNIVERSITY;
THESE DISSERTATIONS ON THE
CREED,
ARE RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED BY
H. WITSIUS.**

EVER since I entered on academical employments, FATHERS OF THE SENATE, I have considered it as the principal part of the business assigned me, to exert my best endeavours, with purity, perspicuity, accuracy, moderation, and gravity, to inculcate the sacred truth of the Gospel on the Students committed to my care, and to refer it, in its whole extent, to the practice of undissembled piety. As there is nothing more excellent, nothing more deserving of diligent study, and nothing which it is more profitable or pleasant to know, than that divine doctrine; so it is a subject, which, above all others, requires to be treated with pure and holy dispositions. The man who does not bring to it a candid, peaceable, and tranquil temper, and a mind assiduously devoted to genuine piety, is not merely unworthy to teach, but even incapable of learning to advantage, this heavenly wisdom. Wherever an unhappy zeal for innovation, a love of debate, an acrimonious spirit of wrangling, a frantic spirit of party, an arrogant self-exaltation joined with contempt of others,—wherever these and the like mischievous tempers prevail, it is difficult to believe that a pure love of truth dwells in the same breast, whatever fair pretences to it may be assumed. That person, in reality, doth not yet know and discern the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, who knows it, merely to exercise the volubility of his tongue in vain talking, to employ the dexterity of his pen in litigious disputation, or to render it, in any other way, subservient to his own ambition. The Gospel will only unfold its

treasures, and fill the mind with a sense of its sacred sweetness, when it irradiates the understanding with the native light of its simplicity, and thus inflames the will and affections with the ardours of a pure love,—when it consumes the noxious tares and destructive weeds of vice,—and when, elevating the whole man above the transitory vanities of this world, and causing his heart to burn with the desire of heaven, it transforms him into the image of the divine purity.

Impressed with these sentiments respecting the manner and the object of teaching and learning divine truth, I formed the resolution of giving some specimen of my design to the young men attending the University. With this view, I selected the principal articles of our Religion, as they are contained in the Catholic Creed, for the subject of lectures to my Pupils; that I might explain to them the nature of those doctrines; assert, demonstrate, and vindicate their truth; and, what was chiefly intended, illustrate and enforce their application to holy practice. Such was the origin of these Dissertations; which I began at the very commencement of my professional labours in the celebrated School of FRIESLAND, and finished in your Academy, FATHERS OF THE SENATE; to whom, conformably to the dictates of reason and justice, they are now cheerfully DEDICATED.

Since you have already befriended the Author by the generous invitation with which you honoured him, by the favourable reception which you gave him at the first, and by the remarkable kindness and liberality which you continue to show him; have the goodness to accept of this small literary gift in the same obliging manner.—Accept of it, not as a price by which I exempt myself from all obligations, but as a pledge, by which I bind myself to serve you; for, by these discourses, which are of inconsiderable value, and written solely for the benefit of my pupils, I by no means propose to pay, but only to acknowledge, the debt of gratitude I owe you. Let me request you, in addition to all your other favours, to form your estimate of the gift which I now present, not so much from its intrinsic worth, as from the disposition of him that offers it; who, whilst he holds

himself bound to render to you the most valuable offerings, was able to find nothing else, at present, in the whole circle of literature, by which he could give any proof of his regard and fidelity.

I conclude with my prayer on your behalf. May that ALMIGHTY GOD, who has rescued your Republic, and together with it, your Church and University from so many dangers,—who, with his powerful right hand has defended, protected, and prospered it,—who, in these times of extraordinary peril and difficulty, whilst one tempest followed another in close succession, and the Republic seemed on the verge of rain, caused you to remain at the helm—May the same GOD still preserve the Republic to you, and you to the Republic! Under your benign and auspicious government, "may concord and virtue return! may religion and integrity prevail!"*

FATHERS OF THE SENATE, farewell; and, after having prosperously exercised the magistracy for many years, may you transmit it hereafter to your sons, and to your descendants in the remotest times!

In these terms I wrote, in your City, on the 2d of May, in the year 1681, during the Consulship of ALBERT VAN BENTHEM, and PAUL VOET VAN WINNSEN. I repeated the writing on the 6th of July, in the year 1689, during the Consulship of JOHN BORRE VAN AMERONGEN II. and ARNOLD SPOOR. And, now, for the third, and, possibly, the last time, I write in the same terms, on this 1st day of April, in the year 1697, during the Consulship of CORNELIUS VAN LIDT DE JEUDE, and EVERARD VAN ZYPESTEIN II.;—the year, in which, from your distinguished friendship for me, for which I can never be sufficiently grateful, you have been pleased, FATHERS, to appoint me, for the second time, Rector of your University.

THE
AUTHOR'S PREFACE
TO
THE THIRD EDITION

I SHALL not trespass on your patience, CANDID READER, by a tedious preamble, but will show you, in a few words, the design and scope of the following work. It seems proper to apprize you, first of all, that it is not intended for the learned, or for such as have been long engaged in sacred studies, but only for learners, and my own Pupils, whom I wished to furnish with a light to direct them to the proper improvement of our holy Religion. It appeared to me extremely undesirable, that those with whose education for the sacred office we are intrusted, should at length ascend the pulpit to entertain the Christian people with frigid, though perhaps sublime, discourses, or with unprofitable, though sufficiently warm, discussions; neglecting, in the mean time, to inspire their minds with any relish for heavenly objects, with any desire for divine consolations, with any love for genuine piety. I daily urged them to consider that Religion is not seated in the tongue, but in the mind; that it consists not in words, but in deeds; not in the subtlety of speculations, but in purity of heart; not in the affectation of new discoveries, but in the prosecution of a new life. They were frequently reminded, that he alone is a true Theologian, who adds the practical to the theoretical part of Religion—who combines exhortation to duty with the elucidation of doctrine. They were told, also, that this is

not to be done merely in a superficial, formal, and customary manner, at the conclusion of a sermon; but that the whole discourse should be so framed, that the soul, fixed in earnest and adoring contemplation of astonishing truths, may feel itself inflamed with a heavenly zeal to regulate the life in a manner becoming the knowledge and the faith of those glorious realities. I inculcated, further, that the minds of the hearers must be so instructed, that they may attempt a careful examination of themselves, and be able to ascertain by infallible marks, whether they have a personal interest in the promises of the Gospel:—and that this must be so strongly and pathetically urged, that the most secure may be roused from their fatal lethargy, and every hearer induced to inquire, with eager solicitude, into the state of his own soul. I added, that there is not a single article of our Religion which is not mightily adapted to accomplish this purpose, and proceeded to confirm the truth of this remark by several examples. Some of my Students then began to earnestly request me to favour them with my thoughts in writing; and such is the origin of these Dissertations.

I intended, in the first instance, that what relates to the Theory should be supposed to be sufficiently known already, from Catechetical Institutes, Systems of Theology, and what are called Common-place books; and that my only business should be to point out the application of the doctrines of faith to Christian practice. But at the very commencement of the undertaking, my Pupils expressed a strong desire to learn, also, what appeared to me to be the best method of illustrating, and the most eligible arguments for defending, the doctrines themselves; and this part of their request, too, I was unwilling to refuse. Hence I have sometimes stated those doctrines, from the Scriptures, at considerable length; and when the occasion required, have refuted the objections and cavils of adversaries.

In the selection of the arguments, however, and in the manner of treating them, I have used my own liberty;—a liberty of which I think no one ought to be deprived, who is sincerely desirous that all those

truths, by the profession of which the Church of Christ is distinguished from erroneous societies of every sort, may be preserved pure and entire; and to whom nothing in his whole life affords greater pleasure than exerting his utmost efforts to illustrate and confirm these doctrines, and to apply them to their legitimate use. We are Christians. We have one infallible Master and Teacher, Jesus Christ. When we recur to men, "to follow constantly the sentiments of one individual," as Seneca somewhere elegantly says, "is to act not as a member of the commonwealth, but as an abettor of a party."* Such conduct I utterly detest, and trust that I shall always avoid. "I am the servile follower of no man; I bear no man's name; I show great respect for the judgment of eminent men; I claim permission, also, in some degree, to respect my own."

As I grudge no one this innocent liberty, so I supposed that no one would have grudged it to me. There were not wanting several persons, however, whom it displeased. Some apprehend that I have not every where expressed myself in a manner sufficiently conformable to old opinions; whilst others are still more highly offended, because I have not always acquiesced in new doctrines, and in periodical interpretations of the prophecies. To make no mention of others, with whom I shall never be disposed to have any altercation;—the celebrated JOHN VAN DER WAEYEN, once my Colleague, friend, and familiar acquaintance, after he began to differ from himself, also deserted and opposed his friends. Although, formerly, his opinion of me was not very unfavourable; yet, having altered his procedure, he has thought proper, in most of his writings, both in the Latin and in our vernacular tongue, not only to censure and expose my publications; but, likewise, to attack and traduce my character, with such violence, haughtiness, and arrogance, with such daring falsehood, such unbounded licentiousness of calumny, and such wanton scurrility; that he seems either not to have known, or, at least, to have, in this instance, forgotten alike all the rules of politeness, and all the laws of equity and probity.

What, after all, is the crime of which I have been guilty? None whatever, except that, in conformity to my duty as a Professor of Theology, neither attaching myself to parties nor indulging in invectives, I have calmly expressed my sentiments in relation to those topics, which, during these years, have been disputed among the learned; and that, being a person of a weak capacity and timid disposition, I entertained apprehensions in my own mind, and gave warning to several men of distinction, of those disorders by which the peace of the Churches of Friesland has now, for some time past, been disturbed.

This obloquy would have given me more uneasiness, had I not seen others treated in the same manner, whose names are venerable in the Church; and, in particular, that eminent individual, who is so distinguished for his extensive and correct acquaintance with every department of sacred learning, that he has, perhaps, no superior in the Reformed Churches; and whose hearer, pupil, and admirer, not his colleague, VAN DER WAEYEN himself once was.

If the great man thinks proper to treat his Brethren in this manner, he shall gratify his inclination without any interruption from me, provided he can justify his conduct to God and to the Churches. Far be it from me, ever to follow his example. I leave his expressions with himself, determined to answer his revilings with perpetual silence; and to endeavour, through the grace of God, to refute them, not by words, but by actions. I do not think so highly of him, or so meanly of myself, or so unjustly of his readers, as to fear that prudent and impartial men will form their judgment respecting me, according to his reproaches. If, in the mean time, he shall throw out any suggestion which may prove conducive to a more clear and distinct knowledge of divine truth, whatever be the manner in which it is propounded, I will accept of it with gratitude. I am one of those who are solicitous to make daily advances, and who refuse sound and salutary instruction from no man. It would have sincerely rejoiced me, to have been able to receive information from the SUMMARY OF CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY which he published lately: nor,

although I found myself repeatedly censured in it at great length, should I have thought that any cause of displeasure was given me, if the censure had been accompanied with arguments sufficient to establish the charge of inaccurate conceptions or unfair reasoning. I now clearly perceive, that, owing either to multiplicity of business, or to precipitation, he has not sufficiently understood me in some places, and has, consequently, imputed to me absurdities, which I am far from maintaining. In other points, it is a great consolation to me, that if I do err, I hold errors in common with the most excellent, and even the greater part of the doctors of our Church; nor can I be accused of any fault, but that of defending sentiments which are generally received. Whether I act considerately or otherwise, this celebrated man must forgive me, if I prefer the sentiments of others, who apply to these sacred studies with a more calm and unbiassed mind, and give less indulgence to their passions. "A violent spirit conducts every thing improperly."*

As, however, I do not consider myself faultless, so I would not have my mistakes to prove injurious to the truth. With respect to that want of candour with which he often upbraids me, I know not in what way it is possible for any man to vindicate himself from this aspersion, except by a confident protestation of sincerity, and by discovering it in his conduct when he is convinced of an error. To judge the inward disposition, is the prerogative of Him who alone searches the reins and the hearts. The God of heaven has reserved to himself, the secrets of all minds; and he only who formed the recesses of the breast, is able to unlock and disclose them. Yet I aver that I have never attributed any sentiment to any person, but what I believed he had expressed by word or writing. If I have misrepresented any one's opinion, I have not done this intentionally, but inadvertently; and when informed of my mistake, I will so correct it that no further cause of complaint shall remain. I cheerfully offer "the sponge, to rectify the slips of the pen."*

I have only to request, that others would exercise the same candour, and that they would not conceal, by a studied obscurity of language,

sentiments, which, when they have a convenient opportunity, they deliver more explicitly to their friends. My manner of teaching was never of that kind; but, neither courting the favour, nor dreading the displeasure of any man, I have always expressed, as distinctly as I could, what appeared to me, to be true and just, and consonant to the word of God.

I must beware, however, of exhausting the patience of the reader, by an odious dispute about what does not immediately belong to the present design. The topic to which I refer, will be discussed in its proper place in the third Edition of the books which I have written on the Economy of the Divine Covenants; where, having examined the whole subject with great care, and in the fear of God, I will show that I have received further instruction, and mention those to whom I am indebted, and at the same time discreetly defend what had been justly expressed.

In compliance with the solicitations of my friends, I wrote thus in the year 1689, lest, as usually happens, a wrong interpretation should be put on my silence. Agreeably to my expectation, the third Edition of the Treatise on the Economy of the Covenants, was subsequently published: and in that Edition I have performed what I had intended, with all that reverence for holy writ, with all that candour, moderation, and gentleness, and with all that mildness towards persons of opposite sentiments, which it was possible for me to manifest. Let the pious, judicious, and impartial reader judge; and let him unite with me in prayer to God, that his good Spirit may lead us in the paths of righteousness and truth.

DISSERTATION I: ON THE AUTHORS, AND THE AUTHORITY, OF THE

APOSTLES' CREED

I. As it is my design to illustrate, in a course of academical Dissertations, the doctrine which is briefly comprised in the Apostles' Creed, the subject seems to require that I should begin with some account of the Authors, and the Authority of that Creed. This branch of theological learning, however, has already been amply discussed by James Usher, Gisbert Voetius, Gerard John Vossius, and John Henry Heidegger, all of them men of great eminence and most extensive reading, who may be justly thought to have superseded the necessity of much labour on the part of their successors. To me, at least, nothing remains, but to exhibit, in this discourse, for the benefit of those who shall favour me with their attention, a concise abridgment of what these writers have stated at large, and have confirmed by luminous and satisfactory testimonies from all antiquity.

II. That the Apostles are the real Authors of the Creed which commonly bears their name, is in general maintained by the Doctors of the church of Rome, as so indubitable a fact, that they deem it an instance of the most daring temerity to call it in question. They tell us, that the Apostles, after they were filled with the Holy Ghost, and before they departed from Jerusalem to preach the Gospel in the various regions of the earth, judged a form of sound words requisite both for their own sake, lest they should teach discordant doctrines and become alienated from one another in affection, and for the sake of the church, that she might have an authorized formulary for the instruction of those that were to be baptized;—that they, therefore, composed such a form, consisting of a few simple but comprehensive sentences, and containing a summary of whatever it is necessary to believe with the heart unto righteousness, and to confess with the mouth unto salvation;—and that this is the origin of the Creed which we now have. At what time, however, this was done, they cannot certainly determine. Some are of opinion that it took place immediately after the effusion of the Spirit upon the Apostles on the

day of Pentecost; while others refer it to the time when, as we are informed in the twelfth chapter of the Acts, Herod Agrippa, (not Antipas, as the celebrated Vossius, in his sixth Thesis, has inadvertently said,) in order to gratify the Jews, stretched forth his hands to persecute the Christians.

III. Another circumstance, too, is added to the story. They say that this formulary was not prepared by any one Apostle, appointed to perform the service in the name of the whole college of Apostles; but that each of them pronounced his own particular article, and that the matter was so adjusted that the number of articles exactly corresponded to the number of Apostles. Thus, whilst the different articles were dictated by different Apostles, the entire Creed received the stamp of their united approbation.

IV. That we might remain ignorant of nothing relative to so momentous an affair, Baronius,* the Author of Ecclesiastical Annals, has even informed us, to which of the Apostles we are indebted for each of the articles. Quoting St Augustine, he tells us that this celebrated Father, in his hundred and fifteenth sermon,† wrote as follows. "PETER said, I believe in God the Father Almighty: JOHN,—Maker of heaven and earth: JAMES,—and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord: ANDREW,—who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary: PHILIP,—suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried: THOMAS,—he descended into hell, the third day he rose again from the dead: BARTHOLOMEW,—he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty: MATTHEW,—from thence he shall come again to judge the quick and the dead: JAMES, the son of Alphaeus,—I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy catholic Church: SIMON ZELOTES,—the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins: JUDE, the brother of James,—the resurrection of the body: and MATTHIAS completed the work, saying,—and the life everlasting. Amen."

V. To obviate the charge of credulity to which they manifestly expose themselves by giving credit to such traditions, the Roman Catholic

Doctors endeavour to establish all these points by a variety of arguments. Why, say they, in the first place, should this be denominated the Apostles' Creed by the whole Christian Church, unless the Apostles were its real authors? Secondly, They derive an argument from the term *Symbolum*,* which they suppose to denote a collation, resembling that kind of social feast among the ancients, to which the guests contributed by bringing each his own share. They affirm that this title was given to these articles of faith, because each of the Apostles contributed some undeniable article of the Christian doctrine to this spiritual banquet. To hear their own language; "*Symbolum*, says Gabriel Biel,† is a word derived from *syn*, that is, together, and *bolos*, a particle or morsel; signifying, so to speak, a collection of particles; for each of the Apostles furnished his own particle—his own morsel." Thirdly, they produce a cloud of witnesses from antiquity, on the vast number of whom Genebrard lays a mighty stress.‡ Nay, if we believe Sixtus of Sienna,§ "All the orthodox Fathers affirm that the Creed was composed by the Apostles themselves." They avail themselves, in particular, of the testimony of Rufinus, who has treated the history of the compilation of the Creed at great length. Fourthly, They reason from utility, as suggesting, or even demanding, this measure. It was expedient that the Apostles, "when about to separate from each other, should conjunctly frame a rule for directing them in their subsequent preaching of the Gospel; lest, perhaps, when at a distance from one another, they should teach mankind jarring doctrines." These are the words of Rufinus. So then, some form of agreement in doctrine was, from the beginning, useful, if not indispensable, with respect to the Apostles themselves. Still less could the church remain without such a Creed. It was requisite that those who were to be baptized should make a confession of their faith: such a confession must be at once brief, comprehensive, and perspicuous: and we see that the Apostles' Creed is exactly of this description.

VI. But, though these considerations are brought forward with very great confidence, and though they find several abettors even among the Protestants; they are not sufficient to deter us from adopting the

language of the excellent Chamier:* "If it is not absolutely false that the Creed was composed in this manner by the Apostles, it is, at the least, what must be universally allowed to make the nearest approach to falsehood,—utterly uncertain." As it may not be unprofitable to eradicate prejudices of this sort out of the minds of men, let us proceed to examine the force of each of these arguments.

VII. In reply to the first argument, we admit that this summary of doctrine is commonly called the Apostles' Creed; but we ask, by what authority, and also, in what sense, it is so called? It is possible that it may have obtained this title, from a general and established opinion that they were its authors. From this, however, no certain conclusion can be formed. Learned men have remarked that not even all the titles of the Sacred Books, nor all the short notices subjoined to the Epistles of Paul, are authentic and certain. And who ever ventured to assert the authenticity of the title of the Creed? Or, if any man should assert, how could he prove it? Allowing, however, that it was no sooner composed than it received the name of the Apostolic Creed, and even that it was rightly so called; still the opinion for which our opponents contend, will not be satisfactorily confirmed. It is highly probable, that it received this denomination, in reference, not to the authors, but to the matter;—as it contains those principles of faith, which are collected from the Apostolic writings. The Creed of the church of Jerusalem, which differs from ours both in sense and in words, was certainly not composed by the Apostles; yet it is denominated by Cyril, "A profession of the holy and APOSTOLIC faith."* Nor do I suppose the Apostles to have been the authors of the decrees of the council of Nice; yet referring to those decrees, Athanasius says, "The councils of our own times write APOSTOLICALLY," that is, conformably to the apostolical writings.

VIII. There is still less force in the second argument; for, though we should admit that *Symbolum* means a collection, or a collation, the Creed might be so called on account of the plurality, not of the persons collecting, but of the articles collected. As Cajetan has ingeniously observed,† we have an instance of this in Athanasius,

who alone compiled a Symbolum; if indeed he be the Author of the Creed commonly ascribed to him. But we do not admit that the word Symbolum signifies a collation, or a feast prepared by the contributions of the company. A feast of this sort is called by the Greeks, not σύμβολον, but συμβολή. It is certain that, according to the definition which Aristophanes gives of the term, "συμβολή is a feast upon what is jointly contributed by several persons." Before Vossius took notice of this, it was observed by Casaubon,* and also by Matthias Martinius.† I will not deny, however, that Hesychius explains σύμβολον, symbolum, as signifying, besides other things, συμποσιον, a feast. But as to the trifling remarks of Biel, and other such scholastic writers, respecting the contribution of different morsels, they are unworthy of a serious refutation in the present enlightened age. This formulary is denominated a Symbolum, because it is, as it were, a sign of the covenant with God, into which we enter at baptism; and a sort of military oath, by which faithful soldiers of Christ may be easily distinguished from perfidious deserters. In this sense of the word, Herodian speaks of a military symbolum.‡ Maximus of Turin§ has also well observed, that "Symbolum is a sign and seal, by which a distinction is made betwixt the faithful and the perfidious."

IX. The third argument, which is derived from the authority of the Fathers, is obviously of little weight; for, 1st, the learned Vossius has remarked, that what the Papists now so strenuously urge, was affirmed by no writer prior to the beginning of the fifth century, and that even after that period some time elapsed, before it was asserted by any one that did not belong to the Roman, the Italian, or at least the Western Church. But men who flourished at so great a distance from the apostolic age, cannot, with propriety, be esteemed authors of the highest antiquity. 2dly, Some passages to this effect appear to be forged. It is certain that the hundred and fifteenth discourse of Augustine, from which Baronius shows what part of the Creed was dictated by each of the Apostles, is not accounted genuine by others; —a circumstance which Baronius himself hath not presumed to dissemble. 3dly, Even Rufinus, whose testimony on this point is

usually placed in the front, is not, in the estimation of Popish writers themselves, an unexceptionable witness. "According to the testimony of Jerome," says Bellarmine, "he is guilty of many falsehoods in his apology for Origen."* Possevin, also, calls the writings of Rufinus "a labyrinth;" and adds, "what sort of capacity or integrity Rufinus possessed, it is not easy to determine."† 4thly, Rufinus himself does not positively assert that the Creed was composed by the Apostles. He says merely, that "such was the tradition of the Fathers," intimating that he embraced the opinion which generally prevailed, not that he regarded it as a certain historical fact. Erasmus, too, in his Reply to the Censure of the Parisians, has remarked, "He does not say, in the course of his narration, the Apostles, but they who compiled the Creed; as if he were uncertain by whom it was composed." 5thly, In some instances, even the most ancient Fathers were wretchedly deceived by pretended tradition, though they received it from the lips of those who were believed to be hearers of Apostles. On whom has not Papias, that zealous but too credulous and superstitious Father, imposed, by his passion for retailing apostolical traditions? Who does not know that Cyprian, with his followers, alleged apostolical tradition in defence of their Anabaptism; which however, the church of Rome, in common with us, do not acknowledge to be genuine? The marks by which genuine may be distinguished from spurious traditions are so obscure, and the whole subject of traditions is so involved in the thickest shades of darkness, that they are incapable of proving any thing, and furnish no evidence sufficient to command assent. Thus the third argument also falls to the ground.

X. The fourth argument exposes to just suspicion, the opinion which it is produced to support. The Apostles, being full of the Holy Ghost, who guided them into all truth, stood in need of no such rule or bond of union for their direction in preaching the Gospel. Nor at the beginning of Christianity was any profession of faith required from those to whom baptism was about to be administered, except a simple declaration that they believed in Christ, or in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; as appears from the baptism of the

converts mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles. Thus, from an examination of the arguments, it is manifest, that they are insufficient to demonstrate that the Apostles are the Authors of that Creed which commonly bears their name.

XI. What has been said might suffice to destroy this hypothesis; which ought not to be believed, because it cannot be proved. To complete its overthrow, however, we shall produce several arguments, calculated to show that it is extremely improbable. 1st, If the Apostles had, by mutual consultation, compiled any such Creed as was intended to be a bond of union between themselves and a compendious rule of faith to the whole Church, it is not probable that St Luke, who has accurately detailed the acts of the Apostles, and even some of their transactions that are of far less importance, would have passed over so momentous a matter in so profound silence; or that the Apostles themselves would have taken no notice of it in their Epistles. 2dly, The ancient Fathers also, when engaged in controversy with the heretics, would not have neglected to appeal to this Creed; of which they could and ought to have availed themselves, as a most useful compend and a most effectual weapon; if any such Creed prepared by the Apostles had existed. 3dly, The holy Fathers, had they possessed such a Creed, would never have thought of composing so many other Creeds and Confessions, which are much less plain, comprehensive, and perfect, than that which is styled the Apostles' Creed. Their numerous attempts of this kind can be accounted for on no other supposition, than that the Creed which is so indisputably superior to all of them, was not yet compiled and known. 4thly, If the Apostles had delivered, to the Church Universal, a particular Creed, consisting of certain sentences, arranged in a certain order, and expressed in certain words, it is reasonable to suppose that there would not have been much diversity in the Creeds of different churches. The Creed of Jerusalem, however, which Cyril has explained, varies not a little from the common one, in the sentences, in the arrangement, and in the words; as Vossius has shown by an accurate collation. But is it credible that any Church would have preserved the Creed with stricter fidelity, than that

Church, in the bosom of which it is pretended that the Creed was formed?

XII. Further, that the Apostles delivered each his own sentence, is so far from being a probable circumstance, that it appears almost ridiculous, and tends to transform this venerable summary of faith into a strangely incoherent rhapsody. Who can bring himself to believe, that Peter said, "I believe in God the Father Almighty;" that John added, "the Maker of heaven and earth," and so forth;—the articles sometimes improperly severed, sometimes improperly joined? What has not temerity attempted, in order to make out the precise number of twelve articles, corresponding to the number of Apostles? Are these two expressions distinct articles,—first, "I believe in God the Father Almighty," secondly, "the Maker of heaven and earth?" These, however, they so disjoin, as to attribute the former to Peter, the latter to John.—Do the following sentences make only one article, "He descended to hell: the third day he rose again from the dead?" Yet these two sentences, which are quite distinct from each other, the one relating to the humiliation, the other to the exaltation of Christ, they reduce to one; which they ascribe to Thomas.—In fine, is this, which they attribute to James the son of Alpheus, no more than a single article, "I believe in the Holy Ghost, in the holy catholic Church?" These notions are too puerile, to deserve the least credit among men of sense.

XIII. What opinion then are we to hold respecting this Creed? We will state in a few words what appears to us to come nearest the truth. In the original simplicity of the Christian Religion, no Creed existed, excepting that which our Lord delivered, Matthew 28:19. "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." This short and simple Creed is the foundation, to which the ancient Fathers very frequently appealed. The venerable Voetius, a preceptor for whom it becomes me to entertain the greatest respect, has selected from their writings several passages to this effect, two of which I will here cite. "Athanasius, in his Epistle to all every where that are sound in the

faith, and in his Oration against Sabellius, and against the Arians, says; 'The whole sum and body of our faith is comprised in the words of our baptism, and is founded on that scripture, Go and baptize all nations in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.' Augustine, in his discourse on the Creed, says in like manner, 'Our Lord Jesus Christ himself hath furnished us with this standard of doctrine, and no man of piety entertains any doubt respecting that canon of the catholic faith, which was dictated by him, who is himself the object of faith. Our Lord Jesus Christ, I say, after his glorious resurrection from the dead, and shortly before his ascension to the Father, bequeathed to the disciples these mysteries of faith, saying, Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.'

XIV. Heresies, however, increasing with the lapse of time, the church was no longer permitted to continue in that state of primitive simplicity. In order to distinguish the doctrine of the church from heresy, and the true sons of the church from heretics and their followers, several articles were gradually added, and reared as a superstructure on this simple foundation. Of this there is abundant evidence. 1st, The most ancient writers, as Martial, Ignatius, Justin, Irenæus, and Tertullian, when they propose to give a summary of the faith, proceed no farther than the doctrine of the Trinity. Hilary contends at great length, that the profession of the Trinity ought alone to suffice, and should be held sufficient for the exclusion of heretics.* The same opinion is expressed by Paschasius.† 2dly, It is manifest that there were many copies of the Creed, in which the article respecting Christ's descent into hell, did not appear. Rufinus himself asserts, that, in his time, it was wanting in the Creed of the Roman, and of the Eastern churches.‡ It is conjectured by Moulin, that that article was borrowed from the Creed of Athanasius, and inserted in the Apostles' Creed, by persons who did not observe that, in the former, the articles concerning Christ's death and burial are wanting.§ But, on this subject, we shall have occasion to speak more fully and particularly, in its proper place. 3dly, The epithet Catholic, given to the church, was unknown in the age of the Apostles; nor did

Rufinus know it. It is probable that the purpose for which this title was originally assumed, was to distinguish the church which existed everywhere from the conventicles of heretics and schismatics, such as those of the Novatians, and afterwards of the Donatists. From these arguments we conclude, that the Creed was not the production of one author, or of one council, but was gradually enriched by numerous additions, in successive ages, on various occasions, by different hands;—traces, however, still remaining, of the old foundation upon which the rest of the articles were built.

XV. Thus far of the Authors of the Creed; let us now consider its Authority. We hold then, 1st, That greater authority is justly allowed to this Creed than to all other compositions of the kind that are extant; for it is at once comprehensive in doctrine, perspicuous in language, and neat in arrangement; and it is now so generally received in Christendom, that the man who wantonly rejects it, ought not to be esteemed a Christian. 2dly, Since it exactly agrees in sense with the Holy Scriptures, and is almost entirely expressed in the words of Scripture, we do not deny that, with regard to its matter, it may be denominated Divine and Authentic. 3dly, With respect to the form, however, and the disposition of the several articles, it is merely a human writing; and, in consequence, has a claim to our faith, not independently or of itself, but purely because it is derived from canonical Scripture, and entirely accords with it. 4thly, We do not admit, therefore, that, formally considered, it is to be accounted no less authentic than the written word of God, as the Papists contend; or almost authentic, as some of the Protestants have incautiously said: for the divine authority, being always supreme, admits of no degrees. If the Creed was delivered by Apostles under inspiration of the Spirit of God, it is not almost, but altogether authentic. If it was not dictated by Apostles, or by Apostolical men, from an impulse of the infallible Spirit, (and we have shown above that it has no claim to so high an origin,) it is neither altogether nor almost authentic. In this matter, an intermediate degree, or a qualifying phrase, can have no place.

XVI. For the direction of young people, one thing still remains to be noticed. In the Church of Rome, the Apostles' Creed is most improperly considered as a kind of form of prayer; and to this childish error their Doctors themselves have given occasion or encouragement, by calling it "a Catholic Hymn, and a Sacred Thanksgiving."* Let it be observed, that these three well known forms, the Decalogue, the Lord's Prayer, and the Creed are to be thus distinguished from each other. In the Decalogue, or ten Commandments, God speaks to men; in the Lord's Prayer, man speaks to God; in the Creed, man speaks both to God and to men. As the Prayer is distinct from the Law, so the Creed is perfectly distinct from the Prayer.

DISSERTATION II: ON FUNDAMENTAL ARTICLES

I. SINCE we have more than once affirmed that the Creed is the distinguishing badge of Christianity, it seems not improper to inquire, whether it contains all those articles which are necessary and fundamental; and whether all that it does contain are to be considered in this light. To return a satisfactory answer to these questions, it will be requisite, first of all, to show what we are to understand by necessary and fundamental articles, and to point out their distinguishing marks. This, indeed, is so abstruse a topic, that it has very much embarrassed even the most judicious and acute Theologians who have attempted to explain it; and scarcely any one has given full satisfaction to himself, much less to others. Let us endeavour, however, in common with other writers, and agreeably to their example, to make a few remarks on this point.

II. To enable us to understand the subject the more completely, several distinctions must be premised. First, we observe that doctrines may be said to be necessary,—to Salvation,—or to Religion,—or to the Church. A doctrine, without the knowledge and faith of which, God does not save grown-up persons, is necessary to Salvation; that, without the profession and practice of which, no one can be considered religious, is necessary to Religion; and that, without which none is admitted to the communion of the visible church, is necessary to the Church. There may be articles without which persons ought not to be admitted to the fellowship of the Church, that should not, for that reason, be straightway regarded as absolutely essential to Religion, or to Salvation. Although we dare not pronounce a sentence of condemnation against a man, we ought not, in defiance of order and discretion, to receive him forthwith into the bosom of our church, whatever sentiments he may hold, and to whatever sect he may belong. And with respect to Religion, what falls within the sphere of duty is manifest; but how far it may please a gracious God, or how far it may be possible for him, in consistency with his perfections and character, to extend his forbearance to any one, and save his soul, notwithstanding his errors and sins; or, in short, what are the lowest attainments, without which no man is saved,—who can tell? For this distinction I am indebted to the celebrated Hoornbeeck.*

III. Secondly, The knowledge of those doctrines which are necessary to salvation, admits of various degrees. It is in different measures of clearness, abundance, and efficacy that divine revelation, the means of grace, and the communications of the Spirit are enjoyed; and a corresponding diversity takes place in the degrees of knowledge which the saints attain. In some, it is clear, distinct, steady, and accompanied with a very firm and decided assent; in others, it is more confused, more implicit, subject to occasional wavering, and attended with an assent that is yielded with difficulty. The command of God, indeed, lays an indispensable obligation upon all men, to make every possible effort to attain a most clear, distinct, and assured knowledge of divine truth. It cannot, however, be questioned

that the Deity, in his unbounded goodness, receives many to the abodes of bliss, whose knowledge even of the principal articles is very indistinct, and such as they are hardly capable of expressing in their own words. The smallest measure of the requisite knowledge appears to be this, that, when an article of faith is explained, the mind so far at least apprehends it, as to recognise and embrace it as true.

IV. Thirdly, Times also must be distinguished. It admits of no doubt, that under the bright dispensation of the Gospel, a more extensive and more explicit knowledge is necessary to salvation, than was required under the Old Testament economy; for it is reasonable that both knowledge, and the necessity of knowledge, should increase in proportion to the measure of revelation afforded. Under the Old dispensation, nay, during the time of our Saviour's abode on the earth, it was possible for a man to be a true believer and in a state of grace, who was ignorant of the sufferings, the death, and the resurrection of Christ, and who even presumed to object to the testimony of Christ himself respecting those momentous topics, as is clear from the instance of Peter;—or who, though he believed in general in the Messiah, yet knew not that Jesus is the Christ, as appears from the history of Cornelius the Centurion.^b No one, however, I suppose, would now acknowledge any person as a true believer, who should discover ignorance of these truths respecting the Lord Jesus; and still less a person who should contradict them when represented to him. On this subject, the expressions of Thomas Aquinas deserve to be quoted: "The articles of faith," says he, "have increased with the lapse of time, not indeed with respect to the faith itself, but with respect to explicit and express profession. The same things which are believed explicitly, and under a greater number of articles, by the saints in latter days, were all believed implicitly, and under a smaller number, by the fathers in ancient times."*

V. Having premised these distinctions, let us now, in the first place, inquire, in general, into the marks of fundamental articles; and then examine, more particularly, whether the number of such articles can be determined with certainty. To entitle an article to be considered

fundamental, it must be distinguished by the following characters. 1st, It is requisite that it be contained in Scripture; for the Scriptures "are able to make us wise unto salvation." They are the perfect rule of all things necessary to be known, believed, and done, in order to eternal life. This criterion we lay down, in opposition to Papists, and to Enthusiasts.

VI. 2dly, It is necessary that it be so clearly contained in the sacred volume, that any person, even the most simple and illiterate, provided he give attention, may easily perceive that it is a doctrine of Scripture. The reason of this criterion is, that salvation is intended not merely for the learned and for those endowed with great perspicacity of mind, but also for children and babes in Christ. Among articles clearly contained in the Scriptures, however, we must include not only those which they teach in express words, but also those which, to all who apply their minds to the subject, are obviously deducible from them by necessary consequence. Our Lord and his Apostles very frequently confirmed even fundamental articles of faith by consequences deduced from Scripture.—This criterion, too, must not be understood to intimate, that fundamental articles are propounded wherever they are taught in holy writ, in words thus clear and intelligible to all; or that nothing is to be deemed fundamental, which is exhibited in any passage in a manner calculated to exercise the industry even of the learned. It has pleased God to reveal the same truth in the Scriptures "at sundry times and in divers manners."e Sometimes he propounds a doctrine, the faith of which is necessary to salvation, so clearly, that no reader that is attentive, and is enlightened by the Holy Spirit, can be ignorant of it, and none but a contentious person can call it in question; and sometimes he so involves the same doctrine in obscurity, that it becomes necessary for the studious to compare the more obscure with the more perspicuous passages. The knowledge of a fundamental article consists not in understanding this or the other passage of the Bible; but in an acquaintance with the truth, which in one passage, perhaps, is more obscurely traced, but is exhibited in other places in a clear, nay, in the clearest possible light. In fine, we

do not concur with the Remonstrants, in requiring so high a degree of clearness, as to consider those articles alone fundamental, which are acknowledged and maintained amongst all Christians as of the most unquestionable authority, and which neither are, nor can be controverted. According to this rule, hardly any thing will remain to distinguish the Christian Religion, from the Pagan morality, and the Mahometan theology. There is much truth in the remark of Clement of Alexandria; "No Scripture, I apprehend, is so favourably treated, as to be contradicted by no one."*

VII. 3dly, Another mark of a fundamental article is, that it be of such a nature, that neither faith in Christ, nor true repentance, can subsist without it; for, as without faith it is impossible to please God, so without holiness no man shall see the Lord. For example; since it is impossible for any one to believe in God, unless he know that he is, and that he is faithful in all his sayings; and since it is impossible also for any one to love and serve him, unless he believe that he is the Rewarder of those that seek him,—it must be confidently affirmed, that the articles which respect the existence and the veracity of God, and also the gracious rewards which he confers on his people, are clearly fundamental. Further, as salvation is unattainable without Christ;g as no grown-up person can be saved through Christ, but by faith; and as faith supposes knowledge;i—the knowledge of Christ is necessary to salvation. Besides, since God will honour them only that honour him,l and he who honours not the Son, honours not the Father; and since the Son cannot be rightly honoured, unless he be recognised as, what he really is, the true God, of the same substance* with the Father, and on that account, of equal dignity† with the Father;—we boldly maintain that the article respecting the true Divinity of Christ, is fundamental.

VIII. 4thly, It cannot be doubted that every article is fundamental, to the denial of which, God, notwithstanding the grace and benignity of the Gospel, has annexed a threatening of destruction. I say, notwithstanding the grace of the Gospel; for according to the rigour of the law, all culpable ignorance of any truth which God has

revealed, is damnable. In conformity to this rule, we conclude that the article relating to the incarnation of Christ is fundamental; for John says, "Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God." The reason of this rule is, that no person is saved, in whom any thing is found, for which, notwithstanding the intervention of the Gospel, God declares that he excludes men from the kingdom of heaven.

IX. Some have added, that an article, to which a promise of eternal life is annexed, is fundamental. But this rule does not hold universally. For instance; it is said in reference to the prophecies of the Apocalypse, "Blessed is he that readeth, and blessed are they that hear, the words of this prophecy." It would be rash, however, to conclude from these words, that the prophecies of the Apocalypse are fundamental articles. The reason is, that those attainments, with which the promise of salvation is connected, are not universally so momentous and indispensable, that the absence of any one of them, inevitably subjects a person to a state of condemnation. Such attainments always suppose that which is essential to salvation, though they are not its necessary or inseparable concomitants. "He that believeth and is baptized," says our Lord, "shall be saved." Yet from this it by no means follows, that baptism is so essential, that without it none can obtain salvation. Our Lord himself, when he converts this affirmative into a negative proposition, drops the mention of baptism, saying only, "he that believeth not, shall be damned;" for it is impossible that an adult can be rightly baptized, unless he is a believer; although it is very possible that a true believer may not be baptized.

X. 5thly, That also is to be regarded as a fundamental article, which the Scriptures call a foundation;—whether this be done in express terms, or in words of equal force. Thus the doctrine respecting the Lord Jesus, his person and offices, is denominated by Paul a foundation. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." The meaning is, that no man can teach another fundamental doctrine, separate from the doctrine

concerning Christ. To this, also, may be referred the following words of our Saviour to Peter, "Upon this Rock, will I build my church:"s that is, either upon myself, whom thou hast confessed; or upon this doctrine of which thou hast made a profession, by declaring that I am the Son of God. The learned Cameron, an ingenious interpreter of Scripture, remarks, that the words of Paul in 1 Tim. 3:15, 16. may be connected thus: "The pillar and ground of the truth, and without controversy great, is the mystery of godliness; God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit," &c. With this passage, he also compares the following sentence, which occurs at the beginning of a certain celebrated work of Maimonides; "The foundation of the foundation, and the pillar of wisdom* is, to know that "there is some First Being." James Cappel, a man of profound erudition, approves of this construction, and affirms that it also met the approbation of Andrew Melville, and of John Fabricius. He adds a quotation from Irenæus, from which he gathers, that that Father, too, seems to have read the passage in this manner. The third book of Irenæus begins thus; "We have learned the method of our salvation, from no other persons than those who imparted to us the Gospel; which, in the first instance, they preached, and afterwards delivered down to us in writing according to the will of God, to be the FOUNDATION AND PILLAR of our faith." Much to the same effect, is the following expression of Basil of Seleucia, in a discourse on Matth. 16:16. respecting the confession of Peter: "This is, indeed, the Rock of religion; this, the basis of salvation; this, the bulwark of faith; this, the foundation of the truth." Schultet acknowledges, in his Notes, that these observations are equally pious and learned: nor is John Henry Ursin of a different opinion. † And truly, provided these writers were supported by the authority of ancient copies, no exposition would appear to me more probable. Were this exposition admitted, we should possess a concise summary of fundamental articles, which might well put Socinians to shame, who blasphemously assert, that scarcely any thing at all relating to the person of Christ is necessary to be known.

XI. 6thly, It must not be omitted, that if any article is stated as necessary to be known, which cannot be understood, unless some other article shall have been previously understood and believed; that other article must also rank among those which are necessary. For example; it is necessary to know that we are saved only by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; for the Apostle Paul says, "If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." But this can be neither understood nor believed, unless we know that sin has plunged us into so deep an abyss of misery, that our deliverance surpassed our own power, and even the united exertions of all creatures. Thus, from the necessity of the article respecting our deliverance, we strongly infer the necessity of the article respecting our misery.

XII. 7thly, When any thing, in fine, the necessity of which must have been more doubtful, is expressly represented as necessary to be known; it follows, that a doctrine will also be necessary, the necessity of which we should have been less, or at least not more, disposed to question. To give an instance of this: the Apostle teaches that the article regarding justification by faith in Christ without the works of the law, is necessary, when he asserts that they who are "ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God." The necessity of this article being thus demonstrated; it unavoidably follows, that it is necessary for us to know also, that, considered in ourselves, we are obnoxious to condemnation and wrath: for this last article is much more evident than the former, and more obvious to every one that is willing to examine himself; nor, without the knowledge of it, can we be induced to seek that righteousness which is in Christ.

XIII. There neither occur to ourselves, nor do we recollect to have seen elsewhere, any marks more certain than those which have now been particularized. Let it be observed, however, that, according to the order in which we have arranged them, the two first serve to show what are not to be accounted fundamental articles; and the

others are intended to point out those which, by all means, are entitled to that place. Though every necessary article ought to be contained, and even plainly contained in Scripture; yet every thing that is plainly and expressly delivered in Scripture, is not for this precise reason to be deemed necessary. For instance; it is not necessary to know that Aaron was older than Moses, or that Paul had a cloak. But an article without which neither faith, nor repentance, can be exercised;—that respecting which God himself assures us he admits none who denies it to heaven;—that which the Scripture calls a foundation;—that without which a truth clearly fundamental can be neither understood nor believed;—or that which appears from the very nature of the thing, to be no less, or even more necessary, than what the Scripture affirms to be necessary,—every such article, I say, sound reason imperiously requires us to consider necessary.

XIV. Farther, those articles which are thus fundamental, ought to be known and believed by every Christian that has reached the years of discretion, by the learned and the unlearned, by the humblest mechanic no less than the Professor of Theology. We concede, however, that, in men whose capacity is slow, whose memory is weak, and to whom an obscure revelation, or a cold and inefficient ministry are afforded, God tolerates a less distinct and less explicit knowledge than in persons who, in all those respects, are favoured with superior advantages. It is possible, too, that a man who holds the foundation, may embrace some error inconsistent with a fundamental article; whilst, either from the dulness of his capacity, or from some defect in his education, and from prejudices early imbibed, he does not perceive it to be an error at all, much less, an error at variance with the foundation. In such circumstances, the error does not exclude from salvation. Thus amidst the darkness of Popery, the elect, holding the fundamental articles, were saved; though they did not escape a number of prevailing errors,—such as the communion of the mass, respecting which our Catechism has justly said that it is a virtual renunciation of the alone sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and horrible idolatry.

XV. To point out the articles necessary to salvation, and precisely to determine their number, is a task, if not utterly impossible, at least extremely difficult. There are, doubtless, more articles fundamental, than those to which the Scriptures have appended an express threatening of destruction. None of the writers on this subject, however,—none at least whom we have had an opportunity of consulting, how small soever the number to which they reduce the fundamental articles, have even attempted to prove from Scripture, in the manner we have done, the necessity of all the articles which they particularize. Every one has reasoned according to his own inclination; and who does not see that this is a mode of proceeding quite precarious? It should be considered, also, that, in some instances, Divine grace unites the elect to Christ by a very slender bond; and that the most ardent flames of love, the sincerest concern to please God, and an earnest desire of salvation, may be found in persons, whose knowledge of the articles of faith is exceedingly circumscribed. Who then, without instruction and authority from God himself, can, in the present state, exactly ascertain the smallest measure of knowledge in reference to each of the articles, which is indispensably necessary at the tribunal of the supreme and omniscient Judge?

XVI. Nor is it absolutely necessary that we should possess an exact list of the number of fundamental articles. It is incumbent on each of us to labour with the utmost diligence to obtain an enlargement of saving knowledge, lest, perhaps, we should be found ignorant of truths that are necessary. The man who is not solicitous to receive every possible accession to his knowledge, knows nothing yet of the ways of the Lord, as he ought to know. Pope Leo has expressed himself with great propriety in the following terms; "Whoever is able to attain clearer conceptions of this subject," referring to the topic which he was then discussing, "and is unwilling to know, or having thus known, is unwilling to believe it, cannot be saved. There are many of the profound mysteries of our holy faith, to which not a few are able to extend their researches; but into which a considerable number, owing either to their youth or to the imbecility of their

understanding, are unable to inquire. And, therefore, as we have just said, he who is able, but unwilling, cannot be saved."* It is evident, then, that to ascertain precisely the number of necessary articles, is not requisite to our spiritual comfort. It is sufficient to know in general, that he who has learned cordially to love God as reconciled in Christ, and to place his confidence in him, holds what is necessary; and that, mean time, it is the incumbent duty of all Christians, to make progress in the knowledge of the mystery of God, and of Christ.v

XVII. It is of no great importance, besides, to the Church at large, to know quite correctly the precise number of fundamental articles. It does not become us to ascend into the tribunal of God, and to pronounce concerning our neighbour, for how small a defect of knowledge, or for how inconsiderable an error, he must be excluded from heaven. It is much safer to leave that to God: and even supposing we had succeeded in discovering it, still we should possess no clear and positive rule of admission to the communion of the Church. It may not be safe and expedient for us to receive into church-fellowship, a person chargeable with some error or sin; whom, however, we should not dare, on account of that error or sin, to exclude from heaven. Nor, were even this point once determined, would the way be prepared for perfect peace and harmony in the churches of Christ; as if, provided the necessary articles are maintained, no great solicitude ought to be discovered with respect to the rest. Though one article be of greater importance than another, none of the truths of God ought to be esteemed so trivial and contemptible, that it is of very little consequence whether our sentiments concerning them be right or wrong. Had it been an object of high utility, in short, to have the number of necessary articles fixed and determined, that God who is unbounded at once in wisdom and in goodness, would not have neglected to consult the welfare of his Church in this instance, and would have defined the number in the Sacred Volume. Since he has not been pleased to do this, we may rest assured that it was not necessary.

XVIII. After what has been said, we are now prepared to return the following answer to the question proposed in the first section; to wit, that, if you consider only the truths expressly mentioned in the Creed, all the necessary articles of our Religion are not contained in this summary. For it contains nothing about the Word of God, which is the immediate object, the rule, and the source of our faith; and which is therefore denominated "the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets;" that is, the Foundation which was laid by the Apostles and Prophets, and on which our faith ought to be built:—Nothing respecting our sin and misery, the knowledge of which is inculcated in Scripture as particularly necessary:x—Nothing relative to justification by faith without the works of the law, the knowledge of which article, however, the Apostle valued so highly, that in comparison of it he accounted all other things but loss and dung—so highly, that he declares that whosoever desire to be justified by the law, have no part in Christ, and are fallen from grace:z—Nothing even regarding the worship and service of God, and the leading of a holy life; which cannot be rightly performed, unless they are both known, and believed to be necessary.

XIX. If any of the Protestant Divines have affirmed that all fundamental articles are contained in the Creed, they did not intend by this expression, that they considered the mere repetition of the words of the Creed, a sufficient sign of Christianity. Our faith consists not in words, but in sense; not in the surface, but in the substance; not in the leaves of a profession, but in the root of reason. All the heretics of the present day, that claim the name of Christians, are willing enough to subscribe the words of the Creed; each however affixing to them whatever sense he pleases, though diametrically opposite to sound doctrine. It must be remarked, also, that such of the Protestants as have held this language with regard to the Creed, have included under the articles expressed in it, those which are necessarily supposed or deduced, and without which the articles expressed can be neither thoroughly understood, nor sincerely acknowledged.

XX. As all necessary points are not expressly contained in the Creed; so all that it doth contain, are not indispensably necessary. Who would presume to question the salvation of all those, who perhaps know not that Christ suffered under Pontius Pilate, or who are ignorant of the precise time of his resurrection? Who would pronounce it impossible for any man to be saved, that does not understand the article respecting Christ's descent into hell, or that concerning the Catholic Church, or the Communion of saints? As for us, we dare not act so rigorous a part, lest we should be found false witnesses against the generation of God's children.

XXI. Neither the ancient Fathers, however, nor the chief men of the Reformed churches, can be justly accused of having done wrong, when they inserted in Creeds and Confessions articles not absolutely necessary, and even when they sometimes expressed those articles in other terms than those of Scripture. Since all the truths of our holy faith are exceedingly precious, and are at the same time intimately connected together, prudence requires us to provide for the security of such as are necessary, by maintaining those which, although less necessary, are yet worthy of all acceptation. It is expedient, also, for the Church, solicitously to distinguish and separate herself from all who pervert the truth: and her safety is ill consulted by those who, under the specious pretext of peace and toleration, would have her to embrace with open arms, all that hold errors not entirely fundamental. Conduct of this sort would be utterly unworthy of the chaste Spouse of Jesus. As heretics, too, are accustomed to use general expressions with a view to deceive, and while they retain the words of Scripture, impose on them a foreign and unnatural sense; necessity sometimes indispensably requires us, for the purpose of detecting the wiles of seducers with the greater facility, to express the genuine meaning of Scripture in our own language. Thus the Orthodox, long ago, wisely distinguished themselves from the Arians by the term *Consubstantial*.* The experience of all ages clearly shows, that persons who calumniate forms of that kind, and are pleased with none excepting such as are extremely brief, and

composed entirely of the mere words of Scripture, are secretly entertaining some mischievous design.¹⁰

DISSERTATION III: ON SAVING FAITH

I. HAVING introduced ourselves to the subject, by saying as much as seemed necessary to our purpose, respecting the Authors and the Authority of the Creed, and also respecting Fundamental Articles in general, let us now proceed to take a nearer view of the several articles which this summary contains; beginning in this Dissertation with the expression, I BELIEVE. This single phrase supplies a copious subject of discourse. It comprises four topics, and those, too, of very great moment. 1st, The ACT of believing itself, or SAVING FAITH. 2dly, The special APPROPRIATION of that act to the mind of every Christian, so that each believer believes for himself. It is not said, WE BELIEVE, but I BELIEVE. 3dly, The CONSCIOUSNESS of that act, by which every believer may and ought to be conscious and assured of his own faith. 4thly, The PROFESSION with the mouth, of that faith which dwells and operates in the heart. We shall illustrate each of these in order.

II. SAVING FAITH, the nature of which we are now about to explain, is not any one particular act or habit of the soul; nor ought it to be limited to any one faculty of the human mind. It is complex, and consists of various acts; which, without the least confusion, pervade one another, and, by a delightful co-operation, mutually promote and assist each other. It implies a change of the whole man. It is the source of every part of the spiritual life. It is, in fine, the holy energy and activity of the whole soul, exercising itself towards God in Christ. The entire extent of this principle, therefore, can hardly be distinctly comprehended under any one conception.

III. Let none consider it strange, that we include so many ingredients under the name of one Christian grace. As when men speak of life, they intend by that word a principle, which, diffusing itself through the whole soul and its various faculties, communicates its virtue also to the body, and extends its influence to all the actions of the living person; so when we speak of faith, which is a most fertile source of every part of the spiritual life, we understand by this term, a principle which pervades all the faculties of the soul, and is the proper mean of uniting them to Christ, and of thus quickening, and making them holy, and happy.

IV. Many things, both natural and moral, are almost universally allowed to extend themselves through the whole soul, and not to admit of being restricted to any one faculty. In things natural, we have an instance in Free-will, or Free-choice;* which, as choice is referred principally to the understanding, as free, rather to the will: so that, as Bernard somewhere speaks, "man is his own free-man, with respect to his "will; his own judge, with respect to his reason." In things moral, we may mention the divine image and original righteousness; which are to be viewed as residing neither in the understanding only, nor in the will only, but as adorning each of these faculties.

V. Would not every difficulty be removed, and would not the whole controversy which is agitated among Divines with regard to the seat of faith, be settled, were we to deny, as we can justly do, that the understanding and the will are really distinct, either from the soul, or from one another? What else is the understanding, but the soul understanding and knowing? What is the will, but the soul willing and desiring? We must by no means consider the soul as a substance which is brutish and irrational in itself, and becomes intelligent and rational only in consequence of some other thing being superadded to it. As to the notion of those who allege that the understanding is derived from the soul by a kind of emanation, it is scarcely possible to conceive how this can take place. If the soul, in its own proper and formal nature, does not include the power of reasoning, it cannot

produce it; for it is vain to expect from a cause, that which it neither formally nor eminently contains. But if the soul possesses, of itself, the power of reasoning, there is no necessity for some other faculty being superadded to that power, of which the soul is thus already possessed. The same remarks apply to the will. It is not really distinct from the soul, any more than the understanding. The will is the soul itself, so far as the soul is a substance which God has endowed with an original capacity to desire what is good.

As both these faculties are formally, not really or essentially, distinct from the soul, so they are only formally distinct from one another. If the will be so separate from the understanding as, considered in itself, to be blind, it is impossible to show in what manner it can perceive, and thus rationally desire, an object which the understanding exhibits as good. For what reason, let me ask, should we make a real difference betwixt these two powers? Is it because their objects are different? The object of both is, in fact, the same, namely, a true good; though in the manner of considering it there is a diversity,—while the understanding contemplates the good as true, and the will desires the same true object, as it is good. And is there not a far greater difference betwixt the objects of the understanding, as a speculative and as a practical faculty; which, however, philosophers generally agree in regarding as one and the same power of the mind?—Is it because their acts are different? But every diversity of acts does not infer a diversity of power. Simple apprehension, surely, differs from judging and reasoning; which are, nevertheless, acts of the same faculty. Since it appears, then, that the faculties of understanding and will cannot be separated from each other, let it not be thought strange, that we should consider faith as subsisting in both.

VI. It seems proper, in the mean time, to remark that, amongst the various acts of faith which we are about to describe, there is one which holds the principal place, and in which, as it unites us to Christ and justifies us, we apprehend the essence and formal nature of faith to consist. This must be carefully attended to, particularly in the

matter of justification; lest several expressions of love which, in different ways, are involved in the exercise of faith, should be rashly numbered among the causes of our justification.

VII. It must also be kept in view, that several things which, for the sake of accuracy, we shall distinctly and particularly explain, are, in various forms, mutually interwoven in the exercise of faith. Whilst the whole soul is exerting itself in this work of God, many operations are, conjunctly, and without an adherence to any certain method, directed towards God and Christ; which the believer earnestly engaged in the work itself, has neither leisure, nor in many instances inclination, nor sometimes even the power, to arrange distinctly in their proper order. That we may understand, however, the more thoroughly, the whole nature and exercise of faith, it is proper for us to attend to its natural progress.

VIII. The first attainment which faith includes or supposes, is the KNOWLEDGE of the truths believed. This appears, in opposition to the absurd doctrine of Popish doctors, 1st, From express passages of holy writ, which make mention of faith in such terms as manifestly intimate, that knowledge is involved in its nature and exercise. 2dly, From the very nature of faith itself, which unquestionably signifies an assent given to truth which God has revealed, and therefore necessarily presupposes the knowledge of these two things: 1. That God has revealed some truth: 2. What it is, to which it assents, as a truth divinely revealed. It is absurd to say, that a person assents to any truth of which he is utterly ignorant, and respecting which he does not know that any testimony worthy of credit exists. 3dly, From the manner in which faith is produced in the elect This is done, externally, by the preaching and hearing of the Gospel, which reveals what ought to be believed, and manifests the truth to every man's conscience; and, internally, by the teaching of God the Father. If faith, then, is generated in the heart by means of instruction, both external and internal, it must certainly be founded in knowledge; for knowledge is the proper and immediate effect of instruction. 4thly, From the natural consequence of faith, to wit, the confession and

vindication of the truth.^e It is impossible that this can take place without knowledge. Hilary has well said, "No one can either express what he knows not, or believe what he cannot express."

IX. It must indeed be acknowledged, that, owing to the darkness of our minds in the present state, many truths are unknown even to the most enlightened; and many are believed with an implicit faith, by those, in particular, that are babes in Christ, young and inexperienced. Christians of this description, hold, in general, the whole Scripture as the infallible standard of all truth, while it contains many points of which they are ignorant; and they embrace the leading doctrines of Christianity, in which many truths are concentrated, that are evidently deducible from them, and which, at least in their foundation, they believe. The Apostle John, accordingly, affirms concerning the faithful, that they "know all things," because, through the teachings of the Spirit, they have learned that foundation of foundations, to which all saving truths are referred, and from which they are deduced. I will go further. It is possible that one, to whom God, who is sovereign in the distribution of his blessings, has allotted a scanty portion of knowledge, may yet be remarkably strong in faith, and even prepared to suffer martyrdom. From this, however, it by no means follows, that faith is better defined by ignorance than by knowledge; or that those act a laudable part, who, contrary to the injunction of Scripture, cherish ignorance, among the people, as the mother of faith and of devotion. No one can at all believe a doctrine, of which he is entirely ignorant; and all are bound to exert their best endeavours, that their faith may not be implicit, but as distinct as possible; which becometh those who are "filled with all knowledge."^h The more distinctly any person perceives, in the light of the Spirit, a truth which God has revealed, and the more clearly he discerns the rays of divinity shining in it, the more firmly will he give credit to that truth. Those very martyrs, who were uninformed respecting other matters, saw most clearly and distinctly, that the truths for which they did not hesitate to sacrifice their lives, were most certain and divine; though possibly they were incapable of reasoning at great length in their defence.

X. Further, the things which it is necessary for a man to know in order to his becoming a believer, are, in general, the divinity of the Scriptures, into which faith must ultimately be resolved; more especially, those points that relate to the obtaining of salvation in Christ; which may be summarily reduced to these three heads. 1st, That you know that by sin you have become alienated from the life of God, and have come short of his glory; and that it is impossible that either yourself, or an angel from heaven, or any creature in the universe, nay, that even all creatures united, can extricate you from this abyss of misery, and restore you to a state of felicity. 2dly, That you know the Lord Jesus Christ as "full of grace and truth;"^k besides whom there is no other name given under heaven, by which we can be saved; and in the knowledge of whom, consists eternal life.^m 3dly, That you know that, in order to your obtaining salvation in Christ, it is necessary for you to be united to Christ by the Spirit and by faith; and to surrender yourself to him, not only to be justified, but also to be sanctified, and to be governed by his sovereign authority, "proving what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God."

XI. To knowledge must be added, in the second place, ASSENT; which is that act of faith, by which a man receives and acknowledges as true, those doctrines which he knows; receiving the testimony of God, and thus setting to his seal that God is true. Assent is principally founded on the infallible veracity of God, testifying concerning himself and his Son.^p On this testimony, delivered in the Scriptures, and diffusing all around the rays of its divinity, the believer no less firmly relies, than if he had been immediately present at the revelation of all those doctrines. When the soul, enlightened by the Spirit, beholds those divine truths, and discerns in them a certain God-like excellency,* and a most beautiful harmony and inseparable connexion, she cannot withhold her assent from truth recommending itself by so invincible evidence; but embraces for certain that which she thus knows, with as little doubt or hesitation as if she had seen it with her own eyes, or handled it with her own hands, or had been caught up to the third heaven and heard it immediately from the mouth of God himself. Whatever may

be the murmurings of the carnal mind, or whatever cavils vain sophists may urge, the soul, though perhaps she may not be prepared for refuting every objection, persists, however, in embracing and confessing the truth; which she has seen too clearly, and heard too certainly from the mouth of God, ever to allow herself to be drawn away from it, by any sophistical arguments whatever. I have not followed after cunningly devised fables, says the soul, when I believed the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; but, in the Spirit, was an eye-witness of his majesty, and heard his voice from heaven. Thus faith is accompanied with ὑποστασις, substance, ἔλεγχος, evidence, and πληροφορια, full assurance. It will not be unprofitable, to offer a few remarks on the meaning of each of these words.

XII. Πληροφορια, full assurance, is an expression which occurs more than once in the writings of the Apostle Paul. He speaks of πληροφορια συνεσεως, "the full assurance of understanding;" πληροφορια της ἐλπίδος "the full assurance of hope;" and πληροφορια πιστεως, "the full assurance of faith." According to its etymology, this word denotes a carrying with full sail; the metaphor being taken, probably, from ships when their sails are filled with favourable gales. Thus it may here signify the vehement inclination of the mind, impelled by the Holy Spirit, towards an assent to the truth perceived. Hesychius, a most excellent master of the Greek language, explains it by βεθαιοτης, stability. In this sense, πληροφορια πιστιως, "the full assurance of faith," is precisely of the same import with στερεωμα της εις χριστον πιστεως, "the steadfastness of faith in Christ." The Apostle seems to use these two expressions as synonymous; and, in the gospel of Luke, πεπληροφορημενα πραγματα, are "things which are most surely believed."x So firm is the assent which the believer ought to give to divine truth.

XIII. Most emphatical, also, is the term ὑποστασις, hypostasis, or substance, which the Apostle employs when speaking of faith.y The Latin language furnishes no word that can sufficiently express its

whole energy. 1st, It denotes the existence, or, as some of the ancients expressed it, the extantia, the standing out of a thing; in which sense philosophers say that the properties and circumstances of things have a hypostasis, that is, really exist, and are not mere figments of our own imagination. Accordingly, faith causes the thing hoped for, though not yet actually existing, to exist in the mind of the believer; who assents as firmly to the promises of God, as if he saw the blessings promised already present. Chrysostome had this idea in his mind, when he explained the words of the Apostle thus; "The resurrection has not yet taken place, "nor doth it yet exist in itself; but hope," (we may say faith,) "gives it a place and an existence in our "mind."* The Greek Scholiast, whose words are quoted by Beza, has very happily expressed the same idea, thus: "Since those things which are the objects of hope, have as yet no existence, and are not yet present; faith, so to speak, becomes their substance and essence, because it makes them, in some sense, to exist and to be present, by believing that they are." 2dly, Ὑποστάσις signifies also a basis or foundation; in which sense, Diodorus Siculus, cited by Gomar, speaks of "the foundation of the sepulchre."* Calvin seems also to favour this signification of the word, when he says, "Faith is the hypostasis, that is, the support or possession, on which we fix our foot."† 3dly, It denotes continuance, or that constancy which will in no degree yield to the attack of an enemy. Thus Plutarch says, —"None of the enemy keeping the field, but all betaking themselves to flight;"‡ and Polybius, in his description of Horatius Cocles, "They feared not so much his strength, as his resolution and constancy," which scorned to give way.§ And, indeed, there is something in faith, which nobly withstands all the assaults of temptation, and preserves it from being moved away from its assent to the truth which it has once discerned. Now, if we join all these ideas together, we shall assert, that faith is so firm an assent to divine truth, that it sets before us the objects of a far distant futurity, as if they were present; and becomes the support of the soul, upon which it stedfastly fixes its foot, yielding to no assault.

XIV. Nor must we omit to mention that the Apostle calls faith *ἐλεγχος*, *elenchus*, the evidence of things not seen. This word denotes two things: 1st, A certain demonstration. "An *elenchus*," says Aristotle, is that which cannot possibly be otherwise, but must necessarily be as we affirm."* 2dly, Conviction of mind, arising from such a demonstration of the truth; as Aristophanes says, "You cannot convince me of that."† Faith, therefore, if it is *ἐλεγχος*, an *elenchus*, implies a firm conviction of mind, founded on a clear and infallible demonstration of the truth. This demonstration of the truth, it must be observed, rests upon the testimony of God, who cannot possibly deceive, from which faith reasons thus; "Whatever God, who is truth itself, reveals, cannot fail to be most certain, and worthy of all acceptance; although, perhaps, I can neither see it with my eyes, nor fully comprehend it in my mind."

XV. All these illustrations serve to show, that the assent included in faith, has a strength and an assurance, which no certainty of mathematical demonstration can surpass. Those, therefore, who contend that falsehood may be found in a divine faith, express themselves in a manner extremely unguarded; since the proper object of faith is the testimony of God, which is necessarily true, and superior in certainty to all[^] demonstration; and since they can specify no passage of holy writ, in which any thing not true, is proposed to the faith of mankind.

XVI. Another difficulty, however, must here be removed. If faith is so firm and unwavering an assent, does it follow that those are destitute of true faith, who sometimes stagger even with regard to fundamental truths? I answer, 1st, We are now describing faith, considered theoretically, as a Christian grace to the perfection of which we all ought to aspire, not as it is sometimes found in its subject. 2dly, It is possible that waverings, staggerings, doubtings, and even inclinations towards the opposite errors, may at times arise in the minds of the most excellent believers, especially when they are exposed to some violent temptation; as is manifest from the waverings of Asaph, Jeremiah, and others, respecting the providence

of God. But these are so many defects of faith, arising from the weakness of the flesh. 3dly, Faith immediately resists those temptations; it assents not to the suggestions of the devil, or the dictates of the carnal mind; nor doth it ever rest, until, having entered the sanctuary of God, and having received instruction from the Spirit of faith, it is established in the contemplation and acknowledgment of those truths with respect to which it was disposed to waver. There, at last, and no where else, it finds rest to the sole of its foot.

XVII. The natural consequence of this assent, is the love of the truth thus known and acknowledged. This is the third act of faith, and of this the Apostle speaks when he says; "They received not the love of the truth that they might be saved." Since the saying truths of the Gospel afford a bright manifestation of the glory of God, as not only his veracity in his testimony, but also his wisdom, holiness, righteousness, goodness, power, and other divine perfections, shine forth in them,—the believing soul, contemplating these amiable perfections of the Deity in those truths, cannot fail to burn with an ardent love for them, to exult in them, and to glorify God. Hence the believer is said to "give glory to God," and to¹⁵ "love the praise (the glory) of God," Above all, the soul delights in the fundamental truth respecting Christ. This it loves as an inestimable treasure, as a pearl of unparalleled value. This to believers is a price, that is, most precious. We admit that, strictly speaking, love is to be distinguished from faith; yet the workings of these two graces are so interwoven with each other, that we can neither explain nor exercise faith, without some operations of love intermingling, such as that of which we now treat This remark has been formerly made by some of the greatest Divines; as, not to mention others at present, by Chamier* and Wendelin.† Each of these writers avails himself of the authority of Augustine, and makes the following quotation from him: "What is it to believe in God? It is by believing to love him."‡ See, also, Le Blanc, that celebrated Divine of Sedan, in his learned Theses.§ If any one, however, is disposed, agreeably to the language of the Schools, to denominate this love, an imperate|| act of faith, we shall not

contend with him; provided it is understood that the believing soul, while exercising faith, cannot but sincerely love the doctrines of the Gospel, known and acknowledged, as they are in Jesus, rejoicing that such things are true, and delighting in the truth; and is thus very differently affected from devils and ungodly men, who disrelish those doctrines which they know to be true, and wish that they were false.

XVIII. Hence arises a fourth act of faith, A HUNGER AND THIRST AFTER CHRIST. The believer, while he knows, acknowledges, and loves the truths of salvation, cannot but wish that all those doctrines which are true in Christ, may also be true to him, and that, according to these truths, and by means of them, himself maybe sanctified and blessed. It is his earnest desire that, having been alienated from the life of God through sin, he may be freely justified, and thus possess a sure title to the glory of God; and that his justification may be sealed by sanctification. This is the hungering and thirsting after righteousness mentioned Matth. 5:6. How is it possible, that the man who believes and feels that in himself he is extremely miserable,—who is fully persuaded that he can be rescued from his misery by no creature either in heaven or on earth,—who sees at the same time a fulness of salvation in Christ,—who is assured that without union to Christ he cannot be saved, who cordially loves the truth concerning the fulness of salvation in Christ alone and in communion with him;—how is it possible, I say, that such a person should not seriously and ardently desire to have Christ dwelling in him,—that he should not seek and pant after him, and have so vehement a longing as can be satisfied with nothing short of the possession of the object desired; as hunger and thirst are allayed only by meat and drink?

XIX. This hunger and thirst is succeeded by A RECEIVING OF CHRIST for justification, sanctification, and complete salvation. This is the fifth act of faith, and indeed its formal and principal act. Our heavenly Father freely offers his Son, and the Lord Jesus Christ freely offers himself, with all his benefits and the fulness which dwells in him to the sick and weary soul, saying; "Behold me, behold me."d The soul, now conscious of her misery, discerning also, with

joy and hope, a fulness of salvation in Christ, and earnestly desiring communion with him, cannot fail, with the utmost alacrity, to apprehend and receive the inestimable blessing thus exhibited, and by receiving to appropriate, or make it her own. By this act, Christ becomes, so to speak, the peculiar property of the believing soul. All that belongs to Christ being exhibited together with him, the believer claims to himself whatever is Christ's, and especially his righteousness, which is the foundation of salvation. By apprehending Christ in this manner, he is united to him; and being united to Christ, he is considered as having done and suffered those very things which Christ, as his Surety, did and suffered in his stead. When this is rightly observed, it is easy to understand how we are justified by faith in Christ.

XX. The Scripture more than once describes this act of faith in express terms. Remarkable is the passage in John 1:12. where "as many as received him," is equivalent to "them that believe on his name;" and in Coloss. 2:6. "As ye have, therefore, received Christ Jesus the Lord," &c. To these may be added what the Lord very emphatically says in Isaiah, "Let him take hold (fast hold) of my strength," or of my tower, so as not to let it go. The words הַחֲזִיק, to take fast hold of, and שָׁלַח to let go, are opposed to each other.

XXI. But, as the soul, while it thus apprehends Christ for salvation, at the same time RESTS and DEPENDS upon him, the exercise of faith is frequently explained by this metaphor also; as in the expression, "By thee have I been holden up;" and again, "They stay themselves upon the God of Israel,"^h assuming the appearance of a genuine faith. The same thing is expressed by another Hebrew word namely, נִשְׁעָן, as in Isaiah 50:10.—"and stay himself upon his God." If you are disposed nicely to distinguish this act of the believing soul, thus resting on Christ and staying itself upon him, from the reception of Christ, and to consider it as posterior to the receiving of him, I shall not vehemently oppose you. We may, therefore, call this the sixth act of faith.

XXII. This appears to us to be very significantly expressed by the Hebrew term האמין , which properly signifies to cast one's self upon the veracity and power of another, in order to be carried; as an infant casts itself, for this purpose, into the arms of its nurse. It is derived from אמן , which is properly to bear, to carry; and from which comes אומן a bearer, a nursing-father. "Carry them in thy bosom, as האומן a nursing-father beareth the sucking-child." Hence also חאמן , to be carried: "Thy daughters תאמנה shall be nursed (carried) at thy side," in thine arms: for it is said in a parallel passage, "Ye shall be borne upon her sides."m Christ carries believers, as nurslings,* in his bosom;n and Moses, too, makes use of this figure: "The Lord thy God bare thee, as a man doth bear his son;" "underneath are the everlasting arms."p According to the natural signification of the word, then, חאמן is to give one's self to Christ to be carried, and so to throw one's self into his bosom and his arms; by which similitude the activity of the believing soul towards Christ is most elegantly expressed.

XXIII. Farther, when the believer thus receives Christ and rests upon him, he considers him not merely as a SAVIOUR, but also as a LORD. He receives a whole Christ, and acquiesces in him in all those characters which he sustains: but he is not less a Lord than a Saviour; nay, he cannot be a Saviour, unless he be also a Lord. Our salvation consists in this, that we belong not to the devil, nor to ourselves, nor to any other creature, but are the property of Christ the Lord. Faith, therefore, receives "Christ Jesus, the LORD." Christ offers himself as a Husband to the soul, only upon this condition, that she acknowledge him likewise as her Lord.r The soul, accordingly, when she throws herself into the arms of Jesus, renounces her own will, and yields herself up to the sovereign will of Jesus, to be carried whithersoever he pleases. Hence faith includes an humble surrender and giving up of one's self, by which the believer, suitably to the sacred obligations under which he is laid, yields himself wholly to Christ, who is freely given him, saying, "I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine." It is said of the Christians of Macedonia, that "they gave themselves to the Lord;" which they seem

to have done nearly in the same form with Amasai and his companions, when they gave themselves to David, saying, "Thine are we, O David, and on thy side, thou son of Jesse."u This surrender that we make of ourselves to Christ, which we number as the seventh act of faith, is a fruitful and permanent source of all true obedience; which, on this account, is denominated "the obedience of faith," that is, an obedience flowing from faith.

XXIV. After the believer has thus received Christ, and surrendered himself to him, he may and ought to conclude, that Christ, with all his saving benefits, is his, and that he will surely bless him; for faith reasons infallibly in this manner: "Christ offers himself as a complete Saviour to all that are labouring and heavy-laden, hungering and thirsting, to all that receive him, and are disposed to surrender themselves to him: But I am labouring and heavy-laden, hungering and thirsting, &c. Therefore, Christ hath offered himself to me; he is now mine, and I am his, nor shall any thing ever separate me from his love." This is the eighth act of faith, a reflex act, arising from the consciousness of justifying faith.

XXV. Hence arises, in fine, the holy CONFIDENCE of a soul conscious of its union to Christ by faith, a confidence accompanied with tranquillity, joy, peace, a bold defiance of every enemy and every danger, glorying in the Lord, and glorying in adversity. Whilst the soul leans with pleasure upon her beloved, with stretched out arms casting herself upon him, or with her elbow sweetly reclining upon him, (for, according to the Talmudists, מרפק signifies the arm-pit,) assured of mutual communion and mutual love, whilst she sings, "I am my beloved's, and his desire is towards me;"—she piously exults and delights in her Lord, is filled with his love, "rejoices with joy unspeakable and full of glory,"z sweetly melts by the glowing flames of reciprocal love, and, in fine, triumphs in hope of the glory of God.

XXVI. Let us now briefly recapitulate, and exhibit in one view, the particulars which have thus been stated at large. Faith includes the

knowledge of the mystery of God and of Christ in the light of grace, and the full assent of the mind to the truth of this mystery on account of the authority of God by whom it is attested. Nor is this all; the believer also loves the truth, exults in it and glorifies God; he is ardently desirous of fellowship with the Saviour, that those doctrines which are true in Christ may be true to himself for his salvation; consequently, when Christ is offered to him by the word and Spirit, he receives him with the greatest alacrity of soul, rests and leans upon him, surrenders and yields up himself to him; after which, he now glories in him as his own, and delights in him exceedingly, reclining under the shadow of the tree of life, and satiating himself with its delicious fruits. This is "the faith of God's elect," an invaluable gift, the bond of our union to Christ, the scale of Paradise, the key of the ark of the Covenant by which its treasures are unlocked, the permanent spring of a holy, tranquil, and blessed life.

XXVII. If any one apprehends that he speaks more correctly, when he so distinguishes these acts of faith as to say, that some of them precede faith strictly so called, as the knowledge of revealed truth, to which some excellent Divines add the pious inclination of the will towards God; that others pertain to the very form and essence of faith, as assent, a hunger and thirst after righteousness, the reception of Christ as a Saviour and Lord, and the flight of the soul to him for refuge; and that others are accidental, and belong only to a strong and established faith, to wit, the assurance that Christ is now mine, and a most delightful leaning upon him as mine, joined with exultation and glorying in him;—we see no reason why such a person may not enjoy the accuracy to which he is partial. It is by no means displeasing to us; we only intended to show that all these acts concur in the full exercise of faith.

XXVIII. From what has been said, it is evident, that the faith which is commonly called Historical and Temporary, differs very widely from that saving faith which we have just described. I question, however, the propriety of those terms. A naked assent given to those truths which are contained in the word of God, founded on the authority of

God who declares them, without any pious motion of the will, is styled a historical faith. But, since this assent may not only be given to the historical parts of the sacred volume, but extends also to the precepts, doctrines, promises, and threatenings, the character historical applied to this faith, seems to be too confined. Possibly, however, it may be so denominated, in reference to the manner in which it is conversant with its object; for as a person who reads histories of transactions in which he has no concern, barely contemplates them, and is not inwardly moved or affected with them, so those who have merely the faith in question, satisfy themselves with idle speculation about the doctrines taught in the word of God, and do not reduce them to practice. Yet it is not universally true, that histories, even such of them as relate to the most ancient events, or to the affairs of another world, are read without interest, emotion, and application. It would, therefore, be better to call this a theoretical, or speculative faith, or the faith of naked assent.

XXIX. Our Lord calls that a temporary faith, which, besides giving this general assent, rejoices in the truth known and acknowledged, makes profession of it, and gives rise to many emotions in the heart, and actions in the life, which exhibit some appearance of piety; but continues only for a time, while the external circumstances of the church are altogether prosperous, and fails, when the storms of persecution assail her. This is aptly denominated by our Lord temporary. But it may possibly happen, and, indeed, it is frequently found, that while the state of the church is tranquil and flourishing, men may persevere to the end of their life in this profession of faith, and imaginary joy, and in such a course of life as they account sufficient for the purposes of piety. The denomination of temporary faith, therefore, which our Lord gave to the faith only of apostates, is with less propriety applied to this faith, which, though not saving, is yet abiding. It would be better perhaps to call it a presumptuous faith.

XXX. It is of importance, however, to our consolation, to know distinctly, by what means this faith may be distinguished from a true, living, and saving faith, which it boldly counterfeits. First, there is no small difference as to the ACKNOWLEDGMENT of revealed truths. This presumptuous faith assents to them as truths: but, being destitute of the true light of the Spirit, it does not see the native beauty of those truths, or their excellence as they are in Jesus; it does not discern the perfections of God shining brightly in them; nor does it form a right estimate of their value. When it first begins to know them, it is affected with their novelty and extraordinary nature; but it does not burn with an ardent love to them, nor is it much concerned to have them, not merely impressed upon the soul, but also expressed in the disposition and conduct; and, whenever other objects present themselves to the mind, which flatter it with a fair appearance of pleasure or profit, it easily suffers the ideas of those truths which are hostile to that gratification to be obliterated, and almost wishes that there were no such truths, the certainty of which, however reluctantly, it is compelled to admit. But, in genuine faith, the reverse of all this takes place, as we have shown in the seventeenth Section.

XXXI. Secondly, There is a great difference in THE APPLICATION OF THE PROMISES OF THE GOSPEL. A presumptuous faith does not proceed in the right method: it rashly imagines that the salvation promised in the Gospel belongs to itself; and this hasty conclusion is built either upon no foundation at all, or upon a false one. Sometimes the presumptuous, without any self-examination or diligent inquiry into their own character, which they avoid as too irksome and inconvenient an exercise,—foolishly flatter themselves,—arrogantly lay claim to the grace of our Lord, and sleep on securely, indulging this delusive dream, neither inquiring nor disposed to inquire what ground they have for this imagination. Sometimes they lay as a foundation for their confidence, either a preposterous notion respecting the general mercy of God, and some easy method of salvation which they discover in the Gospel-covenant; or an opinion of the sufficiency of their own holiness, because they are not so

extremely vicious as the most daring profligates; or their external communion with the Church and attendance on the public worship; or the security of their sleeping conscience, and the soothing fancies of their own dreams, which they regard as the peace of God, and the consolations of the Holy Spirit. By these and the like vanities of their own imagination, they deceive themselves; as if these were sufficient marks of grace. But true believers, impressed with a deep sense of their own wretchedness, panting after the grace of the Lord Jesus, and laying hold upon it with a trembling humility, dare not, however, boast of it as already their own, till after diligent investigation they have discovered certain and infallible evidences of grace in themselves. With profound humility, with a kind of sacred dread, and with a sincere self-denial, they approach to lay hold on the grace of Christ: nor do they conclude that they have obtained it, till they have inquired carefully, first into the marks of grace, and, then, into their own hearts. It is otherwise with the presumptuous in both these respects; for they rashly seize that which is not offered to them in any such order, (since God doth not offer security and joy to sinners, before their mind is affected with sorrow for the sins which they have committed, and roused to a due solicitude regarding salvation;) and, then, they rashly boast of having attained grace, although they cannot make good their pretensions to a participation of the grace of God, by any one satisfactory proof.

XXXII. A third difference consists in the JOY which accompanies or follows both kinds of faith; and this difference is two-fold; 1st, In respect to the origin; 2dly, In respect to the effect of that joy. In presumptuous faith, joy arises, partly, from the novelty and rarity of the things revealed, (for the knowledge of a rare and profound truth delights the understanding, as the enjoyment of a good, the will;) partly, from the vain imagination that the blessings offered in the Gospel belong to themselves; of which, from the common gifts of the Holy Spirit, they have some kind of taste, though very superficial, and, so to speak, affecting only the extremity of their lips. But in living faith, there is a much nobler and more solid joy, springing from the love of those most precious truths, by the knowledge of

which, the soul taught of God, justly considers itself inexpressibly blessed;—from a well-founded hope and a certain persuasion of its own spirit, with which the testimony of the Divine Spirit concurs, respecting the present grace and the future glory of God;—and, finally, from a delightful sense of present grace, and a happy anticipation of future glory.

Since there is so wide a difference betwixt the causes of these two kinds of joy, it is not surprising that the effects are also extremely different. The former makes the soul full of itself, leaves it void of the love of God, and by its vain titillation, lulls it still deeper asleep in carnal security. The latter, on the contrary, fills believers with high admiration of God's astonishing and unmerited "kindness towards man," inflames them with love to the most gracious and companionate Jesus, and generates a solicitous care, lest they do any thing unworthy of that unbounded favour and goodness of God, or grieve and offend that Spirit of grace, who hath dealt so mercifully with them.

XXXIII. The fourth difference consists in their FRUITS. A presumptuous faith either plunges men into a profound sleep of security, which they increase by the indulgence of the flesh; or leads to some reformation in their external conduct, and causes them, in a certain degree, to "escape the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ;" or, when it operates in its most excellent manner, it stirs up some slight and vanishing resolutions and endeavours after a stricter piety. But, even then, it doth not purify the heart; it doth not introduce new principles of holiness; and, whenever either the allurements of the world and the flesh, or some disadvantages attending evangelical religion, assault them with more than ordinary force, they soon become weary of that course of goodness on which they had entered, and return to their sins, like "the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."e By that superficial knowledge which they have received of evangelical truth, and of the good, no less pleasant and profitable than honourable, which the Gospel exhibits,—by this

knowledge, faintly imprinted on their minds, they are, indeed, excited to some amendment of life: but, when the attainment of any present good or the avoidance of any imminent evil is in question, those ideas of what is true and good, which the Gospel had suggested to them, are so obliterated, that they prefer the acquisition of a present pleasure or advantage, or an escape from a present impending evil, to all the promises of the Gospel, and to all evangelical piety. A true and living faith produces far more excellent and salutary fruits. It impresses the image of what is good upon the soul in so deep characters, that it esteems nothing more noble or delightful than to make every possible exertion to attain it. It imprints the bright and spotless holiness of the Lord Jesus, in so vivid colours, that the soul, beholding it with the greatest affection, is transformed into its image. It so pathetically represents the love of a dying Saviour, that the believer deems nothing more desirable, than, in return, to live and die to him.g It gives so lively a view, and produces so indelible an impression, of the promised bliss, that, for the sake of that bliss, the soul is prepared to face every danger, and to sustain every suffering. Thus it purifies the very heart, and disposes it to the practice of a sincere and steadfast piety; which is always more lively or more languid, in proportion to the vigour or languor of faith.i

XXXIV. Having thus illustrated the nature of a living faith, and the manner in which it is distinguished from that which is presumptuous, we shall now accomplish what remains to be done with the greater brevity and ease. Let us proceed, then, to what we promised to speak of in the second place, viz. What is intended by the appropriation of this faith to every Christian in particular. We do not say, WE BELIEVE, but I BELIEVE. The principal reasons of this, appear to be the three following. 1st, Because the faith of one cannot avail for the salvation of another; but every individual must be justified by his own faith. We do not deny that the faith of parents is so far profitable to their children, that, on account of it, they are numbered among God's covenant-people, so long as they do not by their conduct give evidence of the contrary. The faith of the parents,

however, is not sufficient for the salvation of their children, unless the children themselves be regenerated and united to Christ by the Spirit of grace. To this is usually referred that remarkable passage, Habakkuk 2:4. which some render, "The just shall live by his (own) faith." But I will not dissemble that the relative "his" may properly be applied to Christ, of whom it is said in the preceding verse, "he will surely come, he will not tarry;" so that the meaning may be, by the faith of him, that is, of Christ. This interpretation corresponds with the expression in Isaiah, "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many," where "his knowledge" signifies the knowledge of Christ. This, also, appears to be a richer sense, and more glorifying to Christ. It remains, however, a truth, that every man is justified by his own faith. 2dly, Another reason for the singular number is, that this Summary of faith was framed in the primitive church for this purpose, that they who were about to be baptized, when interrogated with regard to their faith, might return an answer, everyone for himself. It was usual to examine a person who was going to receive baptism, in this manner; "What do you believe?" To which he replied, "I believe in God the Father," &c. 3dly, This reason also may be added, that we cannot give testimony concerning the faith of another with the same certainty as concerning our own faith. Augustine has well said, "Faith resides in our innermost parts; nor does any man see it in another, but every one may see it in himself. Hence it is possible, that it may be counterfeited by artifice, and supposed to be in one who, in reality, is destitute of it. Every one, therefore, sees his own faith in himself."*

XXXV. To proceed now to the third division of the subject; let us inquire in what manner every one may be conscious of his own faith. That it is possible and usual for believers to have in themselves a consciousness of their own faith, Paul teaches us, not only by his example, when he says, "I know whom I have believed," but also by the following exhortation addressed unto all, "Examine yourselves, whether you be in the faith; prove your own selves."o This exhortation would be quite nugatory, were it impossible for men, by examining and proving themselves, to attain the knowledge of that

which they thus investigate. That this is a possible attainment, he intimates in a manner still more express, by adding, "Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you?"

XXXVI. Nor is it difficult to understand, how this consciousness of faith may arise in the minds of believers. It is requisite, in the first place, that they be well instructed from the word of God, with respect to the nature of saving faith. Not that it is necessary to burden and perplex the minds of the weak with a multiplicity of marks. Only let the principal and essential acts of a true faith be simply and clearly shown them. Let them be urged to attend to the difference betwixt a strong and a weak faith; betwixt a lively and a languid faith; betwixt a faith which is calm and tranquil, and that which is shaken by numerous temptations. Let them be taught, not only that the faith which is weak, languid, and shaken, is, yet true and genuine; but also, that, when they examine themselves, a weak faith is not to be tried by the idea* of a strong faith; nor a languid by the idea of a lively faith; nor that which is shaken by the idea of that which is tranquil; but that each is to be compared with its own proper idea. This being well considered, let every one examine himself, and see whether he puts forth such acts of faith as those which we have now described. Of this, no one that attends properly to himself can be ignorant. Every man is immediately conscious to himself of those things which he thinks and wills, for the precise reason that he thinks and wills them. Now, faith is, unquestionably, an exercise of the understanding and will.

XXXVII. Some, perhaps, may object, "If it is represented as so easy for one to possess a consciousness of his own faith, how does it happen, that a great number of believers are tormented with harassing doubts and waverings, with respect to this point?" For this, however, several reasons may be assigned. 1st, It often happens that they have either formed to themselves a wrong idea of saving faith, or rashly adopted a mistaken notion of it, which others have incautiously suggested. Thus we have learned by experience, that a considerable number of afflicted souls, have entertained the opinion,

that the essence of faith, consists in a firm persuasion, and delightful sense of the love of God, and a full assurance of their own salvation. When, therefore, they could not discover these attainments in themselves, they proceeded, by a rigorous sentence, to expunge their own names from the roll of the faithful. The same persons, however, when better informed about the nature of faith, and when taught that the attainments which we have just mentioned are rather the glorious fruits of an established, than the essential acts of a genuine faith, have gradually returned to greater composure of mind. 2dly, The minds of believers are sometimes agitated by so many storms of temptation, that they do not give, or are even incapable of giving, that attention, which is necessary to distinguish the proper exercises of their own souls. In this condition, they perform every thing in so irregular and desultory a manner, that, so long as the perturbation continues, they cannot clearly discern the state of their own heart, whilst the various thoughts of their mind and emotions of their will, mutually succeed and oppose one another with surprising rapidity. 3dly, Sometimes, also, it is not easy for believers, especially when their souls are in a disconsolate state, to compare their exercises with the description of a genuine faith; or, to speak more clearly, to compare the rule with that which is to be tried by the rule. This is particularly the case, when one has proposed to himself the idea of a lively faith, and finds only a languid faith in his heart. In such circumstances, finding little agreement, or rather, the greatest difference between the two, he must almost inevitably form too unfavourable a decision respecting his faith.

XXXVIII. It is not, indeed, absolutely necessary to salvation that every one should know that he is himself a believer; for the promise of salvation is annexed to the sincerity of faith, not to the knowledge which one has of his faith. It is expedient, however, for the following purposes, that, by a careful search, every one should inquire into the truth and sincerity of his faith: 1st, That he may render to God the praise which is due for this inestimable gift. If the Apostle Paul so often rendered thanks to God for the faith of others, how much more is it incumbent on every believer to bless the Lord for his own

faith? This, however, he cannot do, unless he know that he has faith. 2dly, That he may enjoy great consolation in himself; for the consciousness of our faith is accompanied with assurance of our salvation. Accordingly, Paul joins these two together, saying; "I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day." 3dly, That, with the greater alacrity, he may run the race of piety. When he is sure that his works proceed from a principle of faith, he is certain, at the same time, that his "labour shall not be in vain in the Lord;" and this assurance so animates the believer, that he becomes "stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord."s

XXXIX. In fine, we must say something briefly with regard to the PROFESSION of faith; for the Creed is a kind of formulary of such a profession. This, the Apostle Peter, in the name of God, enjoins upon every believer; "Be ye ready always to give to every one that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you." This, the Spirit of faith dictates, influencing no less the tongues than the hearts of the faithful, as that mystical "new wine which makes the maids eloquent."u "We having the same Spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken, we also believe, and therefore speak." This the glory of God requires; to the promotion of which, by the declaration of the truth, and of the Divine perfections shining in it, our tongue ought to be subservient; and the magnifying of which, Paul had in view in that boldness which he discovered.w Love to our neighbour, also, who may be edified by this means, demands an open profession of faith. Such was the line of conduct observed by those Christian worthies, who, amidst the fury of the world, the rage of devils, and the frowns of tyrants; despising death in all its forms, whether they were cut off by the sword, or nailed to the cross, or thrown into the midst of the flames; with undaunted courage, and with a most clear unfaltering voice, (to adopt the expression of Eusebius concerning Vetius the Martyr,*)—declared those doctrines which they knew to be true. Basil the Great has nobly said, "That, rising superior to every emotion of fear and shame, we ought to display great boldness and courage in confessing our Lord

Jesus Christ and his words."!† To this, the Lord Jesus himself directs us by his own example;" he witnessed a good confession before Pontius Pilate."y To this, if it proceed from a sincere heart, a promise of salvation is annexed; whilst, on the other side, our Lord denounces the most dreadful threatenings against those, who, from false modesty and carnal cowardice, are ashamed to confess him before men.

XL. It has, therefore, been a laudable custom, observed from the most ancient times in the Christian Church, to admit no adult to the sacred laver of baptism, unless he has first made a public profession of his faith. Conformably to this practice, the children of Christians, after they had grown up to the years of discretion, were anciently presented to the Bishop, that they might act the same part which was required of adults who offered themselves for baptism. Having been initiated by baptism in infancy, when they were incapable of making a confession of faith to the Church; they were again presented by their Parents, about the end of their childhood, or when entering on youth, and examined by the Bishop, according to the form of a Catechism which was then well known and generally used. From this ancient rite, as Calvin observes,* the Church of Rome has derived her fictitious Sacrament of Confirmation. The same custom was also observed by the Bohemian Brethren; amongst whom parents presented their children, when about twelve years old, to the Pastor, in the church; that the children might make a public profession of their faith, and that it might appear, whether the parents had faithfully discharged their duty in giving them instruction, agreeably to the engagements under which they had come at their baptism. † The manner in which this observance was introduced amongst them, is accurately related in the Account of the Discipline of the Bohemian Brethren.* Something similar, as Durel † shows, is practised in the Church of England.²¹ It were to be wished that the same observance were in use in our churches also; or, at least, that they who are admitted to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper made a public profession of their faith, in the presence and audience of the whole congregation. As to persons who refuse to make such a profession,

even before the Consistory or Session, or before the Pastor in private, alleging the most frivolous apologies for their refusal,—I would they were admonished to consider, in the most serious manner, the awful denunciation of our Lord respecting those who shall be ashamed of him and of his words.

DISSERTATION IV: ON THE FAITH OF THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

I. GOD is at once the principal and the ultimate object of faith; "Ye believe in God," said our Lord to his disciples; and says the Apostle Peter,—"who by Him," that is, Christ, "do believe in God."b Believers consider God as the self-existent, uncreated truth,* on whom they may rely with the greatest safety; and as the supreme felicity, united to whom by faith, they may become inexpressibly happy. The Creed, accordingly, begins with these words, I BELIEVE IN GOD.

II. Many have supposed that these three phrases, *Credere Deum*, to believe God, *credere Deo*, to believe God,[†] and *credere in Deum*, to believe in God, ought to be thus distinguished; that the first means, to be persuaded of his existence;‡ the second, to give credit to God when he testifies any thing; the third, to rely upon God with a saving confidence of soul.

III. But as this distinction has no foundation in the Scriptures, so it takes its rise from total ignorance of the Hebrew idiom. The expression *Credere Deum*, to believe God, no where occurs in holy writ. Paul says, "he that cometh unto God, must believe that he is: and in Deum credere, to believe in God, is a Hebraism, contrary to the ancient purity both of the Greek and the Latin tongue.—The Hebrews use indifferently, ל, or ב, in connexion with אָמַן; as in the expression וַיֵּאֱמִינוּ בְּדִבְרֵי ה' "Then believed they his words," and, לֹא אָמְנוּ לְדִבְרֵי ה' "They believed not his word." This Hebraism, in common with many others, was imitated by the Hellenists,²² and by the sacred writers of the New Testament. Let the following instance suffice. In John 8:30. it is said, πολλοὶ ἐπίστευσαν εἰς αὐτόν, "many believed on him;" and verse 31. the same persons are called πεπιστευκοταὶ αὐτῷ, "those who believed him." Hence it appears that they are greatly mistaken, who assert that the expression to believe in one, signifies that devout affection of mind which is an

homage due to God alone; for it is expressly said, ויאמינו כיהוה ובמשה עבדו, "and believed (in) the LORD, and (in) his servant Moses." Those, also, are mistaken, who suppose that the phrase to believe in God or in Christ, is always descriptive of a living faith; since it is said of the Ninevites that they believed in God, and of the Jews, that they "believed in his," to wit, Christ's "name," to whom "Jesus did not commit himself;"—whilst, on the contrary, a different expression is made use of, to denote a living and saving faith, in John 5:24. πιστευων τω πεμψαντι με, "he that believeth him that sent me;" and in the account of the Jailor, πεπιστευκως τω θεῳ, "who believed God," both phrases are used indiscriminately.*

IV. When we speak of GOD, we understand a Being who is infinitely perfect, since he is the Creator and Lord of all other beings. This is the idea common to all nations, which they express, each in their own language, whenever they make mention of God. Now, in order to a man's believing in God, it is necessary, first of all, that he be firmly persuaded in his mind that such an infinitely perfect Being doth really exist. "For he that cometh unto God, must believe that he is." But, since this persuasion lays a foundation for itself in NATURE, upon which GRACE rears the superstructure of Divine revelation, it will be proper to see, first, what nature can teach us on this topic, and then, what the Christian faith superadds to the persuasion derived from nature.

V. The existence of God is so necessary and so evident a truth, that to one rightly attending to the subject, scarcely any thing can appear more certain, more obvious, or more manifest. It is clear even from that notion of a Deity which is common to all nations. Whoever speaks of God, speaks of a Being infinitely perfect. Such a Being, however, cannot even be conceived of in thought, without including in our conception the necessity of his existence. For, since it is a greater perfection to exist than not to exist; to exist necessarily than to exist contingently and according to the pleasure of another; to exist from eternity and to eternity, than to exist at one time and not to exist at another time;—it follows that existence, even a necessary

and eternal existence, is implied in the essence of a most perfect Being. It is as impossible to form an idea of a most perfect Being without necessary existence, as an idea of a mountain without a valley.

Besides, the man who denies that there is a God, denies, at the same time, that it is possible for an absolutely perfect and eternal Being to exist. For if he at any time begin to exist, he will not be eternal, and therefore not absolutely perfect, and consequently not God. But it is impossible that a being who neither is, nor can begin to be, can ever exist. According to this supposition, then, the impossibility of existence will be included in the conception of a Deity; which is no less contradictory, than if one should say, that the want of eminent perfection is necessarily included in the conception of that which is infinitely perfect.

VI. The Creator has so deeply impressed the idea of his own existence on the human mind, that all may receive this knowledge from nature. "That which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them." This is what is usually termed the innate knowledge of God. Eusebius speaks, not improperly, of the "notions which every one learns from himself, or rather from God."* It is not intended, that infants possess an actual knowledge of God even from the womb; which is equally contrary to universal experience, and to the word of God, which testifies that they "cannot discern between their right hand and their left." Nor is the above expression to be so loosely understood, as if God merely endowed men with a capacity of knowing himself, provided the proofs of his existence be clearly proposed and set before them, or provided every one make a right use of his capacity in the investigation of those proofs;—as if the knowledge of God's existence could not be attained without laborious exertion. But we intend, that God has so deeply impressed the traces of himself upon the innermost parts of the mind, that man, after having arrived at the use of reason, cannot but often think of a God, and it is only by doing violence to himself that he can expel such thoughts from his breast.

VII. Maximus Tyrius, the Platonic philosopher, has the following beautiful sentence in his first Dissertation.* "But if, since the beginning of time, two or three men have existed, that have lived in an atheistical, degraded and senseless state, deceived by their own eyes and ears, maimed in their very soul,—a brutish and unprofitable kind of men, no less destitute of the distinguishing glory of their species, than a lion without courage, an ox without horns, or a bird without wings;—from even these men you will learn something concerning a Deity; for, in spite of themselves, they both know and express something on this subject." Julian, too, ungodly as he was, expresses himself equally well, as follows: "All of us, previously to our receiving instruction, are persuaded that there is a Deity; and that to him we should look, to him we should hasten. Our minds are inclined towards him in the same manner, I think, as our eyes towards light."

VIII. This argument is illustrated by the operations of Conscience, which, in a variety of ways, convinces men of the existence of God. 1st, As it is the deputy of God, and the depositary of his laws in the human breast, it inculcates, in the name of God, what ought to be done, and what ought to be avoided. So great, too, is the authority with which it speaks, that though the lords of the earth, and dreaded tyrants, should establish a thousand decrees in opposition to its dictates, it would, nevertheless, incessantly urge by its secret whispers, that obedience must be rendered to itself, and to God, in whose name it speaks, rather than to any mortal whatever. It says concisely, and with a dignity worthy of a Lawgiver, "Universal submission is due to me, and to God."* This is what David intends when he says, "My heart said unto thee,"^m that is, for thee, in thy behalf, in thy place. 2dly, While it is acquainted with the most hidden secrets of men, and while neither the least imagination, nor the slightest motion of the mind, can be concealed from its view, it testifies, at the same time, that there is another besides itself, who is thoroughly acquainted with all our actions, words and thoughts. It is for this reason it is called Conscience,[†] that is, a witness associated with another in perceiving the secrets of man; and who can that

other be but God? On this account, also, it may be denominated "Conscience towards God." 3dly, When it judges the state and the actions of men, it performs this office under God, and with reference to God. Whilst it commends good works, even though performed in secret, and though disapproved by others, it gives us to know that the praise of the upright "is not of men, but of God."o When it rewards the good man with a most delightful tranquillity, and, in particular, when it causes his peace to abound in dying moments, it shows that God is the Rewarder of those who serve him. When it reproveth, accuses, condemns, punishes, and scourges a man without mercy for his wicked deeds, although it is within the man, and indeed a part of him, it stands, however, on God's side; nor doth it regard the degree of torment which the man may suffer from its testimony. Nay, though it be a thousand times enjoined to keep silence, though it be treated with violence, though it be almost stifled, and seared as with a hot iron, yet it rises again, and sharply presses its testimony, in defiance of the struggles of the guilty. 4thly, Amidst all these operations, it summons man to the tribunal of God, and intimates that there all things are to be re-examined, and a more exact judgment to be passed on every action; and, according to the sentence which it has pronounced here, it causes him either to come into the presence of God with confidence, or to tremble at the thought of appearing before him. Such, also, is the energy which it displays, that it will not suffer itself to be hindered in these operations by any created power. "If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God." Paul gives us a concise summary of the greater part of these operations, when he says of the Gentiles, "These, having not the law, are a law unto themselves; which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another."r Nor are these the terrors of weak minds, which the stronger can easily elude. Conscience often restrains and overawes the boldest; and the most daring profligate, though he may assume the semblance of hope in his countenance, only conceals the pain which deeply pierces his

heart. The laughter of such audacious transgressors is merely constrained, while they feel the smart of the sting within.

IX. This faculty of Conscience, because it so powerfully manifests God to man, doth all in his name, refers all to him, and, in short, acts the part of his vicegerent in the soul, was called God by the Heathen. Hence Menander says, "Our mind is God."* Euripides, in like manner, quoted by Gataker, says, "Our own mind is to each of us God."† By this, they intended nothing else, probably, than what that old writer expresses more clearly thus, "In all men, conscience stands in the place of God."‡ But the following passage of Epictetus is particularly worthy of notice: "Knowest thou not that thou nourishest a God? That thou givest exercise to a God? Dost thou not carry God about with thee, thou wretch, and art not aware of this? You imagine, perhaps, that I refer to something external, formed of gold or silver. Let me tell you that you carry him within your breast. ... But whilst God himself is present within, and sees and hears all things, art thou not ashamed, as if insensible to thine own nature, and hostile to God, to think and to do these things?"* For the same reason, Plato says, "He mystically called those Atheists, who corrupt the God who dwelleth in them, that is, Reason."†

X. The mind, also, which attends to itself, cannot be ignorant that as it was made by God, so it was made for God. Since it is clear and evident to the mind, that it did not consent of its own accord and by deliberate counsel to inhabit this body which it carries about; nor form the body for itself; nor subject it to its authority; nor even knows how the bodily members in subjection to it, are moved according to its will; nor existed any where else before it lodged in the body; nor became what it is by the contrivance or power of parents; nor is able to furnish itself with what it perceives to be necessary to its welfare; nor can find in itself the cause of its existence;—it is forced to acknowledge that it was created, and that, therefore, it is the property of him who created it. This can be no other than God; and, as it was made by him, it necessarily follows that it was also made for him. The eye is adapted for light, the ear for

sounds, the tongue for speech, and speech for the interpretation of the mind. For what is the mind itself adapted? For an object, certainly, which can fill it—an object, the knowledge of which can make it wise, the love of which can make it holy, the enjoyment of which can make it happy. For an object, better than itself, nobler than all created things, and most amply sufficient to satisfy its boundless capacities. For an object, in short, which is nothing less than God. The human mind, provided it only give attention to the subject, must clearly perceive, that if no such object as this existed, it could never have itself existed, or if it had, must have existed in vain, and for no proper purpose. That man offers violence to his own mind, who does not say, "Where is God my Maker, that giveth songs in the night?"

XI. But, besides that innate knowledge of God, of which man has the principles in his own mind, there is another argument arising from the consideration of the various other creatures around him. Since these are unable to secure the continuance of their own existence, it is manifest that they were not made by themselves: and if we trace them particularly, through the second causes of their being, as far backwards as our mind is able to conduct us, we must arrive, at length, at the First Cause, to whom those that are supposed to be the first of creatures owe the beginning of their existence, and in whose eternity, (as he exists necessarily, of himself, and without beginning,) all our thoughts are swallowed up, as in an immeasurable abyss. The sacred writings instruct us in numberless passages, that the existence of the Supreme Being may be inferred, by incontrovertible arguments, from the contemplation of the creatures.

XII. A very emphatical passage to this effect occurs in Job 12:7, 8, 9. "But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee; or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee; and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee. Who knoweth not in all these, that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this?" Here we are directed to hold a conference with the creatures, that they may instruct us concerning the Creator. That conference

can mean nothing but an attentive consideration of the creatures, in their origin, in their nature, in their capacities, in their operations, in their order and mutual subserviency to each other, in the law to which they are subject, and which is inviolably observed for the preservation of the whole. The response which they give, the doctrine which they unfold, is the demonstration of the Deity. They had no power to produce themselves, and even now they have no power to uphold themselves in being, far less to govern themselves with so much wisdom, that every one, in its own sphere, should both possess what is sufficient for the continuation of its own existence, and be adapted for assisting others and for serving the whole universe, as it most judiciously ranged in a family and state, Notwithstanding, therefore, the profound silence which they observe, they proclaim to every reflecting mind, that, as they were originally created, so they are still directed, by the hand of an infinitely wise, as well as infinitely powerful God. Let it be remarked, also, that this conclusion is not ascribed to any tradition received from the fathers, but to that very instruction which the creatures themselves afford, independently of all human tradition.

XIII. No less forcible is the testimony which we have, Psalm 19:1, 2, 3, 4. which I shall explain by a short paraphrase. "The heavens declare the glory of God;" for they are his throne, which he has curiously fashioned, and which testify his power, majesty, and magnificence. "And the firmament showeth his handy-work;" proclaiming that it was adjusted by his word alone, that things below might be aptly and commodiously united with things above, and that things terrestrial might be maintained by the influence of things celestial, communicating itself through the medium of the firmament. "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night teacheth knowledge." The vicissitudes of light and darkness, succeeding one another in so exact and so uniform an order; and, (which is the cause of these appointed vicissitudes,) the revolution of the sun and the stars, neither moving more slowly than at the first, nor revolving with a more rapid motion, but still preserving the original measure of their course,—clearly manifest a Ruler of

unbounded wisdom. Nor is there a single day, or single night, which doth not at once utter something for itself respecting God, and bear witness to another; as if it were the scholar of the preceding, and the teacher of the following. No word is uttered, no speeches are made, their voice "is not heard." They do not teach by words; because, were this their manner of giving instruction, it would cease with the utterance of the words. They do not instruct by speeches, or discourses, which consist of a train of arguments artfully connected; for, in such discourses, some degree of obscurity could hardly be avoided. Nor do they utter an audible voice in our ears, the sound of which might dun us by its excessive noise. But the heavens instruct us, constantly, clearly, and pleasantly, whilst they exhibit the perfections of their Creator to view, as in a mirror. Some, however, choose to translate the words thus, (of which we do not disapprove:) "There is no speech, nor language, where their voice is not heard." Though the nations differ from one another in their languages, and though the Greek may not be able to understand the Barbarian, yet the language of the heavens is common to all, and equally capable of imparting instruction to all. Nothing but listlessness hinders those, whose tongues and customs are the most opposite to each other, from receiving knowledge, so to speak, from the mouth of one and the same teacher. "Their line is gone out to all the earth."* The manner in which the heavens give instruction, bears a resemblance to the method of teachers, who instruct boys in the first principles of literature by means of figures which they draw for their use: For the luminaries of heaven, by the beams which they shed, form lines, and, as it were, first principles; which, being mutually combined, and variously connected, compose one entire book of wisdom. This idea is suggested by the word יָרָא line; as in the expression יָרָא יָרָא line upon line. It may be observed, also, that there is but little difference betwixt this Hebrew term, and the Greek $\phi\theta\omicron\gamma\gamma\omicron\varsigma$, made use of by the Apostle; for $\phi\theta\omicron\gamma\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ signifies not only a sound, but likewise a letter; as in Plutarch on Fabius; of which Scapula has taken notice in his Lexicon. This line, then, has "gone out to all the earth, and their words to the end of the world." All mankind, whether they inhabit cultivated regions, or the most desert and uncultivated parts of the

earth, are instructed by this preceptor. There is no quarter of the world in which the figures of heaven, which are so many proofs of the divine perfections, are not beheld.

XIV. Though this exposition of the passage is at once simple, consonant to the words, and worthy of the divine perfections, Socinus most perversely contends, that it is here taken for granted, that it is not evident from the contemplation of the heavens, that they were created by God. He denies that they proclaim the glory of God to any but those who have been previously persuaded, by other means, of the existence of God, and of the creation of the world. What is said, too, about their line going out to all the earth, he restrains to Judea alone, adducing in confirmation of this sense, Psalm 45:16. 105:7. 2:8. This, however, is a daring perversion of the Scriptures; for, 1st, It is clear to any one who looks into the Psalm, that the Psalmist points out two ways of knowing God; the one by nature, which he describes from the beginning to the seventh verse; the other by revelation, which he then illustrates, and extols as far more perfect. Nor does he represent the latter as the foundation of the former, but the former as the foundation of the latter. 2dly, The words of the Psalm, cannot bear the interpretation which Socinus puts upon them, to wit, "The firmament showeth the nature and kind of the work, or celebrates the work:"* But they must be interpreted thus, "The firmament showeth the work of his hands;" that is, proclaims itself to be the work of divine omnipotence. In this sense the heavens, the sun, the moon, and all the sparkling stars, are said to praise God; because, since they were all created at his command, they furnish men with the most abundant matter and ground for the celebration of his praise. 3dly, Nor is this proclamation made to the Jews only: it is published in a language equally intelligible to Israelites, Greeks, and Barbarians; for he never left himself "without witness," even to the Gentiles. 4thly, It is published through the whole earth, even to the uttermost parts of the habitable globe; which are by no means comprehended within the narrow circuit of Judea: unless one chose also to confine within the limits of Judea, what the Apostle expresses in the same words, concerning that

Gospel which is preached "to every creature."y 5thly, Nor is the heretic able to point out any passage of Scripture, where these expressions, the whole earth, and the uttermost parts of the world, signify only the land of Judea; for the testimonies which he produces, are foreign to the purpose. Psalm 45:16. is a prophecy respecting the calling of the Gentiles; as appears from verse 17th. Psalm 105:7, "His judgments are in all the earth," is with no appearance of reason confined to Judea; since God executes judgments in the whole world, and those which he executed among his people, were published to the Gentiles. The heretic erroneously confounds the judgments of God's works with the judgments of his law; which, under the old dispensation, were made known to the Israelites alone. Though we should grant that Judea is sometimes called the whole earth, yet the ends of the habitable world, are never limited to so inconsiderable a spot of earth. The words in Psalm 2:8. refer not to the kingdom of David, but to the kingdom of Christ; to whom "all power is given in heaven and on earth;" and whose "dominion shall he from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth."b 6thly, Though this were the meaning of the expression in some other passages, yet it cannot be so understood here; since the subject treated in this passage, is the whole of that earth, where the line of the sun is beheld,—where his glorious beams are seen, where his all-maturing heat is felt

XV. We may add, that, in reality, had it not been long ago ascertained that these most audacious perverters of the Scriptures are lost to every emotion of shame, they must have been put out of countenance, on this occasion, by the more intelligent among the heathen; a great number of whom avow, that they were excited and compelled to acknowledge a Deity, purely by the consideration of the heavens, and the stars, and of the order which is observed in the universe. Plato's expression is well known: "The heavens never cease to give instruction to mankind."* To the same effect are the following words of Lucilius in Cicero;† "What can be so obvious, and so clear, when we have beheld the heavens and contemplated the celestial bodies, as that there is a Deity possessed of the most consummate wisdom, by whom they are governed?" And again, a little after; "If

any one doubts of this, I know no reason why he may not also doubt of the existence of the Sun; for what can be more evident?" I shall quote another passage from Cicero. "Who is so stupid and infatuated," says he, "as not to perceive, after having looked up to the heavens, that there are Gods; or to ascribe to the operation of chance, works which discover so great intelligence, that scarcely any one is able, by any art, to trace their order, and their revolutions."* But why do I insist on the convictions and declarations of individuals? Zaleucus, the lawgiver of the Locrians, by a law which he enacted, bound all his fellow-citizens to acknowledge a Divinity, from the contemplation of the heavens. According to the testimony of Diodorus Siculus, "Zaleucus, having been chosen by the people to frame laws, and attempting to confirm them by new sanctions, began by directing their attention to the celestial Gods. At the beginning of the preamble to the whole code he says; that the inhabitants of the city are required, first of all, to believe and to be firmly persuaded that there are Gods, and having attentively considered the heavens and their astonishing magnificence and order, to conclude that they are neither the production of chance, nor the workmanship of man."†

XVI. Further, where can we find a more striking confirmation of the doctrine we are now illustrating, than the following remarkable expression of Paul? "For the invisible things of him, from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things which are made, even his eternal power and godhead." Here notice, 1st, What respecting God the Apostle affirms to be known. 2dly, In what manner it is known. 3dly, From what time. 4thly, Whence this knowledge is derived.

XVII. 1st, What is it that is known respecting God? The Apostle, in the first place, shows, in general, that it is his "invisible things;" for it is one of the fundamental principles of religion, that God is a Spirit, quite distinct from the whole mass of matter, and invisible to every eye. He then takes particular notice of what is included in these "invisible things." 1. His POWER; which, by his own simple fiat, with no assistance whatever, with no advantage arising from pre-existent

matter—by his mere good pleasure—causes all things to exist, and to continue in existence so long as he pleases. 2. His ETERNITY; which has neither beginning nor end of days, nor any thing corresponding to the succession of time. Unless God had existed from eternity, he could not have existed at all; for that which neither existed from eternity, nor is capable of being produced, has no existence; but that God is produced, is an idea utterly repugnant to every dictate of reason. A Being, too, who had no beginning, can have no end; for he possesses, in his own perfections, the cause of a necessary existence. Aristotle has, somewhere, finely said: "Necessary existence and eternity are inseparable from each other."* Unless God were eternal, besides, he could not be the lord of time, and the disposer of seasons. Synesius, accordingly, has the following elegant expression in his third Hymn, "Thou, who art the Eternal Mind, art the Root of the world."† 3. His GODHEAD; which here means the perfections and excellencies of God; in particular, his self-sufficiency and absolute independence, and also the relation in which he stands to the creatures, as the Lord of all, and therefore entitled to the love and the service of all.

XVIII. 2dly, In what manner are these things known? They are "clearly seen by the mind."* 1. Though-not perceptible to the eye of the body, they are perceptible to the mind and soul: To the mind, however, that gives attention,† and considers them; not to the mind that either resigns itself to stupidity and torpor, or that impiously excludes the light, and surrenders itself to a voluntary blindness. 2. By the attentive mind, they are "clearly seen:" For this knowledge, like the knowledge of those objects that are presented to the faithful eye, (as the sun, who enlightens the world, or the moon, or the stars,) is so prompt and easy, that men cannot reasonably demand a more ample or obvious demonstration.

XIX. 3dly, From what time are these things thus clearly seen? "From the creation of the world."‡ Some construe this clause in connexion with the words preceding, and give the sense thus, Those things which have been invisible ever since the creation of the world. But as

the properties of the divine nature are necessarily and eternally invisible, it is better to refer the expression to what follows: They are clearly seen from the creation of the world. This, again, is susceptible of two senses. 1. It may denote the source of knowledge; as if the Apostle had said, "from the consideration of the creation of the world:" as in these words, "By their fruits ye shall know them." 2. It may respect the time; the Apostle may intimate, that those perfections of God have been displayed to mankind, as long as the world has existed, and been inhabited by the human race.

XX. 4thly, Whence, in fine, can men derive the knowledge of these perfections?—From "the things that are made." The works of nature, which our eyes behold, testify concerning themselves, that they are "things made,"* that is, that they have a Cause, a Maker, an Architect. Thus they lead us to the Maker of all, who, whilst he is entirely free from the imperfections of the creatures, possesses all their excellencies in a supereminent degree.

XXI. The way in which Socinus perverts the Apostle's expressions in this passage, is truly surprising. By "the invisible things of God," he understands the mysteries of the Gospel, which are said to "have been kept secret from the foundation of the world." "His eternal godhead," he affirms to be "that which God would constantly have us to do;" in which sense, he says, the term "godhead" is employed in Col. 2:9. "His eternal power," he would have to be, "the promises which shall never fail;" in which sense Paul had said, in a preceding verse of the chapter, that the Gospel is "the power of God." Finally, he refers "the things that are made," to the miracles performed by God, and Christ, and the Apostles.

XXII. On this strange exposition, we offer the following remarks. 1st, The heretic perverts the scope of the Apostle; which is to convince the Gentiles, who were destitute of the written word of God, of their having sinned and merited the curse; in the same manner as he convinces of their guilt and danger, the Jews who possessed the written word;—that thus he may establish the conclusion, that both

of them must be justified solely by the grace of God through faith in Christ. It is manifest, therefore, that the Apostle here considers the Gentiles, as in a state of nature, in the darkness of Paganism, not yet enlightened by the preaching of the Gospel.

XXIII. 2dly, He perverts, also, the words of the Apostle; for, 1. "The invisible things of God," are quite distinct from the mysteries of the Gospel, which he does not even attempt to prove to be any where intended by that expression. The Apostle here opposes the eyes of the body to the eyes of the mind, and the things which he represents as invisible to the former, he asserts to be visible to the latter; as elsewhere he speaks of "the invisible God." With regard to Matth. 13:35. we have there another expression, and an extremely different subject; and that saying of Christ, therefore, is improperly adduced to illustrate this passage of Paul. 2. "Eternal godhead," and "that which God would constantly have us to do," are totally different from each other. To endeavour to pass them for the same, is worthy of a man, who, "having his conscience seared as with a hot iron," scruples not to confound things which are diametrically opposite to each other. By what authority, by what example, I say not from the sacred volume, but from any writer whatever, will he prove, that "godhead" is that which God would have us to do? That which he produces for this purpose from Col. 2:9. discovers only the rage of a furious mind. The expression there, is not *θειότης*, but *θεότης*. Nor does the word in that passage, denote that which God wills to be done by us; for how doth this dwell in Christ, and dwell bodily in him? But it signifies the divine nature itself, which resides in Christ, not typically and symbolically, as in the temple of old, but truly and really. 3. The "eternal power" of God, nowhere denotes his promises. The Gospel is called "the power of God," because it is an efficacious mean of salvation; the word "power" being taken in its native sense. The Apostle does not intend to intimate, that the Gospel is the promise of God; but that, in converting his elect by the preaching of the Gospel, accompanied with the energy of the Holy Spirit, God displays "the exceeding greatness of his power, according to the working of his mighty power." 4. Miracles are not usually called "things that are

made,"* but "mighty deeds, signs, wonders." † Ποῖημα signifies a thing created by God, as in Ephes. 2:10. "For we are his workmanship, created," &c. ‡ Ποῖημα and κτισμα are words of the same import; and, accordingly, the Arians of old, blasphemously styled Christ, Ποῖημα καὶ κτισμα, a made being, and a creature.

XXIV. It is disgraceful for those who wish to be called Christians to wrest to another meaning, such clear and satisfactory testimonies of Scripture; since even heathens ascended from the consideration of the world to God its Creator. Aristotle, or whoever else is the Author of the Book concerning the world,§ says: "It is, therefore, an ancient doctrine, and a sentiment congenial to all mankind, that of God, and through God, all things were framed and established." This doctrine, however, doth not rest upon ancient tradition alone; it is strongly inferred from the imperfection of all the creatures. Hence it is added by that Author, "For no creature, deprived of that support which He affords, is sufficient for its own subsistence." This is fair reasoning. It is highly proper to rise from the imperfection and insufficiency of the creatures, to the absolutely perfect and all-sufficient Creator. Whatever is called imperfect, is accounted such, because it falls short of what is perfect. Take away that which is perfect, as Boethius reasons;* and it becomes impossible even to conceive, whence that which is deemed imperfect, derived its existence. Cicero also says, "The beauty of the world, and the order of the heavenly bodies, oblige us to acknowledge the existence of some glorious and eternal Being, whom mankind are bound to admire and adore." †

XXV. This truth is confirmed by the admirable predictions of astonishing events which were yet in the womb of futurity, by the fatal periods of monarchies, and by several other considerations of this sort. But as those arguments have been copiously illustrated by others, let it suffice that we have merely alluded to them here.

XXVI. Since the doctrine of the existence of God is established by so many, and by so clear and incontrovertible evidences, it ought to receive the firm assent of every individual. Doubts of it should not be

entertained, at any time, or upon any pretext;—not even for the purpose of attaining, in consequence of doubting, a more certain knowledge and a stronger faith. This truth is so manifest, that no man who seriously attends, can seriously doubt of it. Those who were anciently called Atheists, were at once very few, and generally men of a profligate character, whose interest it was that there should be no God. They were actuated, too, in their reasonings, rather by a love of contradiction, than by any sincere conviction of mind; like the man who contended that snow is black. Besides, as Vossius has shown,* persons were sometimes stigmatized as Atheists, merely because they renounced the false gods of the Gentiles. Whatever be the purpose in view, to plunge into doubts of the existence of God, is always contrary to piety. It is never right to say, "Perhaps there is no God; perhaps, in all the thoughts which we have of a Deity, we are deceived by some malignant and powerful spirit." This truth, however, must not be negligently passed over; nor are we rashly to presume that we already possess a competent knowledge of so noble a subject, lest, possibly, we may not duly love or adore a God whom we do not sufficiently know. To attend carefully and deliberately to this matter, is not to doubt of the existence of God, but to doubt concerning ourselves, whether we have discharged our duty in this respect with becoming diligence.

XXVII. Nature and Reason are able to teach man, though a sinner, all that we have hitherto said respecting the existence of God. Of all this, faith avails itself, as a groundwork; not overthrowing nature, but ascending by it, and above it. Tertullian, accordingly, well observes; "God has, in the first instance, appointed nature your teacher, intending to follow up her instructions with prophecy; that, having been the disciple of nature, you may the more readily give credit to prophecy."* Clement of Alexandria says, also, to the same effect: "The Greek philosophy, as it were, purifies and prepares the mind for the reception of faith; upon which, truth raises the superstructure of knowledge."† In this sense we may excuse his expression in another place, where he calls Natural Philosophy, "the groundwork of Christian Philosophy." ‡ Let us now see what

Christian Faith superadds to this natural persuasion concerning the existence of God.

XXVIII. 1st, It disposes one to observe with attention, those proofs of a Deity which every part of the creation affords. "By faith we understand," observe, and consider. Many things "which may be known of God," and which are placed in the clearest light, are neglected by the generality of men, their eyes being blinded. In this concern, the greater part of mankind are cold, languid, and torpid: and, hence, they either rest in a bare notion of the Divinity, or if they descend a little deeper into the contemplation of his character, are satisfied with meagre elements of truth, which they pollute by a large mixture of error; so that, while they seem to be wise, and give indulgence to their own reasonings, they are, in reality, fools. Those, in particular, who, instigated by the fury of a wicked mind, wish that there were no God, (of whose character, as the avenger of crimes, they cannot be ignorant,) exert themselves to suppress all thoughts of a Deity, which are never welcome to their hearts. Of such persons, the Apostle says, "they did not like to retain God in their knowledge:" that is, as Theophylact explains it, "they rejected the knowledge of God." This, as Chrysostom observes, was, on their part, "not a sin of ignorance, but a wilful sin." It was of the same nature with the sin of those who say to God, "Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways." But Christian faith causes one to love the truth relating to God, and, consequently, to attend with care to the evidences by which the beloved truth is confirmed, and to take pleasure in the contemplation of them; singing to God, "My meditation of thee shall be sweet; I will be glad in the Lord."p It keeps at a distance, at the same time, all pretended wisdom and vain conceit of science, and determines a man to become an humble disciple of God, to hang upon his lips alone, and to desire instruction from him, in other matters relating to the Deity; saying, "Who teacheth like him?"

XXIX. 2dly, It is not satisfied with knowing the Divinity by those evidences which nature supplies; but depends, also, on the testimony

of God, who testifies concerning himself, as well externally by the word of divine revelation, as internally by the secret voice of the Spirit. He BELIEVES that God is, because he hears his word, and finds it so wise, so pure, so sweet, so efficacious, and so full of majesty, that it can be nothing else than the word of God. As one believes that his father is present, because he hears his well known voice, so faith believes that God is present in the world, because with her own ears she hears that divine voice, which, with incredible power and sweetness, penetrates to the inmost soul, and widely differs from all the illusions of deceiving spirits. As the spouse no sooner bears the familiar accents of her beloved Husband than straightway she cries out, "The voice of my Beloved! behold, he cometh;" so the believer, when he hears the voice of God in the world, knows and discerns it, and exclaims; "My Lord, and my God!"

XXX. 3dly, Nature teaches merely, in an indistinct sad general manner, that there is a God; but doth not expressly and particularly declare WHAT he is. Maximus Tyrius, whom we formerly quoted, after having, in his first Dissertation, made some general remarks respecting the Deity, adds: "That distinguished Master of the Academy," (he intends Plato,) "shows that such a Father and Author of the Universe exists: but he does not mention his name, for he did not know it." Clement of Alexandria, not unjustly, represents the Gentiles as guilty of Atheism, and that twofold; first, "as they knew not him who is truly God;" and, secondly, as "they regarded those who are not, as though they were; and called those Gods, who, in reality, are not so."* Vossius, also, says with great elegance: "The same thing happened to them as to the blind man of whom we read in the Gospel of St John. When this man saw the Son of God, from whom he had received sight, he inquired, nevertheless, who was the Son of God: for he did not know that he whom he saw, was the person whom he saw; as if you should see the King; and not be aware that the man whom you see is the King. Almost all the Gentiles, in like manner, saw him who is invisible displaying himself in his works, and heard him declaring by expressive silence, that he is the

Creator and Ruler of the universe, and that he demands and is entitled to our worship: But they shut their eyes against the sight, they stopped their ears against the voice; as if overpowered by a deep sleep, they imagined that he resembles those objects which daily presented themselves to their eyes; and, giving easy credit to their own dream, they adored the work instead of the Artificer, and rendered divine honours, not to God, but to that which is not God. This was, certainly, to change lie truth into a lie."* The same writer expresses himself elsewhere in a manner equally excellent; and, although the passage is somewhat long, it illustrates the subject so well, that I shall not hesitate to quote it. It is as follows:† "Though we know something of God by nature, yet we do not know the true God but by divine revelation.... Nor let it be objected, that it is wrong to affirm that the Gentiles knew not the true God, since the Apostle himself says of them that they knew God. For, as Oedipus, when, as the Poets tell us, he knew that he had a father, was yet ignorant that Laius was his father; so the Gentiles, whilst they were enabled by the light of nature to know that there is one God, and that he is the Fountain of all good, knew not, however, who is that God. Hence, as the Apostle testifies, it was necessary that this UNKNOWN GOD should be declared unto them. The knowledge of God, then, is of two kinds; the one, simple, by which it is understood, in general, that there is a God, and that he is a wise, good, and powerful Being, the rewarder of righteousness, and the avenger of wickedness; the other, determinate, and applied to a certain object, namely, the God of Israel. The Gentiles, we admit, possessed the former, but they were destitute of the latter; for they imprisoned in falsehood and unrighteousness, those bright conceptions which they had of God, and ascribed them, not to the true, but to a false Deity. Hence, in many passages of Scripture, they are said not to have known God."

XXXI. Christian faith, on the contrary, being instructed by the doctrine of Christ, is acquainted with the name of God; and makes mention of that name, saying, "Thou, whose name alone is JEHOVAH, art the Most High over all the earth." Faith recognises Divinity in God himself, and doth not ascribe his prerogatives to one

who is not God. It doth not say, "JEHOVAH hath not done all this;" which would be to alienate from God the glory of his godhead, and of his works. Faith knows distinctly, that he alone is God, who manifested himself to our first parents in paradise, and afterwards, "at sundry times and in divers manners," to patriarchs and prophets; and at last condescended to make a visible appearance in the person of the Son, clothed with human flesh. As he proclaims himself in his word, saying, "I, even I, am JEHOVAH, and besides me there is no Saviour;" so faith assents to this declaration, and replies, "Thou, even thou, art JEHOVAH alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens with all their host," &c. It belongs to the sincere Christian to say in truth, what was vauntingly said by Tryphon in Lucian, or the author, whoever he be, of the Dialogue entitled Philopatris: "Having discovered the Unknown God of Athens, we will adore him, and, with hands stretched forth towards heaven, render thanks to his name."

DISSERTATION V: ON FAITH IN GOD*

I. IN the preceding Dissertation, we have shown what the Christian believes with respect to the existence of God. It must, by no means, however, be supposed, that this weighty expression, I BELIEVE IN GOD, includes nothing further. These words imply, without doubt, the whole exercise of the pious soul, who relies on God as her salvation; of which a more particular account must now be submitted to the consideration of our pupils. Faith in God, considered in its full extent, comprises, 1st, The knowledge and acknowledgment of those perfections of God, from which a sinner may derive salvation and happiness: 2dly, The desire of union and fellowship with Him who is at once blessed for ever, and the fountain of blessedness: 3dly, A cheerful acceptance of God as exhibiting himself for our salvation: 4thly, The soul's diligent self-investigation, to see whether it

possesses the evidences of God's dwelling in it: 5thly, Unutterable joy arising from the consciousness of such evidences. 6thly, A holy solicitude of mind to walk worthy of God. We shall consider each of these in order.

II. Every one who employs himself assiduously in the contemplation of the Deity, will be able to discover, even by the light of nature, that God is the best, and the happiest of beings, and possessed of unbounded fulness and sufficiency; and that from this it follows, of necessity, that the chief good consists in his image and fellowship. Boethius has ingeniously demonstrated this truth, by philosophical arguments.* "It appears," says he, "from the universal conceptions of the minds of men, that God, who is the First and the Greatest[†] of all, is good; for, as nothing better than God can be imagined, who can doubt, that he, who is surpassed by none, is good? Reason, indeed, shows that God is not only good, but possessed of perfect goodness; for, unless he be so, he cannot be the greatest of all beings; but there will be something better than he, which, possessing perfect goodness, will appear to be superior and more excellent. Whatever is perfect, is unquestionably superior to that which falls short of perfection. Not to protract this reasoning beyond bounds,—it must be acknowledged that the Most High God possesses, in the amplest measure possible, the highest and most perfect goodness. Now we hold, that perfect goodness is true happiness; it necessarily follows, therefore, that true happiness resides in the Most High God." From these principles, he deduces the following conclusion: "Since men become happy by attaining happiness, and since Divinity itself is happiness, it is manifest that they become happy by attaining Divinity. But as by the acquisition of justice men become just, and by the acquisition of wisdom they become wise, so, by parity of reason, it unquestionably follows, that by the attainment of Divinity they become Gods. Every happy person, therefore, is a God. By nature, indeed, there is only one God; but, by participation, there is nothing to prevent the existence of a great number of Gods." Thus far Boethius; with whose last words, you may compare the expression of the Apostle Peter, —"that ye might be PARTAKERS OF THE DIVINE NATURE."

III. But, however evident and certain this inference may be, and how impossible soever it is to deduce any conclusion, more just in itself, more strongly supported by arguments, or more worthy of God, very few of those who had nature alone for their guide seriously thought of this truth. It may reasonably be doubted if these ideas would ever have occurred to Boethius himself, unless his philosophy had borrowed lights from a more spiritual teacher. Plato having defined the sum of happiness to be "the nearest possible resemblance to God,"* Clement of Alexandria, when quoting this expression, not unjustly questions, whether it is to be attributed to the sublimity of Plato's genius that he discovered a truth so congenial with the sacred doctrines of Christianity, or whether he did not rather derive it from some of those inspired writings which were then extant.† But, while this manifest truth was very imperfectly perceived by the minds of the heathen philosophers, they were equally ignorant with the most illiterate of the way by which communion with God may be obtained. The thoughts of the natural man are, in consequence, easily diverted from meditation on this truth; the will is not duly inclined to desire the Chief good; and the mind, weighed down by the power of the passions, at last becomes vain, and loses itself in the sublimity and subtlety of its own speculations; and, forgetting God, meanly grovels among corporeal, earthly, and transitory enjoyments.

IV. But Christian faith irradiates the mind with a more abundant light, and enables us to know, distinctly, the following truths relative to God. 1st, That he is "the blessed and the only Potentate," who finds in the possession, knowledge, and enjoyment of his own unbounded perfections, blessedness the most perfect, and most worthy of himself. 2dly, That he is infinitely able not merely to secure his own happiness, but also to communicate happiness to such of his rational creatures as he may deign to admit to fellowship with himself: for he is "the almighty (all-sufficient) God,"d and "all in all;" and "in his presence is fulness of joy,"f—joy which so completely fills and satisfies the soul, that it neither knows, nor wishes to know, any thing desirable besides him. 3dly, That the riches of the all-sufficiency of God are so great, that, what appears almost incredible,

he can, and even will be, the God and the salvation of guilty and ruined men, in a manner fully consistent with his majesty, holiness, righteousness, veracity, and other perfections; so that the sinner is permitted to say and to sing, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the LORD; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation." 4thly, That a salvation already purchased by the Son, and to be applied by the Spirit, is freely offered in the Gospel to all who desire it, and that God kindly and graciously invites men of every description to partake of it; crying with a loud voice, "Who hath declared this from ancient time? who hath told it from that time? have not I the LORD? and there is no God else besides me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none besides me. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else," 5thly, That a salvation so great is on no account to be neglected; but that, preferring it to every thing else, we must strive to become partakers of it; embracing with great alacrity and cordial delight, that God who graciously exhibits himself to us, and yielding ourselves to him in return, with ardent affection.j

V. All these truths are contained in the following words of the Apostle, Heb. 11:6.... "He that cometh unto God must believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him." In these expressions something nobler is exhibited, than any instructions which nature can impart to a sinner; for, 1st, TO BELIEVE THAT GOD IS, is to give credit to the testimony, in which God has revealed his name and attributes, and the riches of his all-sufficiency. Faith is knowledge founded on the divine testimony; and since God, as revealed by himself in his word, is such and so great a God that he can be the salvation of a sinner, that man does not truly believe that GOD is, who does not believe the Gospel, when it ascribes to Jehovah this illustrious character, that he can justify the ungodly: for this is included in the representation which God has made of himself in his word. 2dly, It is possible, however, that God might be God, even though he were unwilling to become that, which, from his all-sufficiency, he can become, to wit, the God and the salvation of a sinner. Christian faith, therefore, proceeds further,

and, agreeably to that divine declaration, "I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain," believes that God IS, in fact, THE REWARDER of those who diligently seek him. 3dly, Faith teaches, that this good ought to be earnestly SOUGHT, and that it is incumbent on us to COME to him; which supposes that, on the part of God, there is a testimony which points out the way in which he is pleased to be sought, and to be approached unto by sinners. It must, by all means, be maintained, that a sinner cannot seek God, unless he seek, also, the righteousness of God, which, of necessity, must be declared in the salvation of a sinner; and that it doth not become a sinner to draw near to God without a priest, as without a priest he cannot approach with confidence. We read accordingly in Jeremiah, "Who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me? saith the LORD;"—for these words have a relation to the doctrine concerning Christ, and that satisfaction which he made to divine justice.

From these remarks it appears, that this passage of the Apostle's writings, is interpreted too loosely, by those who would have it to include nothing more, than that knowledge of God, which is taught by natural theology. Not to mention that this knowledge, of whatever sort it is, cannot with propriety be denominated faith; this natural faith, if we may be allowed to call it so, was never sufficient for salvation, and never enabled any man to please God.

VI. The distinct knowledge of those truths concerning God, which are embraced by Christian faith, excites in the mind a vehement DESIRE of God and of communion with him. It is not merely carried towards him for a short time by a kind of sudden impulse of affection, but enjoys no rest or tranquillity, till it become actually a partaker of that chief good, for which it fervently longs. The conscience, enlightened by faith, or, as the Psalmist speaks, the heart of the believer, discerning that perfection of beauty, and that assemblage of all possible excellencies, which are to be seen in the face of God, says in God's stead, "Seek ye my face." To this invitation, faith causes it immediately to answer, "Thy face, LORD, will I seek; O God, thou art my God, early will I seek thee; my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh

longeth for thee, in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is."p Hence that holy wish which is opposed to the confused wishes of the men of the world: "There be many that say, Who will show us any good?" But I say, "LORD, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us." Hence the complaints of the soul which can find no rest, so long as she remains uncertain of her having fellowship with God, and which incessantly exclaims, What doth it avail me that there is a GOD, unless he be MY GOD? Hence the firm and resolute purpose of not ceasing to seek after God, until she find him as her God, and her exceeding joy.

VII. When, amidst this solicitude of the mind inquiring after God, the Deity graciously exhibits himself, saying, "Behold me, behold me;" faith, without delay, EMBRACES him with open arms. She "takes hold of his strength," (takes possession of the tower of his strength;) and, as the mariner, in a tempestuous sea, while in imminent danger of being swallowed up by the deep, no sooner finds some fragment of the shipwrecked vessel than he casts himself upon it with the whole weight of his body; so the soul, concerned for her own salvation, relies upon that God who offers himself in the Gospel, and falls, so to speak, with her whole force, into his arms and his bosom. God lifts up his voice in the Gospel, saying, Who is the man that is desirous of me, and of salvation in me? It is I, replies the believer. As the hart panteth after the waterbrooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. Behold me, then, replies God by the Spirit, able and willing to satisfy thy thirst. I accept of thee, rejoins the believer immediately; condescend thou then to be mine, let me be thine, and henceforth let none ever separate betwixt thee and me. This is to believe in God, so as cordially to receive him.

VIII. But the more excellent the good in question, and the more vehement the desire that is cherished for it, the believing soul becomes, in the same proportion, the more solicitous that it do not falsely and rashly claim it as its own. True faith in God, while it generates and promotes a well-founded confidence, detests and expels all temerity and arrogance. It does not teach a man to say

boldly to God, on slight grounds, Thou art mine. It is by degrees, that it reaches this height; and it is after having accomplished a thorough search, that, at last, it forms this conclusion, which is the foundation of all comfort. The marks, by which the believer is persuaded that the God in whom he believes, has become his own, are, principally, the following.

IX. 1st, This sincere desire of God, and of the most intimate union with him, is never found, but where God has begun to communicate himself, in a saving manner, to the soul. Unless he first draw near to the soul to enlighten it with the glorious beams of his reconciled countenance, and to draw it to himself with the cords of his preventing love, it can neither know, nor desire, nor seek him. The desire of the soul panting after communion with God is not felt, where communion with God is not already, in some degree, enjoyed. Hence David joins these together, saying, "O God, thou art MY GOD, early will I seek thee." The man who so earnestly seeks God that he regards all other things, in comparison of him, as nothing better than dung, gives evidence that he is already apprehended of God.^v He does not run, till he is drawn. He does not love, till he is loved.^x

X. 2dly, When God communicates himself to the soul, he not only makes it happy, but also holy. He communicates himself in a manner suitable to his real character: But he is the Holy One, and he is the LORD that sanctifieth Israel. He puts his law in the minds of his people, and writes it on the hearts of those whose God he is;^a and he gives them one heart and one way, that they may fear him for ever. Whilst he is pleased to become the Portion of his people,^c he still remains their Lord. The more intimate the fellowship with himself to which he condescends to admit them, the stronger, in proportion, are the obligations under which they are laid, reverently to adore his majesty, carefully to imitate his holiness, humbly to proclaim his goodness, and assiduously to cultivate his friendship. Nay, as, in the beginning, the Spirit of God, by moving on the face of the waters, rendered them wonderfully productive of life; so, when God takes up his residence in the soul, he makes it a partaker of his own life. The

old and natural life of the soul is now gradually absorbed by the more excellent life of God; and it is not so much the man himself that lives, as God that lives in him. This communication of vital holiness, is so inseparably connected with fellowship with God, that no man can truly glory, or sincerely exult in the latter, unless he is, at the same time, adorned with the former; and when the holiness of believers declines, the full assurance of their communion with God never fails at the same time to be impaired.e

XI. 3dly, They who have JEHOVAH for their God, cannot bear his absence with indifference. When he hides his face from them, and withholds those gracious influences, which produce a happy serenity of mind, and an alacrity and vigour in the various exercises of the spiritual life, they are so troubled that their soul in a manner fails, they are sick of love,g and can receive no consolation until he return. This sorrow arises, if not from the sense and experience of former enjoyment, at least from a great esteem for familiar intercourse with God. None but one that has enjoyed this privilege, can form a just estimate of its value. Even those who are strangers to God can feel a kind of sorrow for their sins; but none excepting the children of the bride-chamber lament the absence of the Bridegroom.i

XII. 4thly, Those whom God has blessed with a special interest in himself, are often employed in devout and affectionate meditation upon him. Where the treasure is, there will the heart be also. Accordingly they who gloried in God as their own God, have unanimously protested, that they thought of nothing with greater pleasure than of Him. The spouse rejoiced that her Beloved was her's;k but she added, "A bundle of myrrh is my well-beloved unto me; he shall lie all night betwixt my breasts." David struck his harp and said, "The LORD is the Portion of my inheritance and of my cup;" but he added, "I have set the LORD always before me." "My mind," says the pious Augustine,* "is devoted to thee, inflamed with love to thee, breathing for thee, panting after thee, desiring to see thee, alone. It accounts nothing delightful but to speak of thee, to hear of thee, to write of thee, to converse about thee, and often to

revolve thy glory in my heart; that the sweet remembrance of thee, may afford me some respite and refreshment amidst these calamities. Upon thee, therefore, do I call, O thou most beloved of all objects; to thee I cry aloud with my whole heart. When I call upon thee, too, I call upon thee as a God dwelling in myself; for unless thou wert in me, I could not exist at all. Surely, thou art in me, for thou abidest in my memory; by this I recognise thee, and in this I find thee, since I have thee in remembrance, and in thee, and from thee, enjoy my supreme delight."

From these and similar evidences, it is possible for the believer to attain assurance, that God has become his own God.

XIII. When the soul knows this for certain, especially if she hear it from the mouth of God himself addressing her inwardly by the Spirit, and actually taste something of the Divine sweetness, she is filled with a great, an incredible JOY. Hence Peter says, "In whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory." Hence that sweet song of a soul rejoicing in God as her own: "The LORD is the Portion of mine inheritance and of my cup; thou maintainest my lot. The lines are fallen to me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth." In another Psalm also, the two following expressions are conjoined, as if by the same stroke of the harp:—"God, my exceeding joy," and,— "O God, my God."q

XIV. This joy, indeed, is not to be wondered at; for when any one knows that God is his own, he finds in Him the most powerful protection against all evil. "In the LORD JEHOVAH, is everlasting strength," (the Rock of ages.) "I will say of the LORD, he is my refuge, and my fortress, MY GOD; in him will I trust." He finds in him, also, an inexhaustible fountain of all desirable good; not only what equals, but also what infinitely transcends his conceptions and desires. "How excellent is thy loving-kindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house, and thou

shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures. For with thee is the fountain of life; in thy light shall we see light." Both of these ideas are briefly, but strikingly, united, in the words of God to Abraham, "I am thy SHIELD, and thy exceeding great REWARD;" and in the following expression of the Psalmist, "For the LORD God is a SUN and a SHIELD."

XV. The representation and enjoyment of so great a good, cannot fail to be delightful in the highest degree. If separate goods are pleasant, how delightful is that good, which contains the sweetness and quintessence of every good; and not merely such sweetness as we have experienced in created objects, but as widely different from these, as the Creator differs from the creature! All the beauty, all the glory, and all the joy of the material world, are nothing but resplendent beams, emitted and diffused around, by the King of beauty, of glory, and of joy. Whatever things were made, were made by him; and, therefore, whatever goodness is found in the creatures, could be derived from him alone, by whom all were made. The borrowed goodness, consequently, of which they are possessed, is darkened and eclipsed, when compared with that uncreated goodness which is its spring and original. God is, doubtless, a Being, in whose light alone, all that is luminous—in whose glory alone, all that is glorious—in whose beauty alone, all that is beautiful—in whose joy alone, all that is joyful, is contained. When he bestowed upon the creatures light, glory, beauty, and joy, he reserved to himself, the source of light, glory, beauty, and joy; and thus he always retained within himself as the fountain, more than he communicated from himself to the creatures. Ought not, then, the possession of so boundless a good, to produce an almost boundless joy?

XVI. Further, the sweetness arising from the gracious communication which God makes of himself, is so great, that it has virtue to sweeten all that is bitter in the bitterest calamities. The smallest drop of this sweetness, distilled into the mouth which pants after it, quickly dispels the greatest sorrows. This rendered torrents

of stones pleasant to Stephen, the cross to Andrew, the violent tearing of the skin to Bartholomew, the gridiron to St Laurentius, rods, racks,* wheels, and flames, not to mention prisons and exile, to so many myriads of holy martyrs of Christ; who, having tasted this sweetness of God, rejoiced and sang when they were led forth to the most dreadful tortures, as if they were conducted to the most splendid entertainments. These things, indeed, seem incredible to the world. But such is the nature of this sweetness of our God, that none can understand it in any other way than by tasting it. Those only who eat of this manna, can conceive how delicious it is.

XVII. In whatever measure, too, this blessedness is imparted to man in the present life, it is nothing more than the first fruits and earnest of greater, and everlasting enjoyment. Hence arises the constancy and permanence of this joy, if not with regard to its effects, and what are called its secondary acts, at least with regard to its foundation and its primary act. "Everlasting joy shall be upon their head;" "Your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you."x Though, agreeably to the dictates of his infinite wisdom, God is pleased, in this life, to temper the communication of his sweetness with a mixture of bitterness, often very large, but always salutary; there is a principle abiding in believers, which soon gives rise to renewed emotions of joy, and ultimately proves a most abundant source of never-ending delight.

XVIII. Nor has any one cause to be afraid lest he should err by indulging this joy to excess; for God himself invites us not only to cheerfulness, but even to a certain holy and mystic ebriety. The more liberally a person has drunk of this spiritual nectar, though he may seem to others that are ignorant of these delights to be beside himself, he is, in reality, at once the happier and the wiser. There are spirits in material wine, which serve to exhilarate the animal spirits of the human body; but when it is too copiously drunk, it disorders the brain, and makes wise men mad. This spiritual wine, however, which is wholly spirit, and spirit in the very height and exuberance of spirituality, and which is newly extracted and imbibed from the first

and greatest Spirit,—with what mighty force, and with how surprising an ecstasy does it seize and ravish the soul! Yet it produces no agitation but what is salutary, consistent with discretion, and conducive to holiness; it enables the man, no longer his own master, but full of his God, and on the confines of heaven, both to think and to speak with a dignity and energy more than human. Oftener than once, I recollect, I have observed this, with astonishment, in persons whose minds were, in other respects, endowed with very ordinary faculties. Such is the spiritual and mystical joy of Christian faith, when exulting in God as her own.

XIX. This same faith in God is also the spring of true HOLINESS. It cannot be denied, that even that persuasion of a Deity which the Gentiles derived from nature, was calculated to produce a certain attention to repentance and virtue. Epictetus, in his meditations upon this subject, almost rises above heathenism, when he expresses himself in the following terms:* "It is requisite, first, to learn that GOD IS,—that his providence extends to all, and that it is impossible to conceal from his penetrating eye, not merely external actions, but even the thoughts and emotions of the mind. What sort of nature and character, then, have the Gods? Whatever perfections they are found to possess, it is necessary for the man who is desirous to please and obey them, to exert his endeavours to resemble them as closely as possible. If the Deity is faithful, he, too, must be faithful; if free, he, also, must be free; if beneficent, he must be beneficent; if magnanimous, he must be magnanimous. In short, it is incumbent upon him, in all other respects, to think and to speak as an imitator of God." Thus the persuasion of a Deity is the mother of probity.

XX. These expressions, indeed, are equally beautiful and just. But the truth which they inculcate was known to very few; and, in those who knew it, was so enchained by the fetters of corrupt propensities, that it was far from elevating the character, or governing the conduct. Hence the Apostle overthrows their pretensions by the following sentence, as by a thunderbolt: "When they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their

imagination, and their foolish heart was darkened." God caused some of his rays to shine upon them, and, accordingly, they are said to have known God: but they did not admit those rays to the secret recesses of the heart; which is, therefore, said to be darkened. "In the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God." The fabric of nature displayed the power, the wisdom, and the goodness of the Most High, and thus called on mankind to serve him with fidelity, both on account of his supreme majesty, and his numberless benefits; and also because a blessed and glorious reward is reserved for his worshippers in a future state of existence. But the world chose rather to amuse themselves with idle speculations and frigid discourses respecting the works of God, while, in the mean time, they rendered no homage to their great Author. Even those who were possessed of more sagacity and penetration than others, did not betake themselves to the true God, to whom they ought to have resorted, but had recourse to the creature, in common with the populace—against whom, however, these distinguished masters of wisdom, whenever a convenient opportunity occurred, loudly exclaimed, as in this respect acting the part of madmen.

XXI. A Christian faith in God, on the contrary, does not suffer a man to continue destitute of true piety and holiness. The truth of this assertion may be illustrated in various ways. 1st, While faith elevates the mind to the contemplation of the ever adorable Deity, and holds it fixed in delightful meditation upon him, the mind is insensibly transformed into the image of the divine holiness. After Moses had remained forty days on the holy mount, enjoying familiar intercourse with God, the skin of his face shone with so bright an effulgence, that the eyes of the Israelites were unable to endure the sight of him.^b The same, in a spiritual sense, is the attainment of those who frequently and attentively contemplate God in the light of faith. The beams of celestial influence, flowing in abundance from the Father of lights, and received by faith, penetrate and pervade the innermost parts of the soul, and adorn them with a new lustre of celestial purity. The more frequently the believer beholds him in the spirit, his knowledge of his perfections, of which holiness is the ornament,

becomes the more clear. The more clearly he knows the divine perfections, the more ardently does he love them. The more ardently he loves them, the more solicitous doth he become increasingly to resemble them; for love naturally leads to a resemblance to the object beloved. The more ardently he loves God, too, he contemplates him the more frequently, and with the greater attention and pleasure: and, whilst he is engaged in performing this endless circuit of contemplation and affection, he obtains, at every repetition of the exercise, some fresh lineament of God's glorious image.

XXII. 2dly, When faith considers the unspotted purity of God, she readily concludes that she must exert her endeavours also to attain eminent holiness, if she wishes to possess, to cultivate, and to retain such communion with God as will prove effectually conducive to her joy. She assents to the voice of reason suggesting this truth. She gives credit to the sacred volume teaching it still more expressly; "The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him:"—and to the Lord himself crying aloud in her ears, "Be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you."d She learns, also, by experience, that she no sooner relaxes her ardour in the pursuit of piety, than the joy of fellowship with God is immediately impaired. But since faith prizes this joy above every thing else, it cannot fail powerfully to stimulate her to a certain distinguished sanctity of life; as she is well assured that, without this, she can neither attain nor preserve that communion with God, which she so earnestly desires.

XXIII. 3dly, That stupendous love of God, by which he gives himself to the soul for its salvation, when it is apprehended by faith, and represented to the believer in its true light,—kindles surprising flames of reciprocal love. No one, I may venture to affirm, truly believes that God has become his own God, who, whilst he believes, is not swallowed up with amazement at that abyss of divine love, and doth not sincerely wish that he had a far more capacious soul, that it might be entirely replenished with the love of God,—who so greatly loves, and is so greatly loved. In believers themselves, I am aware,

that fervent and unbounded love, with which they are required to love their God, sometimes languishes. But on such occasions, their faith towards God as their own God, is either scarcely present, or not lively, or not called forth into exercise. When this faith is at once present and vigorously exercised, it dictates to the man a song of love not unlike the following, in which Augustine adored his God:* "I love thee, O my God, and I desire always to love thee more; for thou art truly sweeter than all honey, more nourishing than all milk, and brighter than all light. Thou art dearer to me than all gold, and silver, and precious stones. O my Love, whose heart is ever warm, and never waxes cold, be pleased to inflame me. O let me be entirely inflamed by thee, that I may entirely love thee; for if one love any other object together with thee, which he does not love for thy sake, he loves thee the less. May I love thee, O Lord, since thou hast first loved me!"

XXIV. 4thly, Whoever truly believes that he is now become a partaker of God, as he cannot be his own, so cannot wish to be his own; but, did he possess any thing more valuable than himself, he would give it up to his God. Far from desiring to reserve any thing to himself instead of employing it in the service of God, he is truly grieved because he himself is not better, and more worthy of being surrendered to the Lord. On this topic, nothing can be conceived more elegant and forcible, than the following expressions of Bernard, in his treatise on loving God,* which I cannot help quoting. "If," says he, "I owe my whole self for my creation, what can I add for my renovation by means so astonishing? I have not been renewed so easily as I was made. God made me, by merely speaking a single word; in renewing me, he has not only spoken much, but endured many grievous and ignominious sufferings. In the first work he gave ME to myself; in the second he GAVE HIMSELF; and when he thus GAVE HIMSELF, he RESTORED ME to myself. Having, then, been both GIVEN and RESTORED, I owe MYSELF,—I doubly owe MYSELF for MYSELF. What shall I render to God for HIMSELF? for though I were able to render MYSELF a thousand times, what am I

in the presence of GOD!" Christian faith in God teaches a man thus to reason, and thus to stir up his soul.

XXV. We remark, in conclusion, that what has been said must not be understood to intimate, that no person in whom all the attainments of which we have now spoken, and these in the degree which we have delineated, are not found, can say in sincerity, I BELIEVE IN GOD. We have described "believing in God," not as it subsists in Christians that are weak and "of little faith," but as it may be conceived, and as it is sometimes seen in those to whom the Lord has imparted a richer measure of his Spirit. It is proper in this manner to propose faith in God to ourselves, not that we may fall into despair, or be unduly discouraged, when we cannot discern some parts of the description in ourselves; but that captivated with its beauty and excellence, we may cultivate, with all possible zeal and activity, the small beginnings which we have, till we gradually reach that full assurance of faith, which produces so many excellent fruits. Lord, we believe; help thou our unbelief. AMEN.

DISSERTATION VI: ON FAITH IN A THREE-ONE GOD

I. THE Creed is usually divided into three parts; of which the first relates to GOD THE FATHER, and the work of CREATION; the second to GOD THE SON, and the work of REDEMPTION; the third to GOD THE HOLY GHOST, and the work of SANCTIFICATION. The most ancient formulary having consisted of a simple profession of the Trinity, our present Creed, which took its rise from that formulary, and in course of time was completed by the addition of various articles, is still so framed that these may all be referred to the

Three Persons in the Godhead. This great doctrine remained as the Foundation of foundations, upon which the other articles were built.

II. When, however, his own distinct actions are ascribed to each of the Persons respectively, this must not be understood to intimate that either the power or the operation of the Persons is divided, or that any one of them accomplishes his work more immediately than another. As God is one, so the power and operation of all the Persons are one and undivided; and each person is the immediate and perfect of the whole work. The Son and the Holy Ghost created the world by the same power, and by the same act, with the Father. The manner of those works which respect our redemption, is, nevertheless, somewhat different. As a participation of the human nature was requisite to the performance of these, and as the Son alone assumed this nature into personal union with himself, these works, being the works of the God-man, are peculiar to the Son. Yet it is admitted that in so far as the Godhead was concerned, they are the works of the whole Trinity; and, accordingly, they are, in this view, attributed to the Father and the Holy Spirit equally with the Son.—To the Father: "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself, but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doth the works."—To the Holy Spirit: "I cast out devils by the Spirit of God."^b The incarnation itself, and similar acts, though peculiar to the Son in respect that they terminate upon him only, are nevertheless, in regard to the agency by which they are effected, the works of the whole Trinity.

III. But this distinction of the Divine works, has a respect, 1st, To the order of the Persons, which ought to be observed in their operation, as well as their subsistence. Thus, because the Father is the First person of the Godhead, and creation is the first external work of the Deity, as it is the beginning of all those things that are without God,* it is justly ascribed, by special economy, to the Father, who, on this account, is called "Lord of heaven and earth."^d Yet the agency of the Son, and the Holy Ghost,^f is not excluded from this work. 2dly, It is necessary, also, to attend to the terminating of an act upon some

certain Person. For this reason, redemption is attributed to the Second person, for whom alone the human nature was prepared, in and by which the Godhead performed many acts relating to our salvation. The Father, however, is said to have "reconciled the world to himself,"^h and to have "made peace by the blood of the cross of Christ:" and we "are washed, sanctified, and justified, by the Spirit of our God."^j Paul, in like manner, says of the living God, essentially considered, that he is "the Saviour of all men, especially of them that believe." 3dly, Some add that the distinction of the Divine works has a respect to the proximate and immediate principle of operation, and that, in this view, our sanctification should be ascribed to the Holy Ghost.^l We may be permitted, however, to call in question the solidity of this sentiment; for one Divine person doth not act by another, as an intermediate cause; and, as the power of all the persons is one and the same, each of them accomplishes an effect by the same immediate operation. A holy God, essentially considered, is the sanctifier of Israel. The Father and the Son perform this work not less immediately than the Spirit; for the power and the operation of all the three are the same. If, indeed, the order of operation amongst the persons be considered, the Father acts by the Son and the Holy Ghost. But, in this sense, all the works of God ought to be characterised as the immediate works of the Holy Ghost. This, however, is foreign to the purpose; for the Father acts no less immediately by the Son, than the Son himself acts; and the Father and the Son act no less immediately by the Holy Spirit, than the Holy Spirit himself acts. It is only where there is a diversity of essences and of operations, that the distinction betwixt a remote and a proximate, or betwixt a mediate and an immediate cause, can have any place.* Why, then, is sanctification so uniformly ascribed to the third person? No reason occurs to me, at present, more satisfactory than the following. The sanctification of a sinner is the consequence of the grace and the merits of Christ:³⁰ in the order of subsistence and operation amongst the three Divine persons, the Holy Spirit follows the Son, and hence he is called "the Spirit of the Son:" it appears, therefore, that the application of the merits of the Son, cannot be more properly attributed to any of the persons, than to

him who is next the Son, who is sent by him, and who applies those blessings only, which belong to the Son, and which he receives from him.o

IV. It is of importance to examine this mystery more distinctly. I shall not now explain the terms made use of by the Church on this subject, which Gomar, according to his usual manner, † has treated accurately, and John Gerhard more copiously. ‡ Nor shall I scholastically define what is intended by essence, existence, suppositum, and person. Such definitions may be learned from those systems which are in every one's hand. I shall only state, with great simplicity, and in a manner adapted to the weakest capacities, what we ought to know and believe respecting this tremendous mystery. The true God, who is the Creator of heaven and earth, and the salvation of his chosen people, is one only,* according to the most absolute unity.p But, in perfect consistency with this unity, there are three Hypostases, or Persons distinct from one another; each of whom is the only true God, and who have the same common form, † nature, ‡ or essence:§ for, "according to the holy Fathers, essence, and nature, and form are synonymous terms."|| These three are the FATHER, the WORD or SON, and the HOLY GHOST; who are not three Gods, nor merely three names, or attributes, or powers of God; but three distinct Persons in one individual Godhead. It is sufficient for salvation to know what has just been stated, though one remain ignorant of the subtle refinements of the schools, which are often bold, and really presumptuous and unadvised.

V. This doctrine belongs to the number of those mysteries of our religion, which man, particularly in his corrupt state, cannot learn from nature alone, and of which Justin Martyr beautifully says: "They surpass all the understanding, all the language, in short, all the comprehension of a created nature. If, therefore, amidst your inquiries into them, any doubt arise in your mind, avail yourself of that which affords a ready solution of your doubts respecting the subject of inquiry, to wit, faith."* Christ himself says in reference to this mystery, "No man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither

knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."q It is, therefore, only by the revelation of the Son, that the relation which exists between him and the Father is known. On this account, we cannot subscribe to the opinion of such of our theologians as have endeavoured to prove, to confirm, and by tedious similitudes to illustrate this mystery, by arguments derived from nature; which, after others, Bisterfeld has acutely and copiously attempted, in the Synopsis prefixed to his learned work against Crellius. It is much safer to keep within the bounds of Scripture alone, lest we involve ourselves in unnecessary difficulties. The testimonies produced from Orpheus, Zoroaster, Trismegistus, the Sibyls, and similar writers, are not genuine; and the clearer they are, they are the more to be suspected. It seems contrary to the sacred oracles, as Casaubon well argues, † to imagine, that mysteries so profound were more clearly propounded to the Heathen, than to that people whom God Almighty was pleased to favour as peculiarly his own, and to instruct, by his own immediate voice, and by that of his faithful servants. The passages produced from Plato and his disciples, whilst they tally with this doctrine in words, differ from it in sense, and may be considered as borrowed either from the sacred writings which were then extant, or from tradition; the probability of which has been shown by Clement of Alexandria.*

VI. The Scriptures of the Old Testament, as well as of the New, abound with clear and striking testimonies respecting this mystery. It appears from both, 1st, That there are more Divine Persons than one; 2dly, More particularly, that they are three in number; 3dly, Still more particularly, that they are the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

The first of these assertions is proved, 1. From those passages of Scripture where God either addresses himself, or speaks concerning himself, in the plural number; such as those quoted at the bottom of the page. 2. From those passages in which the LORD speaks of the LORD, or is distinguished from the LORD.

The second assertion is confirmed by the places of Scripture where three distinct persons are mentioned.

The third is proved from Mat. 28:19. Rom. 1:4. 2 Cor. 13:14. 1 John 5:7.

To explain and vindicate all these testimonies might seem somewhat tedious, and it is foreign to our present design.

VII. We have undertaken to show what it is to believe in a Three-one God. This implies, principally, three things. 1st, The knowledge of this mystery. 2dly, The acknowledgment of it, or an assent to it. 3dly, The calm and holy dependance of the soul upon God as a Three-one God.

VIII. With regard to the KNOWLEDGE of this mystery, we deem it so necessary, that we cannot venture to assure any adult of salvation, without this knowledge. A distinction should be made, we allow, betwixt the degrees of knowledge, as more or less clear and distinct;—times, also, must be distinguished, for it is fit that knowledge should correspond with the measure of revelation afforded;—the different capacities of men should be distinguished, since some are far more capable of instruction than others;—knowledge existing in the mind, too, must be distinguished from the expression of it with the mouth;—we ought to take into consideration, in fine, the diversity of the ministry under which individuals live. We do not presume to determine the degree or measure of the knowledge required. This only we state, that it does not appear to us, that the man who is entirely ignorant of this mystery is in the way of salvation. The following arguments tend to confirm this opinion.

IX. 1st, Since our Lord himself makes eternal life to consist in the knowledge of the Father, and of the Son whom he hath sent, who will say that such knowledge is not necessary to eternal life? This would be equally absurd as if one should affirm, that that in which salvation itself consists, is not necessary to salvation. No one, it must also be

remarked, knows the Father, who is ignorant that from eternity he had an only-begotten Son; nor does any one know the Son, who does not know He is the same God with the Father. "Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father.... Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?" These words import a Trinity, at least a plurality, of persons in one godhead.

X. 2dly, It is admitted, that there is no hope of salvation without the knowledge of the true God. But he only is the true God, who, while he is One in essence, subsists in Three persons. Whoever entertains any other view of God than this, does not represent to himself the true God, but a figment of his own imagination, and an idol. "Whoever," says Augustine, "thinks that God is such a being as he is not, entertains a conception, in reality, of another and a false God."* On this account, the heathen, who knew in general that there is some infinite Deity, but were ignorant of the Trinity, which is the foundation of the covenant of God with elect sinners, are said to have been "without God in the world."^w The true God, whom Paul preached, was to them UNKNOWN. "The Gentiles," it is said, "knew not God;"^y that is, they did not know him as a Tri-une God. They knew, indeed, that there is some Supreme Being; and thus far, the same Apostle affirms that "they knew God;" but they were ignorant of what God is; as if one should know there is a certain King in the realm, but be unacquainted with the person of the King.

XI. 3dly, When the Trinity is not known, the necessary consequence is, that the principal foundations of our faith and comfort, are unknown. All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, are hid in the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ.^a I cannot know how God can show mercy to a sinner in a manner worthy of himself, unless I know he has a Son whom he could send to make satisfaction for sin, and a Spirit who can apply to me the merits of the Son. If I know not that the Father is God, I shall be ignorant that I am a Son of God,—which is the sum of our felicity. If I know not that the Son is God, I shall not form a right estimate of the love of the Father who

has given him to me, nor of the grace of the Son, who, though possessing inconceivable majesty, humbled himself so wonderfully for my sake;—nor shall I be able to place a firm dependance upon his satisfaction, which could not be sufficient unless it were of infinite value, or to rely securely on his power, which cannot save me unless it be evidently omnipotent;—it will be impossible for me, in short, to regard him as my Saviour and my Chief Good, because none excepting the true God of Israel is Israel's GOD and Redeemer. If, in fine, I am not sure that the Holy Spirit, to whose direction and government I ought to commit myself, is God, I shall not be able to esteem my subjection to him as true liberty, to maintain a holy acquiescence in his protecting care, or to rely on his testimony respecting my salvation as a most ample security. Christian faith is of so delicate a character, that it can firmly acquiesce in none but the Most High God. It must, then, be of the first importance and necessity for us to know a doctrine, on which the knowledge of so many necessary points depends. This argument is confirmed by experience; for, as we see in the Socinians, the same men who deny the Trinity, deny, also, the satisfaction of Christ, the invincible power of the Spirit in our regeneration and conservation, the certainty of salvation, and the full assurance of faith. The mystery of our salvation through Christ is so intimately connected with the mystery of the Trinity, that when the latter is unknown or denied, the former cannot be known or acknowledged.

XII. 4thly, It is indisputably manifest, that he who does not honour God the Father cannot be saved; for his own words are as follows: "Them that honour me, I will honour; and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed." No one, however, rightly honours the Father, who does not, also, honour the Son. "The Father hath committed all judgment unto the Son, that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father who hath sent him."d Further, no man can honour the Son who does not know him, and who does not know him even in his true character as the Only-begotten, of the same substance with the Father, and, therefore, worthy of the same divine honour with the

Father. For what is honour but a reverential acknowledgment of the excellency possessed by the person whom we honour? It follows, then, that without the knowledge of Christ as one God with the Father, there is no salvation.

XIII. 5thly, It is necessary to salvation, to know him of whom all that are about to be baptized according to Christ's appointment, ought to make a profession. No one can profess what he does not know. But ever since the commencement of the Christian dispensation, it has been incumbent on believers to make a profession of that Trinity, into whose name they are baptized. To be baptized into the name of any one, is to surrender ourselves to him, in order to yield him such homage as is due to God. It, therefore, involves or supposes a confession of his Divinity. It is not, indeed, expressly mentioned in Scripture, that a confession to this effect was demanded in these very terms. But neither is it explicitly affirmed, that the Apostles baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost: yet, without doubt, they observed the institution of our Lord with the most scrupulous exactness. When the Apostles, too, baptized in the name of Christ, which Luke, in his account of their labours, testifies that they did; the whole Trinity, as Ambrose ingeniously observes,* is intended by that name: for when Christ, that is, the Anointed, is mentioned, the expression includes the Father, by whom he was anointed; Christ himself, who received the anointing; and the Holy Ghost, the oil with which he was anointed. In this remark Ambrose has followed Basil, whose words are these: "The naming of Christ is the confession of the whole; for this word denotes, at once, him who anoints, viz. God; the Anointed, viz. the Son; and the unction, viz. the Spirit." † Besides, when our Lord says, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned,"f what is more consonant to reason than that the object of faith to which he referred was that very doctrine which is delivered at baptism? Hence all the ancients, with hardly any exception, made a solemn recognition of the Trinity at the administration of baptism. "You were asked," says Ambrose,* "Do you believe in God the Father Almighty? You replied, I believe; and you were immersed, that is,

you were buried. You were asked, in the second place, Do you believe in our Lord Jesus Christ? You said, I believe; and you were immersed, and thus buried together with Christ.... You were asked, in the third place, Do you believe in the Holy Ghost? You answered, I believe; you were immersed³³ a third time, &c." "We ought," says Basil, to be baptized as we have learned, to believe as we have been baptized, and to honour the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost as we have believed." See several other testimonies of the Fathers in Forbes;[†] to which I here add the expressions of Nazianzen in the speech which he delivered in the Council of Constantinople, the 6th General Council, held in the year of our Lord 381. "We believe in the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, of the same substance and the same glory; in whom, also, baptism has its perfection: for in baptism, AS THOU WHO ART INITIATED KNOWEST, there is both in word and deed, a renunciation of atheism and a confession of the Deity."[‡] Thus it appears that the pious ancients believed, that when a man makes a profession of the Trinity in baptism, he passes from atheism to an acknowledgment of the true God.

XIV. It will not be unseasonable here to inquire, WHETHER THE MYSTERY OF THE TRINITY WAS KNOWN TO ADAM IN THE STATE OF INNOCENCE? Moses Amyrault, a celebrated divine, has thought proper to deny this, and to contend,^{*} that the economy which takes place among the Three persons of the Godhead, so peculiarly respects the redemption of mankind, that "the knowledge of it cannot pertain to the state of innocence, in which there was no place for salvation or redemption." To us the matter appears in a different light; and we will explain and confirm our opinion by the following arguments.

XV. The doctrine of the Trinity, we confess, is a mystery, which man, how distinguished soever for wisdom and industry, could not discover by the mere consideration of himself and the creatures. We hold it, however, as unquestionably certain, that God revealed several truths to Adam in his original state of integrity, which unassisted nature was incapable of teaching him. Being the

confederate, the friend, and a kind of vicegerent of the great God upon earth, it was essential to his happiness to enjoy communion with his God, and from time to time to receive such instruction from his lips as might serve to prepare him more thoroughly for rendering praise to his Creator. Whence, indeed, did he receive the command respecting the tree of knowledge; whence did he learn the signification of the tree of life,—if not by Divine revelation? How else, did he so well know the manner of the creation of his wife, though formed while he was asleep, as to declare that she was bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh?

Zanchius says,[†] he has no doubt that God sometimes spoke to Adam, in an external and visible form, by his own Son, clothed with the appearance of a human body. To him it appears altogether improbable, that this privilege which God afterwards granted to a considerable number of men was withheld from the first man, who was the chief friend of God, and created in his perfect image. He affirms, too, that this was the opinion of the Fathers, of Justin, Irenæus, Tertullian, Eusebius, Ambrose, Augustine, and others. For my part, as I dare not determine any thing respecting the mode of revelation, beyond what is related in sacred writ, so I am persuaded that, from the instances which we have adduced, it cannot be questioned that several revelations were, in reality, made to Adam.

XVI. That the mystery of the Trinity was included amongst the subjects of divine revelation to our first father, may be proved thus. It is universally admitted, that the understanding of Adam was adorned with the most excellent wisdom. Now it is the principal branch of wisdom, to know God: Not, however, to know him in so general and indistinct a manner that one understands there is some Infinite Deity, from whom all other beings derive their existence; for such knowledge remained among the heathen, who, we all know, were blind and foolish, and destitute of the divine image. It is essential to a true knowledge of God, that you know distinctly WHAT he is. If you apply those general notions which you have of a Deity to any other than to Him, who, while he is One in essence, subsists in

Three persons, you must be considered, not as possessing the knowledge of the true God, but rather as substituting an idol, and a figment of your own imagination, in the place of the true God. But, since it is incongruous and almost blasphemous to impute this to Adam in his state of innocence, we must conclude that he had some knowledge of a Three-one God, who alone is the true God. Epiphanius,* in the following expressions concerning Adam, employs the same argument: "He was not an idolater, but knew God the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost; for he was a prophet, and knew that the Father said to the Son, Let us make man." We are here taught by this writer, first, that revelations of a prophetic sort were given to Adam; and, then, that the mystery of the Trinity was one of the points revealed to him: which he proves by this consideration, that he was no idolater. He manifestly supposes, that he would have been an idolater, if he had entertained any other conception of the Almighty, than as a Three-one God.

XVII. In these words, too, Epiphanius suggests another argument, which we shall more fully illustrate. In the work of creation God evidently showed himself a Three-one God; for the Father made the worlds by the Son; the Holy Spirit moved upon the waters, and thus rendered them prolific; and the whole Trinity, by mutual excitation, prepared for the creation of man. It is incredible, therefore, that the Trinity was utterly unknown to the first man; unless we can suppose him to have been ignorant of his Creator. Since both the Son and the Holy Spirit created him, he could not have been ignorant of these Divine persons, without being ignorant of his Creator, and unable to praise or adore him aright. Truly it is not without emphasis and meaning, that in a considerable number of passages in which the Scripture speaks of the Creator of man, it makes use of the plural number. Thus where we read, "Thy Maker is thy Husband," the words in the original literally signify, "Thy Makers are thy Husbands." Again, "Let Israel rejoice in him that made him;" literally, "in his Makers." Man is enjoined to attend to this, and even in early years, to engrave it on his mind; "Remember, now, thy Creator, Creators, in the days of thy youth." It is represented as

criminal in man to neglect this, and not to say, "Where is God my "Maker, Makers, who giveth songs in the night?" Unless these expressions be referred to the Trinity, they might seem dangerous. It is absurd, too, to think that Adam was ignorant of a truth respecting his Creator, (I say Creator, because this is the character now pressed on our attention,) about which his posterity are not permitted to be ignorant. The absurdity is the more apparent, when it is considered that God created man to be a herald to proclaim himself and his attributes in the new-formed world; for unquestionably it tends to the glory of God, that man should particularly celebrate not only the Divine perfections, but also the manner in which these perfections are displayed in the distinct Persons of the Godhead, and in the mode and order of their operation.

XVIII. Hence it appears that the economy of the Trinity ought not to be so restricted to the plan of the redemption of mankind, as not to be observed in the first creation of the world and of man. The Gospel itself, while it unfolds this admirable economy as it respects the method of our salvation, leads back our thoughts at the same time to that economy, as it was discovered in the first formation of the world. It shows us, that in the old creation there was a certain type and figure of the new; and that the Son of God our Saviour is "the Beginning" (viz. in the active sense of the term) "of the creation of God;"m by whom were made thrones, and dominions, things visible and invisible, "that in all things he might have the pre-eminence;" that is, that he might hold the pre-eminence as well in the works of nature, as in those of grace. It is, therefore, wrong to conclude that Adam had no knowledge of the Trinity, from, the supposition that the economy of the Trinity is principally concerned in the work of redeeming sinners; since this work of redemption, which is a new creation, was shadowed forth by the first creation, in which the economy of the Three persons no less manifested itself.³⁴

XIX. It is rashly asserted, too, "that in the state of innocence there was no room for salvation* or redemption." This, indeed, is true with regard to redemption, but with respect to salvation, it is false. The

same salvation, the same eternal life, which we obtain through Christ, (as we have shown at large elsewhere,) was promised to Adam upon condition of his persisting in holiness. We have an evidence of this in the tree of life, which was, then, a symbol, though not of the Mediator as such, yet of the Son of God; for "In him was life."o This symbol would have been nugatory, if its meaning had been unknown to Adam.

XX. Thus far respecting the KNOWLEDGE of this mystery. An ASSENT to the doctrine, and an ACKNOWLEDGMENT of it, after it has been explained to one from the word of God, are no less necessary. The condition of one who denies and impugns a fundamental truth which he knows, is evidently far worse than that of one who is simply ignorant of it. They who oppose the doctrine of the Trinity, I do not hesitate to declare with confidence, have no part in eternal salvation. The Apostle John expressly warns us, that "Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father." Now, that man denies the Son, who denies his Divinity, and who denies the Spirit of the Son,—who is of the same substance with the Son, and, without whom, no man can say that Jesus is Lord.q

XXI. When, therefore, men deny, oppose, and blaspheme the doctrine of the Trinity, as the modern Socinians do, we cannot acknowledge them as Christians and Brethren; we cannot offer them any Church communion, nor accept of it, if offered by them. How much soever they may attempt to recommend themselves by a specious appearance of piety, we boldly pronounce them perverters of Christianity, fighters against God,* and gross idolaters; with whom we wish to have no fellowship in our Churches, and to whom, according to the injunction of an Apostle, we will not say, "God speed."r We applaud the zeal of Christopher Krainscius, who, when Smalcus, a Socinian leader, with his followers, troubled the Orthodox with an unreasonable demand of union, first in the Synod of Lublin, in the year 1612, and afterwards in the Synod of Belzo, honestly replied, "Sirs, begone, give us no trouble; for sooner may heaven enter into an agreement with hell, than we, the Evangelical,

with you. Let the man who fears God, go out from this Church;" and instantly he himself went out. When the adversaries complained of Krainscius, as having by this conduct and language pronounced them unworthy of his company, Count Leszczinius rejoined, "I also fear God, and therefore, I will remove;" and no sooner did he utter the word than he went out, mounted his carriage, and departed. Thus the union demanded was refused.* Whoever wishes to see more on this topic, may consult the learned Theses of the venerable Voet, on the necessity and utility of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity."†

XXII. But what would a naked and merely speculative knowledge and acknowledgment of this mystery avail, unless to these were added the pious DEPENDANCE OF THE SOUL UPON A THREE-ONE GOD? No sooner is the believer divinely instructed in this truth than he delights in it; rejoicing that now he knows and believes those mysteries relating to his God, which transcend all sense, all language, all understanding;—which are worthy of his incomprehensible infinitude;—and by which, in fine, he is distinguished from all the idols of the nations, and from those false Gods which every one, by his own perverse conceptions, has formed for himself. "I have found thee," says Faith, "I have found, and I recognise thee, O my God, the Rock of my salvation, of whom the rest of the world are ignorant; and whom the Athenians, the wisest of mortals, confessed to be to them UNKNOWN. Thou art He;* in the most absolute unity Three; in a distinct Trinity, One; Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Thou alone art the 'true God and eternal life.'

XXIII. Nor does faith stop here. But, acknowledging the Father as God, she confidently commits herself to his omnipotent power, his unsearchable wisdom, his unbounded goodness, and the inexhaustible riches of his all-sufficiency. Acknowledging the Son as God, she rests securely on his satisfaction as most ample, and as deriving infinite value from the dignity of his godhead. "Surely shall one say, In JEHOVAH have I righteousness and strength; even to him shall men come.... In JEHOVAH shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory." Acknowledging the Holy Ghost as God, she

firmly relies on his wise and holy guidance, and reposes an unsuspecting confidence in his testimony as infallible, and infinitely worthy of credit.† Knowing, too, that these three are One, faith is not distracted in her operations, but devolves her whole weight on this Tri-une God;—assured from their unity of will, as well as of essence, that all the three persons harmoniously concur in promoting her salvation.

XXIV. Nothing is more false than that calumny of the Remonstrants, by which they deny that the article of the Holy Trinity has any practical use. Every doctrine of "the truth, is according to godliness:" and shall this character not apply to a doctrine so conspicuous, so fundamental? This article is even the source of all genuine faith, of all true religion. He cannot have Christian faith, who doth not believe that a person in the Godhead could have been given, and has been actually given us, to be a successful Mediator with God; but this would have been impossible, if the Godhead had subsisted only in one person. He who does not adore the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, as equal in divine majesty, worships not the true God, but a creature of his own imagination. Go now, if you will, and boldly affirm, that this doctrine, which is absolutely essential to Christian faith and piety, is unprofitable in relation to practice. The Remonstrants are guilty of offending and dishonouring God, when, in order to flatter the Socinians, for whom they entertain too great a regard, they describe them as persons, "who so regulate their lives according to the rule of the Gospel, that they worship the Father in his Son, and, by devout and pious supplications, solicit from both, the grace of the Holy Ghost."* What sort of language, alas! shall we now have the unhappiness to hear? Do they regulate their lives according to the rule of the Gospel, who, by denying the satisfaction of Christ, overthrow the Gospel? Do those worship the Father in the Son, who slanderously affirm that the eternal Son of God is a mere man,† and who, whilst they adore him as such, make him an idol? Do those men, by pious supplications, implore the grace of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son, who blasphemously allege, that the Spirit is only an attribute of God, or a creature, or at least, a

person of some intermediate dignity betwixt God and a creature? How much more justly does Ignatius say, "Whosoever declares that God is one only, in such a sense as to rob Christ of Divinity, is a devil, and an enemy of all righteousness."*

XXV. Let us now point out the more special uses of this article. The doctrine of the Holy Trinity is profitable, in the first place, for INSTRUCTION, and that in a two-fold respect. 1st, Our understanding is informed in what manner it ought to be exercised in its meditations concerning God. Not confining its views merely to his One essence with its attributes, it must ascend to the Wonderful Trinity. Rightly to know God, is, unquestionably, an important part of piety; and a more excellent object of contemplation cannot be presented to the mind, than this tremendous mystery, the intuitive and perfect knowledge of which, will complete its felicity in the light of glory. 2dly, From this incomprehensible mystery, which surpasses all sense and reason, we learn that we must renounce our own wisdom in divine matters, and reduce every thought into captivity to the obedience of faith. No one is prepared to form right views of this mystery, who has not risen above the low sphere of the senses and human reasonings, and soared to the sublimer region of faith; where, relying solely on God's own testimony respecting himself, he believes what he is able neither to see with his eyes, nor comprehend with his mind,—stopping at that precise point, beyond which divine revelation doth not conduct him. "You hear," says Gregory Nazianzen, of the generation of the Son; be not inquisitive with respect to its mode. You hear that the Spirit proceeds from the Father; beware of curiously inquiring into the manner of this procession."†

XXVI. Secondly, This doctrine is conducive to CONSOLATION. 1st, O how delightful is it to behold in the very intimate union, or rather unity, of the Three Divine persons, a pattern and representation of our own union with Christ, and, through Christ, with God! This astonishing idea is suggested by our Lord's prayer,—"That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee; that they also

may be one in us; ... that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me." 2dly, O how pleasant is it to believe that the Father, who has adopted me for a son, is God; who, being himself Lord of all, is able to make me an heir of all things;—to reflect that the Son, to whom my soul is betrothed, is, equally with the Father, God, and the King of glory;—to know that the Holy Spirit, by whom I am sealed unto the day of complete salvation, is, in like manner, God, and, consequently, truth itself!* 3dly, O how delightful is it for me, when meditating on the mystery of the Sacred Trinity, to behold in the face of the eternal Father, the kindness of his unbounded love towards me;—in the face of the co-eternal Son, the endearing familiarity of the purest brotherly love;†—and in the light of the Holy Spirit, the bonds of my union with God!

XXVI. In the third place, it is useful for ADMONITION. It serves to admonish us, 1st, That we Christians, who ought to "be followers of God, as dear children,"w should live together in perfect harmony, being "of one accord, of one mind;" "endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." 2dly, That we should reverence the divine majesty of our Father;—that we should, with alacrity, throw open the doors of our hearts to the Son, the king of glory;—that we should not "grieve,"z nor "vex," nor "quench,"b the Holy Spirit, who is a person of the same divine dignity with the Father, and the Son; but consecrate our whole selves to him as temples sacred to his honour,—solicitously avoiding all approaches to that sin against Him, which shall never be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in the world to come.d

I conclude with the words of Synesius, in his third Hymn.*

"I praise thee as One; I praise thee as Three.

While Three, thou art One; while One, thou art Three."

DISSERTATION VII: ON FAITH IN GOD

THE FATHER

I. IT is an approved and well-known observation of Divines, that the term FATHER, when applied to God, is sometimes taken essentially,* and sometimes personally. † Taken essentially, it is common to the whole undivided Trinity. In this view, it is employed chiefly with reference to the creatures; for that on account of which God is denominated the Father of mankind and of other creatures, is not peculiar to any one Person, but pertains equally to each. He is called "the Father of all," because he created all, and "the Father of Spirits,"^b because "he formeth the spirit of man within him;" and, also, because he exercises a watchful providence over mankind, extending his care to every individual. "He hath made of one blood," said the Apostle Paul to the Athenians, "all the nations of men.... He is not far from every one of us; for in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring." Now these expressions are to be deemed no less applicable to the Second and the Third, than to the First Person in the Godhead.

II. The name FATHER, however, now falls to be considered by us personally, as the designation of the First Person. We shall observe that he is from himself; that he alone begat the Son, in an incomprehensible manner; and that from him, together with the Son, the Holy Spirit proceeded, in a manner equally ineffable. All that the Scriptures propound as the distinguishing properties of the Father, are comprised in this description.

III. The first of these properties, is the Father's being the FIRST PERSON.* When we call the Father the first person, let it be observed, we do not understand the expression as relating to the order of DURATION; as if he were before the other persons with regard to age or time. For the "goings forth" of the Son, "have been

from of old, even from everlasting." "The LORD possessed," this personal wisdom, "in the beginning of his way, before his works of old," before all time. Hence Athanasius has justly said; "The Son is of the Father without beginning, and begotten of him from eternity."† The Spirit also, through whose agency Christ was offered up as a spotless sacrifice to God, (which without any inconvenience, and even with great propriety, may be understood of the Third person,)38 is called "the Eternal Spirit." Eternity, indeed, is so essential a property of God, that a person not eternal ought not to be acknowledged as Divine. "Eternal power," is part of that which may be known of God from the suggestions of nature itself. What is eternal, too, could have nothing prior to it, even for a moment. Athanasius has, accordingly, well said in his Creed; "The Godhead of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, is one; and their majesty CO-ETERNAL."*

IV. Again, we do not call the Father the First person, in the order of NATURE or CAUSALITY. This is nowhere affirmed in Scripture, beyond which it is not safe to speak on so awful a mystery. A cause is properly defined, that which gives existence to something else. But this cannot take place among the Divine persons, whose essence is one and the same. It is wrong, too, where the nature is one, as here, to entertain any conception of priority or posteriority of nature. The ancient Greek Christians, I am aware, admitted the cause and what is caused, † amongst the Divine persons. But though they thus employed phrases which scarcely merit approbation, their meaning was sound; they explicitly denied all priority and inequality of nature. Let us see how Damascenus expresses himself on this topic. "When we say that the Father is the head of the Son, or greater than the Son, we by no means affirm that he is PRIOR IN TIME OR SUPERIOR IN NATURE TO THE SON, for by him he made the worlds: We intend nothing but this, that the Father is the cause of the Son; that is, that the Son was begotten of the Father, not the Father of the Son." ‡ We disapprove of some expressions in this quotation, as inaccurate. To say that "the Father is the cause of the Son," is harsh, indistinct, and unscriptural. Nor is it true that, in that

respect, the Father is greater than the Son; since the Son accounts it no robbery "to be equal with God." Orthodoxy, however, is secured, when it is affirmed, that the Father is not styled the cause of the Son, in any other sense, but as the Son is begotten of him; and when all priority of nature and of time is excluded.

V. In fine, we do not consider the Father as first in DIGNITY or EXCELLENCE. Infinite and supreme excellence is an essential attribute of Deity: and if any person were possessed of greater excellence and dignity than the Son or the Holy Spirit, neither of these persons could be the Most High God. "These three are one," in essence, and in all essential attributes; equal in dignity, and equal in glory.*

VI. But the Father is the First person in the following respects. 1st, In the order of SUBSISTENCE. The hypostasis is ascribed to the Father. The Son is called "the express image of his person," the character of his hypostasis. The Father, therefore, is the archetype,† the Son the resemblance:‡ But the archetype is prior to that which is conformed to it.§ The Apostle makes use of the same similitude in another place, when he calls the Son "the image of the invisible God." Whilst this priority deprives the Son of no part of his excellence, it brings no addition to that of the Father. On the contrary, the equality of both is elegantly pointed out by this metaphor. Theophylact has the following beautiful remark: "The character, or the form expressed, doth not exceed the hypostasis, or the form expressing; lest, in so far as it exceeds, it should have no hypostasis. Nor is the hypostasis greater than the character; otherwise, some part of it, at least, would not be expressed."

VII. 2dly, In the order of OPERATION. Since the Father works by the Son, it necessarily follows that, in relation to the other persons, he works originally and from himself,* and has in himself the principle of operation, as well personally as essentially. The following assertion of our Lord relates to this subject: "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do; for what things soever he

doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise."m This declaration holds respecting the Son, considered as well in his Divine, as in his Mediatorial character. As, in his human nature, the Son doth nothing without the incitement, command, and example of the Father, but in all his actions performs the will and displays the holiness of the Father; so as the Son of God, he can do nothing "of himself," † nothing, as the Hebrews would express it לבדו, separately from the Father. The essence, the power, and the will of both, are one and the same; yet the Father takes the lead in the order of operation, and the Son "sees" him operating; that is, knows intimately, approves, and executes with perfect exactness, the Father's counsels and decrees,—which are, at the same time, his own.

Thus it is clear that the order of operation begins on the part of the Father. Nor, again, doth this prerogative of order, derogate in the least from the supreme dignity of the Son; unless one should very absurdly regard it as an evidence of weakness and inferiority that, since the power and will of the Father and the Son are one and the same, the Son can neither do nor will any thing, but in and with the Father. The Son himself hath amply guarded his own dignity, by testifying, that "what things soever the Father doth, these also doth the Son likewise."* The meaning is not, as Grotius wrests the expression, that the Son does other works corresponding to these; but that he does the same works, and performs them in like manner. This is to be understood, as Nazianzen observes, "not with respect to the likeness of the things done, but with respect to an equal dignity of power and authority." † The expression intimates too, as Cyril of Alexandria says on this text, "the absolute identity of the works."‡ If the words are explained in this manner, they will furnish an incontestable proof, not only that our Lord had done nothing wrong in curing the impotent man, but even that it was utterly impossible for him to do wrong; because, provided only the distinction of the personal order of operation be preserved, the power and the will by which he works miracles, are the same with the power and the will of the Father. Now this was the scope of our Lord's discourse.

VIII. The second characteristic property of the Father, is that he is OF HIMSELF. This is to be understood, not in relation to the essence, but to the mode of having the essence. With respect to the essence, both the Son and the Holy Spirit are that God who is of himself. That the Deity is of himself—that, owing to the glory of his infinite perfections, he depends on no other, but has his existence and all that he possesseth of himself,—is so necessarily included in the notion of the Deity, that one who, with regard to his essence, is from another, for this precise reason, cannot be God. The ancients, therefore, rightly called Christ, God of himself, and by himself.* Amongst other instances, Eusebius, in a panegyric Oration on Paulinus, Bishop of Tyre, denominates Christ "the proper Son of the supreme God, and God of himself;"[†] because being the true God, he possesses that Divine essence, which is from itself, although he has it as a Son from the Father. The Father, then, is from himself with regard to personality; that is, the Divine essence is communicated to him from no other person; for nowhere does the sacred volume intimate that the Father was begotten, or proceeded, or in any manner came forth from another. Athanasius, accordingly, has well said: "We believe in one unbegotten God, the Father Almighty, who hath his subsistence from himself."[‡]

IX. The third distinguishing property of the Father, is that HE ALONE FROM ETERNITY, BEGAT THE SON. He, accordingly, says, "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee." These words were addressed to Christ, as the Apostle expressly assures us, in a sense altogether peculiar to himself: but, in what this generation consists, it is impossible for us weak mortals to understand or explain. Athanasius, whom I have just quoted, very properly says, "He was begotten in a manner ineffable and incomprehensible."* The very idea of generation, however, properly so called, namely, that by which one is constituted the son of any person, includes the communication of the same nature.³⁹ In created persons, the nature is the same only in species; but in God, owing to his absolute unity, it is the same in reference to number. By the generation of the Son, then, we understand that act of God, by which he has communicated

to the Son the same numerical essence which he himself hath, that the Son may have it in like manner.

X. We do not hazard these assertions without authority from sacred writ. The Son himself leads the way, laying, "As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son, to have life in himself." "To have life in himself," is, not merely, to have enough for himself for that infinitely happy life, which alone is worthy of God; but, also, to be a fountain of life, to impart it to those who had no existence, and to restore it to those who are dead. These are essential perfections of God. In this manner, "the Father hath life in himself." Now the Father hath given to the Son to have the same life in himself, in the same manner; and this necessarily implies the communication of the same essence, which lives by itself, and is the source of all true life.⁴⁰ Several Protestant Divines, I am aware, and some, too, of great eminence, contend that these expressions refer to Christ, not directly in relation to his Divine character,* but to his Mediatorial office.† But, although we should grant them this, (which, however, it is not necessary for us to do,) still it could not have been given to Christ, that, as Mediator, he should possess a fountain of life in himself, unless he possessed a nature which lives of itself, and which is even life from and by itself:‡ For this is the peculiar prerogative of God, and hence the Psalmist adores him thus: "With thee is the fountain of life;"^p and this glory he will give to none that is not God.

XI. But we cannot so easily concede to our adversaries, that, by the generation of Christ mentioned in the second Psalm, his resurrection from the dead is intended; and that, by this day, we are to understand the day on which God, having raised him from the dead, appointed him the King of his church. For, 1st, To beget, signifies nowhere in the sacred volume, to rescue from death; and we are not at liberty to coin new significations of words. 2dly, Though, possibly, it were sometimes used in that metaphorical acceptance, (which, however, is not yet proved,) it cannot be understood in this passage in any other than its proper sense. It is here adduced as a reason for which Christ is called the Son of God. Now Christ is the Sol of God,

not figuratively, but properly; for the Father is called his proper Father, and he himself is denominated the proper Son of the Father; by which designation he is distinguished from those who are his sons in a metaphorical sense. 3dly, These words are spoken to Christ with a certain emphasis, with which they could not have been addressed to any of the angels, much less, to any of mankind. But if they meant nothing more than the raising of him from the dead, they would attribute nothing to Christ, which he doth not possess in common with many others, who, in like manner, are raised up by the power of God to glory and an everlasting kingdom. 4thly, Christ raised himself from the dead, too, by his own power;u from which it would follow, according to this interpretation, that he begat himself, and that he is his own Son. 5thly, It is not true, in fine, that Christ was not begotten of the Father, nor called his Son till that very day on which he was raised from the dead; for, as is abundantly manifest from the Gospel history, he often, when yet alive, professed himself the Son of God, and was often acknowledged as such. 6thly, To-day refers to time, when human concerns are in question; but this expression, when applied to Divine things, must be understood in a sense suitable to the majesty of the godhead.* And if any word may be transferred from time to denote eternity, which is the complete and perfect possession, at once, of an interminable life; what can be better adapted to express its unsuccessive duration, than the term to-day?

XII. Nor can our adversaries derive any support to their cause from the words of Paul, Acts 13:32, 33. "And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus;* as it is also written in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." For, 1st, Paul doth not here prove the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, from this expression in the second Psalm, (which, though it describes him who is raised again, doth not prove his resurrection;) but from Isaiah 55:3, and Psalm 16:10, while he adds, verses 34th and 35th, "And, as concerning that he raised him up from the dead," &c. 2dly, The words, "having raised up Jesus," do not even relate to the resurrection of Jesus from the

dead, but to the exhibition of him as a Saviour. This raising of him up, is expressly distinguished from the raising of him again from the dead, which is subsequently spoken of, verse 34th. The meaning is, that God fulfilled the promise made to the fathers, when he exhibited Christ to mankind in the flesh. But what was that promise? This appears from the second Psalm, where God promises to the Church that, in due time, he would anoint as King over her, his own Son, begotten of himself, TO-DAY; that is, from eternity to eternity; for with God there is a perpetual to-day. Grotius, whose name is not offensive to our opposers, has remarked that Luke makes use of the same word[†] to signify exhibiting in Acts 2:30, 3:26. To these we add another instance from chap. 7:37. "A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you."[‡] 3dly, Were we to admit that the words of the Psalm are applied to the resurrection of Christ, which seemed proper to Calvin, Cameron, and several other Protestant Divines; the sense will only be this; that, by his being thus raised up again, it was declared and demonstrated that Christ is the Son of the Father, begotten of him from everlasting. The Jewish Council condemned him for blasphemy, because he had called himself the Son of God. But, by raising him again from the grave, after he had been put to death as a blasphemmer, God acquitted him from that charge, and publicly recognised him as his Only-begotten Son. Thus he was declared, exhibited, and distinguished as the Son of God with power, expressly and particularly, to the entire exclusion of all others. The original word here employed by the Apostle, is remarkably expressive; and, as Ludovicus de Dieu has learnedly observed, it signifies that Christ was placed betwixt such bounds, and so separated and discriminated from others, that he neither should nor can be judged to be any one else than the Son of God. The expression, "with power,"* may be joined with "declared;" and then the meaning will be, that he was shown to be the Son of God by a powerful argument. Or it may be connected with "the Son of God;" and then it will intimate, that he is the Son of God in the most ample and exalted sense of which the term is susceptible; so that this name, when ascribed to him, is "a more excellent name" than any that is given to the noblest of creatures.w

XIII. The fourth personal property of the Father is, that THE HOLY SPIRIT PROCEEDS FROM HIM, TOGETHER WITH THE SON. † The Spirit is, therefore, styled, "the Spirit of his mouth;" and, again, "the Spirit of God," and "the breath of the Almighty."y Thus far our knowledge extends. But what the mode of this breathing is, and how the communication of the essence to the Third Person by breathing differs from the communication of the same essence to the Second Person by generation,—are mysteries, the knowledge of which, it has seemed good to the great Teacher to reserve for the celestial state. We have no complacency in the boldness of the Scholastic Theologians, who have asserted, that generation pertains to the Understanding, and that the Father, by the contemplation of himself, begat that personal image of himself, who is called the Son: while they refer breathing to the Will, and say, that the Father, in conjunction with the Son, by favouring and loving himself, produced the Holy Spirit. Not only are we afraid of becoming so profoundly wise; but we have, also, an aversion at such vain refinements of human ingenuity, presumptuously amusing itself with Divine topics. Far better, in our apprehension, is the discretion of Gregory Nazianzen, who satisfies himself with the following simple declaration of the truth; "The Holy Spirit is truly a Spirit, who proceeds from the Father; not, however, by filiation, or generation, but by procession."*

XIV. This one thing, however, we can safely affirm; that, while it belongs to the Father alone to beget the Son, the Spirit proceeds from both the Father and the Son. † This may be gathered from John 15:26. "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth* from the Father, he shall testify of me." It is no less certain that the Spirit is sent by the Son, than it is, that he proceedeth from the Father. Both the sending and the procession here spoken of, I acknowledge, are not natural, or hypostatical, but economical; † and the subjects directly intended, are the giving of the Holy Spirit, and his going forth, to men. But these presuppose the eternal mystery; for it is altogether fit and congruous that the manifestation of the Divine

persons, which is afforded in time, should correspond with the real manner of their subsistence from eternity.

XV. I do not, however, dissemble, that to this observation it may be objected, that Christ, who, in respect to his person, is not from the Holy Spirit, is said to be sent by the Spirit; for we read in Isaiah 48:16. "And now the LORD God and his Spirit hath sent me." But I reply, 1st, It is not quite certain whether it be Christ that speaks in this passage. Eminent theologians, as Jerome, Vatablus, Calvin, Junius, our own Dutch Divines, and others quoted by Cornelius a Lapide, will have these to be the words of Isaiah himself, by which he vindicates his authority as a Prophet of God. 2dly, If the words are to be referred to Christ, which is the opinion of a great number of ancient as well as modern writers, whom I dare not contradict; it may be affirmed that he was sent by the Holy Spirit, as he was man, and sent for the redemption of mankind; for the formation of our Lord's human nature is ascribed to the Holy Spirit. In this manner A Lapide, after Anselm, answers the objection. 3dly, The Hebrew text may, with propriety, be translated thus; "The LORD God hath sent me, and his Spirit."* According to this version, the mission of the Spirit is connected with the mission of the Son; which exactly corresponds with the event In whatever sense you interpret the passage, it makes nothing against our hypothesis.

XVI. Why, too, should he be called "the Spirit of the Son," and be said to "receive of the things of the Son,"^b unless he proceeded from the Son? In the economy of redemption, as has been more than once remarked, the Three persons act suitably to the relations in which they stand to each other in the godhead.[†]

XVII. Hence it is evident, what opinion we ought to form respecting the obstinate contention of the Greeks with the Latins relative to this point. There are faults, I doubt not, on both sides. Since the Creed of Constantinople, published in the year of our Lord 381, contained this expression, "the Holy Spirit proceeding from the Father;"[‡] the Latins did wrong in adding to that Creed these words, "and to the Son."[§] On

this addition see Vossius,|| and Heidegger.¶ The Latins did wrong, I say, in this matter; for, although what they added was true, the words of the Creed were the words of Scripture, whilst the addition is not contained in Scripture, in these precise terms. Besides, whoever makes any addition to an ancient Creed, involves himself in the guilt of bearing false witness; for he would have it to be believed that the Fathers who compiled that Creed determined something which they did not determine. The Greeks, also, have done wrong in contending so pertinaciously concerning this point; for the doctrine of the Latins is conformable to truth, and it was delivered in the same manner by ancient Doctors of their own church; as has been long ago shown from the writings of Athanasius, Epiphanius, Cyril of Alexandria, Gregory of Nyssa, and others. Nay, if we are willing to rest satisfied with what is essential, scarcely any real controversy remains. For it is of very little consequence, whether we hold that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son, or "from the Father through the Son;"* as Cyril of Constantinople expresses it in his Confession, written in the year of Christ 1631. As neither of these two expressions occurs in holy writ, so neither of them is improper, or inconsistent with the truth. But let thus much suffice on this subject.

XVIII. We must here take notice of the opinion of Episcopus respecting the subordination of the other persons to the Father. He contends "that the Father is so the First person, that he is, also, the HIGHEST in ORDER, in DIGNITY, and in POWER.—In ORDER, because it was necessary that the Son and the Holy Spirit should be from him—In DIGNITY, because the Father is the Fountain and the cause of their existence; and it is more honourable to derive existence from none than to receive it from another, to beget than to be begotten, to cause to proceed than to proceed*—In POWER, that is, authority or dominion; because the Father has authority to send and to give the Son, and to pour out the Holy Spirit; but neither of them has authority over the Father; and accordingly we no where read of the Father as sent or given, but always as sending or giving." Such is the doctrine of Episcopus; † and similar sentiments are expressed by Curcellæus.‡

XIX. In reply to these writers, we make the following general remarks. 1st, They depart in this instance from the catholic faith of the Church, which, as it is expressed by the Emperor,§ "believes, according to the instructions of Apostles and the doctrine of the Gospel, that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, are one God, subsisting in equal majesty, and in an adorable Trinity."|| Athanasius, in like manner, states the common faith in the following terms: "Where there is an undivided dignity, one sovereignty, one power, and will, and energy, peculiarly distinguishing the Trinity from the creatures,—there is one God."¶ 2dly, The majesty of the Father is artfully extolled with a view to disparage the infinite dignity of the Son and the Holy Spirit. It is the will of the Father himself, "that all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father." 3dly, All these expressions have a manifest tendency utterly to deprive the Son and the Spirit of true godhead. A subordinate Deity, is not Deity. Supreme majesty, dignity, and power, are essential attributes of godhead; and he that is not possessed of them, is not God.

XX. More particularly, 1st, The Scriptures teach a distinction of order; but, since it is merely a distinction of personal order, it implies no superiority or inferiority attributed to the essence. Athanasius, who has stated this distinction of order with singular accuracy, makes the following excellent observation, in the Creed which is commonly received by the Church: "And in this Trinity, nothing is prior or posterior," that is, with respect to dignity, "nothing greater or less; but all these Three persons are co-eternal and co-equal." 2dly, Begetting and being begotten, causing to proceed and proceeding,* imply no distinction of DIGNITY amongst the Divine persons: for the begetting and the causing to proceed are the communication of the same numerical essence, which belongs to him who begets and causes to proceed; and which possesses an infinite dignity, than which none greater can either be allowed, or imagined, without a contradiction. 3dly, The sacred writings nowhere speak of the Father's having power, authority, and dominion over the Son and the Holy Spirit. Nor is it warrantable to infer any such superiority on

the part of the Father, from the mission of the Son and Spirit; which is entirely according to the economy in redemption, and founded in the common council of the whole Trinity.

XXI. When the Father is denominated absolutely GOD, or ONE GOD, or THE ONLY TRUE GOD; this is intended to exclude those who are "called Gods,"^f not the other persons in the same individual essence. Oecumenius has the following remark on 1 Tim. 2:5. "When it is affirmed that there is one God, this is not in contradistinction to the Son or Spirit. Far be the thought. But the words refer to those who are not, and yet are styled Gods."* The appellation of Father even includes the Son in the same conception of godhead. Hence says Cyril of Jerusalem, "We call God Father, that as soon as we have thought of the Father, we may also think of the Son; for there is an immediate relation between Father and Son." † Gregory of Nyssa expresses the same idea thus: "The appellation of Father, by its relative import, shows that He hath a Son."†

XXII. When the Son calls the "Father greater than himself," the expression is not to be understood of him in relation to his Divine nature as the Son. We must not suppose that the Father is greater than he, "as the cause and principle of his existence."[‡] I sincerely wish that this expression had not been used by Basil, Gregory, Nazianzen, Hilary of Poitiers, and Damascenus, amongst the ancients; and, amongst the Protestants, by Danæus (who unjustly censures Lombard for omitting this reason of Christ's inferiority,) by Zanchius on Philip, 2:6, and by Gomar on the same passage. But the Father is greater than the Son, 1st, With regard to the human nature, which he has assumed. 2dly, With regard to the office of an ambassador, which he has undertaken. 3dly, With respect to the economy of his humiliation, and assuming the form of a servant. Accordingly, Athanasius, at the conclusion of his book on the Incarnation of Christ,* has the following remark: "And, when he says the Father who sent me is greater than I, he calls the Father greater than himself, with regard to his human nature. But, as he is the Word of the Father, he is his equal." In the first Dialogue against the

Macedonians, too, he says, "Having assumed the subjection of a servile form, he is, for our sake, subjected to the Father;—not in the Divine nature, but by the union of that servile form which he assumed."[†]

XXIII. When the First person is called "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," (a title which often occurs at the beginnings of the Epistles,) he is called his Father, according to the Divinity,—his God, according to the Economy, both in relation to his human nature, and in reference to the covenant which subsists betwixt him as Mediator, and the Father. Athanasius, in the Dialogue just quoted, says, "As to the Divinity, God is his Father; but, as to the humanity, his God:" which he, afterwards, proves by that expression, "Thou art my God from my mother's belly." The same remarks are made by Gregory of Nyssa, Nazianzen, Epiphanius, and others, whose words are quoted by Forbes.[‡] We thus answer novices who have dared to pervert our faith, in the language of the Fathers, that they may not boast of these frivolous subtleties as their own inventions; since the same cavils were both observed and refuted by the ancients. Whoever wishes to see the whole doctrine of Episcopius completely overthrown, may consult the accurate and solid Dissertation on the subjection of Christ,* by Andrew Essenius,—a man whom I venerate as my Preceptor and Father in the Lord.

XXIV. It is not sufficient that our faith contemplate the Father as the eternal Father of Christ, unless we are also brought to him as OUR OWN FATHER through Christ. Christ himself leads us to him when he says, "I ascend unto my Father, and your Father;" in which words he intimates that there is a resemblance, and, at the same time, a diversity, in the Father's paternal relation, as it respects himself and us. This was judiciously observed by the ancients. "He said not," says Cyril of Jerusalem,[†] "to our Father, lest the creatures should have fellowship with the Only-begotten; but to my Father and your Father—my Father, in one respect, to wit, by nature—yours, in another respect, to wit, by adoption."

XXV. In what way God is the Father of believers, we have shown at large elsewhere. † Yet, that nothing may be wanting to this Dissertation, we briefly notice, that God is called our Father, 1st, With respect to our supernatural regeneration by his Spirit, by which a new and heavenly life is begun within us, and we, in our measure and order, are even "made partakers of the Divine nature." Of this, the Evangelist John speaks in the following words: "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."k 2dly, With respect to our marriage with the Lord Jesus; for when we become his Spouse, we pass into the Father's family, and the Father addresses us by the endearing name of "Daughter," while Jesus himself describes us, with the same breath, as "his Sister and his Spouse."m 3dly, With respect to adoption, by which we obtain the right and the privileges of sons, and the eternal inheritance is bequeathed to us by an immutable testament. We read, "Who hath predestinated us unto the adoption of children;" and "If children, then heirs."o

XXVI. The condition of the sons of God is truly excellent. If David accounted it so great a matter, to be called the son-in-law of such a king as Saul, how highly should we esteem the honour of being called the sons of the living God? 1st, How unparalleled is that dignity, by which we trace our descent, not from an earthly prince or monarch, but from the King of heaven! 2dly, What can be more beautiful than that Divine nature which we obtain by a new generation! God himself glories in his sons as his peculiar treasure, and even calls them "the first fruits of his increase;"r who are to him for a praise, and a name, and an honour. In this instance, his conduct almost resembles that of parents who glory before others in such of their children as are remarkable for beauty. 3dly, What more desirable, also, than a conjugal relation to the First-begotten Son of God, who is "white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousands!" Nothing can even be conceived, more delightful, more enriching, or more glorious. 4thly, Nothing, in fine, can be more excellent than that inheritance, which the sons of God obtain in right of their adoption, and which is assigned diem by an irrevocable testament.

XXVII. It will not be unprofitable to prosecute this topic a little further; and, opening our Father's TESTAMENT, to inquire WHAT and HOW GREAT are the Blessings bequeathed, and under what STIPULATIONS, he has bequeathed them to us. By the TESTAMENT, we understand, The last and immutable will of God, recorded in the sacred Scriptures, and confirmed by the death and blood of Jesus, by which he hath declared his chosen and believing people, heirs of the whole inheritance.

XXVIII. The Testament is the Will of God, or that "counsel of his will," by which he has appointed both the inheritance and the heirs, and to which our Lord referred, when he said, "It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."^v I add, that it is the last and irrevocable will of the Father; for as this is essential to a valid testament among men, so it is not wanting to this testament. "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation." In this Will, he has assigned the inheritance as well of grace as of glory, of which we shall speak immediately. He has also appointed the heirs,—not indefinitely, all that shall believe; but these and the other persons particularly, whose "names are written in heaven,"^y and "graven upon the palms of God's hands;" This his Will, he has expressed in both parts of the holy Scriptures, which are, therefore, called a Testament.^a In fine, that this Will might in no respect be defective, the whole is confirmed and sealed by the blood and death of the Lord Jesus.

XXIX. To understand this, we must observe, that God the Father, did, by testament, intrust his Son Jesus with this honour, that he should be the head of the elect, to excel them in glory, and to possess authority to impart to them, all his blessings. Jesus, again, by the power committed to him by the Father, bequeathes his benefits by testament, to the elect, that they may be joint-partakers of them with himself. "I appoint to you (by testament) a kingdom, as my Father hath (by testament) appointed unto me."^d This making of the

Testament, then, is originally the doing of the Father, but immediately of Christ the Mediator; who died, not to make void the inheritance by his death, for he is "alive for evermore," but to seal the promises, and to acquire for his people a right to the inheritance.⁴² Hence the blood which he shed, is called "the blood of the testament."

XXX. The BLESSINGS bequeathed in the Testament, are inestimable. We reduce them at present to three principal heads. The first is THE POSSESSION OF THE WHOLE WORLD; for it was promised to Abraham and his seed, that they "should be heirs of the world." On these words, we may hear the commentary of Ludovicus de Dieu: "As sin, by separating us from God and subjecting us to his curse, rendered us exiles and outcasts, so that we had no spiritual right or dominion, corresponding to the character of the sons of God, over even the meanest of the creatures; so, when God becomes our God and we become his blessed people, we are restored, as sons, to the right and dominion of the whole paternal inheritance: And, since there is nothing besides God and the world, we are made heirs of the world, both the earthly and the heavenly, the present and the future. Hence it is said, All things are yours; and, amongst these all things, are mentioned, the world, and what ever is in it, things present and things to come."

XXXI. This possession of the world, we may observe, consists in the following things. 1st, Every son of God possesses as much of the good things of this world as the wisdom of our heavenly Father judges sufficient for the support of the animal life, without exposing the spiritual to detriment; and so possesses, that, in the enjoyment of it, he may taste the love of his Father, who confers it upon him as a pledge of better blessings, and of his Elder Brother, who himself became poor, that his people might be rich. This love of God the Father and of Christ, added to the smallest crumb of bread or drop of cold water, renders them, beyond measure, preferable to all the most exquisite luxuries of the rich of this world. "A little that a righteous man hath, is better than the riches of many wicked." 2dly, All the

creatures must serve the children of God as steps by which they may ascend to the Creator. In all of them, as in a bright mirror, they contemplate his adorable perfections,^l and thus find cause of exultation and delight. They perceive in them, in particular, the love of God towards themselves. When they behold the sun, the moon, and the stars, they rejoice that their Father hath lighted up so many luminaries for them, of which they may avail themselves in performing works which become them as the sons of God. Nor do they survey this display of his goodness with less admiration, than if every individual had his own sun, or his own moon, shining upon him.ⁿ They do not exceed the bounds of propriety, when they even entertain the thought, that, for their sake, the world still remains in its present state, and that for this the wicked are indebted to them; for "the holy seed is the substance" (the support) of the world. 3dly, All the creatures, and the whole administration of God towards them, "work together for their good."^p This holds so extensively, that angels in heaven and devils in hell, are both obliged to bear a part in the service. As to angels in heaven, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them, who shall be heirs of salvation?" As to the infernal spirit, the great teacher of arrogance, was he not, when aiming at a very different object, compelled, in spite of himself—by his buffetings to teach Paul humility? 4thly, If this world, which, by reason of sin, is subjected to vanity, cannot suffice them, God will from its ashes, after its destruction, form another, and make "a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."^s Each of these ideas may be included in the general promise of the inheritance of the world.

XXXII. The second blessing of this testament, is A SPIRITUAL KINGDOM. "I appoint unto you," says Christ, "a kingdom." To this kingdom, even such of the children of God as are, in other respects, in the humblest condition, the poor, and servants, and handmaids, are called. "Hath not God chosen the poor of this world" to become "rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom, which he hath promised to them that love him."^u To this belong, 1. The excellency of the sons of God, by which they surpass all other men. 2. Victory over sin and the

unruly lusts of the flesh, to which even kings and dreaded tyrants are enslaved.^w 3. The treading of the devil under their feet. 4. Triumph over a whole conquered world, in spite of whose rage they shall be eternally saved.^y 5. Inestimable riches of spiritual gifts; even in the midst of poverty.^a 6. A holy peace of mind, and joy in the Holy Ghost. All these privileges are begun here in grace, and consummated hereafter in glory.

XXXIII. The third benefit is GOD himself. Hence says the Apostle, ... "heirs of God." Here, the inheritance is mutual. Believers are God's portion, and God is their portion, as these are made reciprocal by the Prophet: "The portion of Jacob is not like them; for he is the Former of all things; and Israel is the rod (the tribe) of his inheritance."^d In this possession of God, his children find, 1st, Protection against every evil. "I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge, and my fortress." Why? He is "MY GOD, in him will I trust." 2dly, The communication of every good.^f For, 1. All that infinitude of perfections which is in God himself, will appear glorious and admirable in the sons of God, and will impart itself to them, that they may enjoy it for their consummate felicity. And what can the soul desire, beyond this infinite Portion? 2. What will not God give those, to whom he gives himself?^h

XXXIV. In this testament, if it is considered in its whole extent, with all its promises, there are no STIPULATIONS properly so called; for it consists of absolute and unmixed promises, suspended upon no condition to be performed by our own strength. Yet the divine wisdom and care have so adjusted all things in it, that a certain and a wise connexion is established amongst them, and the improvement of the blessings promised first in order, paves the way for the possession of further benefits. We have elsewhere treated of this at large.

XXXV. In the same books, therefore, in which the Testament is contained, God has enjoined every one that would take comfort from the promised inheritance, 1st, To love, search, meditate upon, and

lay up in his heart, as no contemptible part of his inheritance, those writings which exhibit the Testament. He must esteem them more than his necessary food.^j 2dly, To value highly, as it deserves, the promised inheritance. 1. To hunger and thirst after it, and to be satisfied with nothing short of it. 2. To consider all other things, in comparison of it, loss and dung;^l and to be prepared, cheerfully to sell all that he hath, in order to obtain the pearl of inestimable worth. 3. To glorify God for his great goodness.ⁿ 4. To keep, with care and diligence, what he has already received. 3dly, To walk as becomes his present happy state, and the hope of so glorious an inheritance.^p 4thly, To be ready to impart to his brethren what he has received from his Father, both in things temporal and spiritual; and to exert his endeavours that others may be brought to possess the same inheritance with himself.^r The individual sustains no loss, but rather derives an accession of happiness, from the numbers of his fellow-heirs; for the abundance of love serves wonderfully to heighten the joy.

XXXVI. It remains to be observed, that if, in a matter of so great importance, we would not impose upon ourselves by flattering imaginations, it is necessary carefully to examine ourselves, by those distinguishing characters of the children of God which the Scriptures supply. The chief of these are the following. 1st, The impression and expression of the Divine image, with a holy conformity to our Father. What is more natural than for a son to resemble his Father? The natural Son of God is "the brightness of the Father's glory;" and it is fit that we, in our order and measure, should be so too. As corrupt Adam "begat a son in his own likeness, after his own image;" so God forms his children in his own likeness, "in righteousness and true holiness."^t This resemblance to God is gradually promoted by familiar intercourse with him, until, having obtained "the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body," of which the Apostle speaks, we shall become perfectly like him.^v

XXXVII. 2dly, A new life, which is worthy of God, and the effect of the Spirit of adoption, who is the Spirit of life. The life of creatures

never fails to correspond to their spirit. The natural man has not a nobler spirit, nor a more excellent principle of life than his soul (anima); and consequently he lives merely an animal life. But as the children of God are endowed with a "free Spirit," who is also the Spirit of Christ; so they, in their measure, live such a life as Christ lived, exerting their utmost efforts to copy after his example and pattern. "Be ye followers of God," says the Apostle, "as dear children."

XXXVIII. 3dly, A true and sincere love to God. Nature itself teaches this; for what genuine son doth not love his father? This is not only a written law, but born with us. Now this love to God arises, partly, from the consideration of his infinitely amiable perfections, which his children are admitted familiarly to contemplate, "their eyes seeing the King in his beauty;" partly from the beams of Divine love continually shed forth upon them, by which they cannot fail to be inflamed.^b Whenever they attentively reflect upon this love, they consider the whole capacity of their soul as too limited to render adequate returns of love.

XXXIX. 4thly, Filial reverence and obedience. This arises from that love of which we have just spoken. This love forbids a man to do any thing displeasing to God, and inspires him with so ardent a zeal for his glory, that he cannot, without anguish, see his honour infringed by others.^d It disposes him also to discharge, with promptitude and alacrity, all the duties of religion. Further, it does not suffer a man to be at ease, if perhaps, by an inconsiderate action, he has offended God, and forfeited those gracious smiles of his face with which he was formerly cheered; it constrains him at last to prostrate himself, with the profoundest reverence, at the feet of his heavenly Father, with sorrow and tears to implore the pardon of his offences, and to promise greater circumspection in his future conduct.^f

XL. 5thly, Undissembled brotherly love, which he bears for all those in whom he perceives the Divine image, and a participation of the same grace with himself. Whilst other evidences are often

imperceptible, this brotherly love furnishes the doubting soul with a comfortable mark of its state. It is impossible for the love of the brethren, to be separated from the love of God. Whoever loves the original, will also love the copy. Whoever loves God, will love him who belongs to God, in whom he discerns the excellencies of God, and whom he believes to be beloved of God.^h Happy the man whose spirit bears witness with the Spirit of God, that these distinguishing characters of God's children, are found in himself.

DISSERTATION VIII: ON THE CREATION

I. THE work ascribed in the Creed to the Father is that of CREATION; on which we now proceed, concisely, to discourse. Let us begin with explaining the word. What the Latins call Creare, the Hebrews express by the term ברא (bara;) which signifies, to produce some new thing, solely, by one's will and command, or nobly to effect and accomplish something by a surprising energy. Thus Moses says, "If the Lord make a new thing," that is, produce a strange thing by his powerful word, causing the earth to open her mouth: and, likewise, Jeremiah, "The Lord hath created a new thing in the earth,"^b that is, hath commanded a thing to exist, nothing equal, or similar, to which was ever beheld.

II. We are not, however, to imagine, that the word ברא does uniformly, or by its own proper power, denote the production of a creature out of nothing. It is applied to those works which are expressly recorded to have been formed, during the first six days, from pre-existent matter. Though men are the offspring of their

parents, too, by natural generation, God is denominated the Creator of every man; and this not merely with regard to the soul, which, indeed, he creates out of nothing, but with regard to the whole person, which owes its existence to his good pleasure, and is "fearfully and wonderfully made." In like manner, it is said in the Psalms, "The people who shall be created shall praise the Lord;"^f and in Ezekiel, "I will judge thee in the place where thou wast created, in the land of thy nativity."

III. Besides, no one doubts, I suppose, that the new heavens and the new earth, for which, according to the promise of the Supreme Being, we look, are to be constructed out of the rubbish and ashes of the world which now exists. Yet God says of them, "Behold, I create new heavens, and a new earth."

IV. There is even a passage, where things which exist already, are said to be created, when new vigour is infused into them: "Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created; and thou renewest the face of the earth." From these instances it appears, that the word ברא is sometimes used in relation to things, which are, by no means, made out of nothing, and yet are so far created, that, by the will and command of God, they pass, in a certain respect, from a state of non-existence to a state of existence.*

V. Correspondent to the Hebrew ברא, is the Greek verb κτίζω; whence κτισις, creation, is derived; that is, an act which gives existence to a creature. But this word is also of extensive application, and signifies the producing of things in any way; as appears from the definition of Hesychius,* and from the Apostle Peter's denominating a magistrate divinely appointed for regulating the affairs of men, "an ordinance (a creature) of man."^k

VI. The Seventy Interpreters, also, have not scrupled to make use of this term in reference to the supreme Wisdom, and as our Divines are accustomed to explain it, in reference to the generation of the Word. The Chaldee Paraphrast, likewise, on the same passage,

employs the word ברא. Some, too, derive from this Hebrew verb the noun בר, a son; the Latin word parere, (to beget;) and the Dutch word baren.† But, as these words have now a different signification in the schools of theology, I deem it neither prudent nor safe, whilst the heretics discover so much perverseness, for any Divine to imitate that phrase, when discoursing of the Only-begotten Son of God, by calling him Created,‡ in whatever sense the expression be used.

VII. It may be added, that the Latin verb creare, in like manner, does not signify, precisely, what we now usually intend by this term. It may even admit of a doubt whether the ancient Romans ever recognised this signification. With them creare is gignere, (to beget;*) to make in any manner;† or even to appoint to any dignity, in which sense Consuls, Generals, and Magistrates are said creari, to be created.

VIII. Although it appears, then, that as well in sacred as in common use, the signification of these words is very vague and indeterminate; yet, because that mode of creation by which something is produced out of nothing is the most excellent and wonderful, it is usual in theological discourses, for an act of this sort to be strictly called Creation, and to be distinguished from generation, and other modes of producing.

IX. To pass, therefore, from an examination of the word to the illustration of the subject; CREATION IS THAT ACT OF GOD, IN WHICH, BY THE ALL-POWERFUL COMMAND OF HIS WILL, HE MADE OUT OF NOTHING, AND PERFECTED, THE WHOLE UNIVERSE, IN THE SPACE OF SIX DAYS.

X. Before the Creation, nothing at all existed, excepting God:—No world such as this we now behold, which some have falsely supposed to have been co-eternal with God:—No shapeless matter, from which, by means of motion, other substances were formed by some imaginary Mind; according to the expression of Anaxagoras in Laertius, "All things existed in one irregular mass; then Mind came,

and reduced them to "order":‡—In fine, no spirits distinct from God, as, in opposition to Scripture, the adversaries of the eternal Divinity of Christ contend—But absolutely nothing.

XI. Satisfied with himself, with his own infinite perfections, and with the most ample knowledge, love, and enjoyment of those perfections, God found in himself the most consummate happiness, and happiness becoming his character; for which reason the Apostle Paul calls him, "the Blessed." It pleased him, however, to display his attributes in certain works that are without himself,* the form and image of which he had most wisely delineated in his mind from eternity. And since he needed no assistance from any, as nothing exists or even can exist independently of him, he commanded all things that are, to rise out of nothing, by the mere act of his sovereign will. "He hath made the earth by his power; he hath established the world by his wisdom; and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion.n

XII. While Reason, particularly as now vitiated by sin, and disposed to raise its clamorous voice against God, dictates these truths somewhat obscurely; Faith, relying on the Divine testimony, embraces them without hesitation. "Through faith, we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear."

XIII. By the expression *τους αἰῶνας*, the Apostle means the same thing that the Hebrew Doctors intend by *עול מים*, to wit, ages, or worlds. He uses the plural number, because they distinguished betwixt three worlds; the lowest, which is the residence of plants, animals, and men; the middle, which is the region of the stars; and the highest, which is the habitation of angels, and blessed spirits.

XIV. In these worlds, there is a framing,* a skilful arrangement of the parts, and an adaptation of every thing to purposes suitable to itself, and to the whole system. Whatever attention human reason may give to these matters, it is excited by faith to mark them more carefully,

and to perceive them more distinctly. But faith supplies us, also, with further light and instruction, whether you consider the beautiful order and arrangement observed in the work of creation, which we learn only from Moses; or attend to the symmetry that is still discernible in the world, in which our carnal reason, from its arrogance and pretended wisdom, would presume to detect a variety of blemishes, were it not restrained by faith.

XV. This order and symmetry, thus recognised by faith, leads us to God, by whose word, that is, by whose command, the worlds were made; and so made that "the things which are seen," † that is, the things which exist, ‡ were made, μὴ ἐκ φαινομένων, "not of things which do appear." This expression is employed, by an anastrophe, § which was made use of principally by the Hellenists, instead of ἐκ μὴ φαινομένων, of things which do not appear. The meaning is, as Chrysostome judiciously remarks, "the things which exist were made of things not existing." ||

XVI The word φαίνεσθαι signifies originally, to be brought forth into light; and thence, simply, to exist: as when we read, "It was never so seen," it never so appeared, "in Israel." The multitude, who uttered these words, by no means intended that similar works had, in reality, been done in Israel, though they had not appeared; but simply, that nothing similar had ever happened. "Things that do appear,"* are things actually existing, which stand in no need of the Divine call to cause them to be, or to appear. "Things which do not appear," † are nothing,—"things not existing," ‡ which indispensably require to be called into existence by the power of God, before they can appear. Rom. 4:17.

XVII. Schlichtingius, an erroneous interpreter, perverting, as usual, the sense of the Apostle, affirms that the things which do not appear, are those elements of things which were in a state of confusion at the beginning of the world. He infers from these words of the Apostle, what, he contends, is apparent also from the history of the creation of the world as recorded by Moses; that God, when he made this

world, or when he began the creation described at the beginning of Genesis, did not make it absolutely of nothing, but of that mass which was without form, and covered with darkness. He quotes, too, this expression used by the writer of the book of WISDOM, ἐξ ἀροορφου ὕλης, "of matter without form;" which the Latin Translator renders *ex materia invisā*, "of unseen matter." He affirms, at the same time, that no mention is made in holy writ of the creation of this matter. Volkelius reasons at great length in the same absurd style,* and adds this observation; that in the Greek Version of the Old Testament, which the New Testament writers generally follow, the earth is called invisible[†] in that passage, where, in the Hebrew, it is denominated void.

XVIII. The design for which these remarks are brought forward, is to make us believe that something besides God existed before the creation of the world, and to weaken the force of that argument in support of the true Deity of Christ, which our Divines are accustomed to derive from his existing before the world;—which, according to the language of Scripture, denotes eternity.

XIX. But the heretics miss their aim; for the Mosaic history expressly declares, that God made that earth which was "without form and void,"[‡] and covered with thick darkness. The words run thus: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form and void." The obvious meaning is, that the earth§ which God created was then, when first made, a mass without form and void. It was not, therefore, created out of a shapeless mass. Whence then was it created? What remains but—nothing?

XX. If they urge, that the first verse contains a summary of the whole work, and that, in the subsequent verses, it is particularly shown whence all other things were created; we answer, that, even allowing the first part of this assertion to be true, it was far from the intention of Moses to intimate that what in the first verse he calls "the heaven and the earth," was formed of that matter which in the second verse he calls the earth "without form and void." But, after he had

comprehended all things under the denomination of the heaven and the earth, saying nothing further with regard to the highest heaven, in which God has prepared his throne, he shows, in the following verses, what was the state of the earth when it first proceeded from the hand of God, and in what manner and order all other things were formed out of it. Vatablus, to whom Volkelius appeals in this cause, expresses himself in the following terms: "You may clearly understand it thus; In the beginning, when God created the heaven and the earth, the earth was then without form, &c. By the heaven he intends the celestial bodies, and by the earth, the terrestrial. He sets forth, at first, the whole universe, that its Author may be known,—that it may be understood, both that the world did not exist from eternity, and also that God created something out of nothing." Do writers who express themselves in such terms as these, agree with the heretics?

XXI. It is not necessary for us, besides, to admit that the first verse briefly comprehends all those works which are afterwards particularly detailed. The opinion of David Kimchi, in which a great number of Divines both ancient and modern acquiesce, appears to me to be highly probable. He considers the order of the creation as here propounded by Moses in this manner: That, first of all, God created the heaven, that is, the highest heaven with the angels; then the earth, the first appearance and condition of which are described in the second verse, and out of which other creatures were subsequently formed. And it is called "without form and void," in opposition to heaven, which was immediately carried to its full perfection, and replenished with inhabitants.

XXII. Moses, indeed, mentions that the earth was at first covered with water, and involved in thick darkness; and the Greek Interpreters, failing to express properly the sense of the Hebrew term, have called it "invisible."* It cannot, however, be proved from any resemblance betwixt the expressions, which are considerably dissimilar, that the Apostle alluded to this passage. "The things which do not appear," † mentioned by Paul, and "the invisible

earth,"‡ mentioned by the Greek Interpreters, are, in reality, quite different from each other. When Paul speaks of "the things which do not appear," he refers to the state of things prior to the creation.§ "The invisible earth," on the contrary, does not signify a mass existing before the creation, but the second part of the universe, which, as well as the heaven, was created on the first day. Those who wrest these expressions to any other meaning, offer manifest violence, not only to the Mosaic history, but also to the whole tenor of Scripture. We have now spoken of the former; let us proceed to the latter.

XXIII. If this pretended matter of which the world was made, existed previously, I ask, was it previously made of nothing by God, or was it really self-existent, and co-eternal with God? The one or the other of these is unavoidable; but both are contrary to holy writ.

XXIV. The matter in question, was not made before the creation of which Moses gives an account: for the Mosaic creation took place "in the beginning;"|| and the beginning of something else prior to this universal beginning cannot be alleged, without contradicting the sacred historian. The Scripture, too, makes the pre-eminence of the Supreme Being above all others, to consist in this, that he existed "before the mountains were brought forth, ere ever the earth and the world were formed;" and God himself urges this as a proof of his Deity; "Yea, before the day was, I am he."s In short, whatever existed before the beginning, ere ever the earth was, existed before all time—according to the phraseology of Scripture, was ETERNAL—was before the works of God—and could not have been made.

XXV. Besides, whoever denies that this matter was made, is not afraid to contradict the four-and-twenty Elders in heaven, who thus address themselves to God in their song of praise: THOU HAST CREATED ALL THINGS. Nor does he scruple to contradict the Apostles John and Paul, who teach the same doctrine in John 1:3. Col. 1:16.—passages which, in defiance of truth, are applied by the heretics to the new creation of things by the Gospel. If these

declarations of the Elders and Apostles are certain, as unquestionably they are, it is also certain, that this original matter of the world is either a mere figment, and indeed absolutely nothing, or that it was created by God.

XXVI. Further, if this matter both existed from eternity, and existed of itself, and thus was indebted to God for nothing it possessed, what right had God to it? or what title had he, to fashion it according to his pleasure? Basil says, "If it was, in reality, uncreated, it must be esteemed worthy of the same honours with "God."* Our adversaries, on other occasions, contend that every right of God in relation to the creatures arises either from a favour conferred by him upon them, or from an offence committed on their part against God. According to the hypothesis, the first has no place here; of the last, brute matter is totally incapable.

Add to this, that it can hardly be conceived how the Creator took possession of that which might be considered not only equal, but in some respects superior to God. It was at least a thing of which he stood in need, and which supplied him with materials and facilities for his operations, and thus was greater than God who needed it; while this supposed matter stood in no need of him, or at least received nothing from him. But every one is dependent on him, whose assistance he needs to make use of; and every one, by employing what pertains to another, is inferior to him of whose property he avails himself. As the eloquent Vogelsangius has acutely observed,* matter must have conferred a truly signal favour upon God, in furnishing him with the means, by which he might, to this day, be known, and acknowledged as Omnipotent. See an excellent discussion of this controversy by Dionysius, in Eusebius; † and another, in the same historian, by Origen, who refutes at large that exposition which the Socinians have thought proper to adopt.

XXVII. Nor shall the heretics elude the force of this argument, by a counterfeit modesty, whilst they pretend that because sacred writ is silent with regard to the creation of this matter, they also determine

nothing. Though they should not presume to determine this point, one of two suppositions is true; the matter in question was either created before the Mosaic beginning, or it was not. There is no room for a third hypothesis. But we have shown the falsehood of both these suppositions.

XXVIII. The passage of Paul, which we are now considering, ought not to be compared with WISDOM 11:17. but rather with 2 MACCAB. 7:28, where the pious mother animating her son to suffer martyrdom, charges him to look upon the heaven and the earth, and all that is in them, and to consider that God made them of things that were not.* This has been observed even by Grotius, for whom Schlichtingius, (according to the testimony of Lubieniecus, in his preface prefixed to his Posthumous Commentaries,) entertained the highest esteem, and of whom he was wont to say, "that the Christian world had waited for the appearance of such a man, for more than fifteen centuries from the days of the Apostles."

XXIX. Volkelius objects that, in this passage of the Maccabees, the author intends a privative nothing, or matter destitute of that form which was to be superinduced: because what is affirmed of all other things, is here asserted concerning man in particular, that he was made of nothing; whereas, while it is certain with regard to several other creatures, it is peculiarly manifest with respect to man, that he was formed of the earth. But this exception has no weight. For, when that pious woman, in conformity with the sentiments of the Catholic Church, says, that all things, and mankind among the rest, were created of nothing, she refers to the first and universal origin of things; which were brought, not from a privative nothing, but from nothing in a negative and absolute sense. Although, when you consider every thing in detail, some are immediately, and others mediately, from nothing; yet ultimately, all things are made of nothing.

XXX. We might dismiss the expression adduced from the book entitled the WISDOM OF SOLOMON 11:17,* with a short answer, by

saying, that that author is not authentic either with us, or in the estimation of our adversaries; and that if he had imbibed this error from the dregs of heathen philosophy, it would have been proper to refute him from writers of undoubted credit, not to obtrude him as a sound interpreter of Moses or Paul.

XXXI. Yet I can scarcely bring myself to believe, that he held that opinion which the heretics impute to him. When he says that the almighty hand of God created the world of matter without form, he seems to speak not of the very first commencement of all things, but of the creation of terrestrial things of that matter which in GEN. 1:2, Moses takes notice of as made by God: For, in the ordinary language of men, the earth, with the things which it contains, is commonly called the world, in contradistinction to heaven. That the earth was, in reality, formed out of that shapeless or confused matter, is evident. That God created this matter, too, this writer by no means denies. He affirms, on the contrary, that "all things" were made by his word; and, in this very chapter, he intimates, that nothing could exist "which was not called by God."w This must be true, also, with regard to the "matter without form," of whatever sort it is.

XXXII. But, according to the testimony of Jerome, it is affirmed by several ancient writers, that this pretended Solomon was Philo the Jew, who was called Moses Atticissans;* and were this certain, we could nowhere collect the meaning of this verse, more decisively than from Philo. Now this writer, in his book on the Making of the World,† expresses sentiments widely different from the hypotheses of the heretics.

XXXIII. Not far from the beginning of the treatise, he has the following words: "But the great Moses was of opinion, that what is uncreated, differs extremely from what is visible; for whatever is sensible, being capable of generation and liable to changes, never continues in the same state. To that which is invisible, therefore, and perceptible only by the mind, he attributes eternity, as allied and

congenial to it; whilst he applies generation as a proper term for distinguishing the objects of sense."

XXXIV. On these words, let it be remarked, 1st, That, conformably to the doctrine of Moses, Philo ascribes eternity, solely, to an invisible nature, which is perceived by none of the senses, but only by the mind, that is, to God. He does not, therefore, ascribe it to any original matter;—which no man, possessing the use of his reason, ever affirmed to be perceptible to the mind only, and not to the senses. 2dly, That he asserts that none of those things which are subject to change or alteration can be uncreated. But shapeless matter is, unquestionably, a substance of this sort. 3dly, To obviate a cavil which some might draw from the word, it may be added, that in Philo, as also in Moses, generation signifies the same thing which we commonly express by the term creation.

XXXV. When, therefore, he said a little before, "that in reference to things that exist, it is indispensibly necessary, that there be both an active cause, and something affected by the cause;" he did not intend by "something affected by the cause," matter that existed before the creation, but matter which was formed by the creating God. This is clear from the words which follow; "There is no connexion between what is not made, and him who did not make it."

XXXVI. The ancient nation of the Jews were evidently of the same mind. The great Rabbi Eliezer, accordingly, says; "Before the Almighty created the world, he and his name existed alone." See Manasseh Ben Israel on the Creation;* who shows that this opinion was received and approved by all the wise men of ancient times. As to the conceits which other Doctors advance about the making of another world before the present one, or the creation of many things before the world, they are cabalistical, mystical, and allegorical. Such also are the expressions of R. Eliezer, when he tells us, that heaven was made of the brightness of God's garment, and the earth of the snow which is under the throne of his glory. Maimonides affirms, that these assertions are so strange and marvellous, that he does not

recollect to have seen the like, in the writings of any of those who observe the Jewish law.†

XXXVII. It is necessary, mean while, to maintain the distinction suggested above. If we consider the first origin of things, all of them were created of nothing. Some, however, were made immediately of nothing, as the first works of the first day, and all spiritual substances: others, mediately, as the works of the subsequent days, which indeed were made of matter; but of matter that in itself was ill adapted to the purpose, that bore no resemblance to the things produced from it, and from which no such creatures could have been produced by any natural energy.

XXXVIII. This production of things was effected by the mere will and command of God, by his all-powerful will,* as Clement of Alexandria expressed it; or, which is the same thing, by his word, or fiat. "God said, Let there be light, and there was lights." "He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast."z "Thou hast created all things, and FOR THY PLEASURE they are, and were created." The creatures existed merely because God willed them to exist, without further effort, without laborious exertion. "The creation of the world," says the same Clement, "is the effect of his counsel alone:" and Philo agrees with him, saying, "It seems reasonable to think, that in the works which he performs, God exercises not only power and authority, but also wisdom and intelligence."

XXXIX. It is still more remarkable, that Maximus Tyrius, a rural philosopher, and a stranger to recondite learning, should have taught the same truth in the following eloquent passage: "By the will of Jupiter, the earth, and whatever is nourished by the earth, was established; the sea, and whatever is produced by the sea; the air, and whatever is supported by the air; the heaven, and whatever moves in heaven. All these were created by the will of Jupiter."* A little before, too, he had said that all these are the works of him, "whose comprehensive and perfect mind is never divided, but with incredible rapidity, in the twinkling of an eye, accomplishes and

perfects whatever it touches." Truly Christian and pious expressions, had he said JEHOVAH instead of Jupiter.

XL. Since these statements are just, we utterly detest that bold tenet of the new Philosophy, by which it is maintained, "That, although God had, from the beginning, given no other form to the world than that of a chaos; yet if, after having established the laws of nature, he had assisted its operations by that concurrence which he usually affords, it may be concluded, without any prejudice to the miracle of the creation, that, by this ordinary concurrence alone, all things purely material would, in course of time, have attained the same state of perfection in which we now see them." The consequence of such notions is, that the masters of the new Philosophy imagine, that by means of natural generation, according to the rules of motion, all natural things could by degrees have been produced out of chaos, established and adjusted, (one of them even says, supposing the ordinary concurrence of God, must have been produced,) in the same manner as they have now been produced, established, and adjusted by a supernatural creation; and, consequently, that there was no necessity for that miraculous work which is called creation.

XLI. These sentiments have a dangerous tendency.† It ought not to pass without severe reprobation as an instance of arrogant temerity, that poor pitiful man should boast that he has discovered a way, by which, under the conduct of motion alone, all whose laws he, no doubt, has been able to ascertain, those wonderful works, which, as now created by the powerful word of God, command the astonishment of all the choirs of angels in common with the holy prophets, could, and even must have come forth from chaos of their own accord. God spoke, of old, to Job out of the whirlwind, saying, "Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me. Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it?" &c. But these audacious men, according to their hypotheses, would find an answer to return to God; to wit, that, in all

those works, there is nothing too wonderful, to have risen spontaneously out of chaos agreeably to their own rules of motion. Without doubt, however, they deserve the same reproof which God administered to Job, "Who is he that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?"^c

XLII. Whatever may be pretended to the contrary, assertions of this kind are derogatory to the miracle of the creation. The most admirable circumstance in creation is, that, at the mere command of the Deity, all things rose into existence either out of nothing, or out of matter which was altogether inadequate, and bore no proportion to what was to be formed from it. But this wonder is, in a great measure, if not entirely set aside, when it is affirmed that, supposing the ordinary concurrence of God, all things would have come forth out of chaos in the same manner, of their own accord, or as Gregory of Nyssa speaks, "by a spontaneous concourse,"* provided it had pleased God, who now accelerated the work, to have indulged motion and chaos with a certain period of time. According to this account, what is miraculous in creation, this only excepted, that it surpasses the ordinary production of natural things as to the degree of rapidity with which it is accomplished? The issue to which these notions gradually lead, is to cause the true doctrine of the creation of the world to be at last discarded with ridicule and disgrace. A certain raw disciple of this school, has not been ashamed, to deride that doctrine, in a book in which he makes this newfangled philosophy the interpreter of Scripture.

XLIII. Since it is manifest, then, from what has been said, that Creation is the production of things from nothing, and this by a mere command and volition, the natural consequence is that we must consider it as, indisputably, a work of the Divine omnipotence. Hence God ascribes it to himself alone, and disowns every other cause, whether co-ordinate or instrumental. "Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth." "Hast

thou not known, hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary?" "I am the LORD that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself." Parallel to this is the following expression in Job;—"Who alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea."

XLIV. Pressed by testimonies so very clear, Socinus perfidiously objects, "that these passages do not prove that, in creating and forming the world, God made use of the services of none at all, but only of none that did not entirely depend upon himself, and that had not derived from him the power of doing something towards the creation of the world." This is boldly to contradict the prophets and God himself; for since they expressly declare, that God stretcheth forth the heavens ALONE, they exclude every other cause of every sort; and since it is added that God spreadeth abroad the earth BY HIMSELF, we are taught that this is an immediate act, in which no cause, not even one that is instrumental, and that operates by power derived from another, has any place. The Rabbinical writers say,—"immediately, and without any concatenation of causes."

XLV. By this work, too, the God of Israel discriminates himself from all the pretended gods of the Gentiles, and vindicates his own majesty in opposition to them. "All the gods of the nations," says the Psalmist, are "idols; but the LORD made the heavens:" and we read in Jeremiah, "Thus shall ye say unto them, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens." Nor is it impertinent to remark, that, whilst Jeremiah composed all his other writings in the Hebrew language, this verse alone is found in the Chaldee dialect; because it was proper that the faithful should be armed against the temptations of the Babylonians, and learn, in due time, what answer they should return to those idolaters, in their own tongue.

XLVI. The following words of Sophocles are not unlike this dictate of Divine revelation: "He who made the heaven and the extensive earth,

is one God—truly one."* These lines of Pythagoras, or of Orpheus, quoted by Justin,[†] bear a still closer resemblance to the language of Scripture.

"Say'st thou, I am a God, I am Divine?

Create a world like this, and call it thine."‡

XLVII. The Apostle also teaches, in Rom. 1:20. that ever since the creation of the world, the invisible things of God are clearly perceived, being understood by the things that are made, and, in particular, his eternal power and godhead. We have elsewhere vindicated this passage from the perverse interpretations of heretics.§ We only remark at present, that the reasoning of the Apostle would have no force, if any other Creator of the world besides the one eternal and omnipotent Deity either existed, or could exist.

XLVIII. Further, that the act of creating is so peculiar to God that no creature can be admitted to any share in it, may be demonstrated in the following manner. Creation is the production of a thing by the mere command of him that creates. If, therefore, we imagine that God communicates this privilege to any creature, that at his (the creature's) command, a certain other thing may exist, that thing would either exist without any co-operation on the part of God for effecting its existence, either by willing or commanding it to be, and would be wholly indebted for its existence to the fiat of the commanding creature; or it would exist in consequence of God's willing and commanding its existence, in concert with the creature which is supposed to create. Now, each of these ideas is most dishonouring to God, and involves a manifest contradiction. If the former is asserted, it is alleged that God wills that a creature may exist which does not depend upon himself in its operations, and that, by the mere and absolute command of this creature, something may exist even without his consent; than which, nothing more absurd can be conceived. If the latter is preferred, it is not properly the creature

which is supposed to create, that would in reality create; since his command is not sufficient to give existence to the thing: but God would create at the command of that creature, upon whose willing the existence of something, God is supposed to will and command the same thing. This, however, is not only contrary to the hypothesis, but also makes God dependent, in his operations, on the will of a creature. Since these imaginations are extremely derogatory to the dignity of the Supreme Being, we must, of necessity, conclude, that the act and the power of creating are incommunicable to any creature.

XLIX. It is impossible, besides, even to imagine any kind of instrument of creation strictly so called. The reason is, not merely that every instrument requires some matter and subject on which it may operate in a way adapted to its capacity, while creation strictly taken supposes the absence of all pre-existent matter; but, chiefly, because creation is effected by the mere command and will of him who creates; which excludes every other concurring cause, whatever be its nature and kind, agreeably to the expression which we lately quoted from Isaiah: "I spread abroad the earth by myself."

L. From the preceding reasonings, it indisputably follows, that the same Godhead which belongs to the Father, belongs also to the Son and the Holy Spirit. Although, for reasons which we have elsewhere assigned, the creation is, in the Creed, attributed to the Father, the sacred writings ascribe it also to the Son and the Holy Ghost. Each of these persons, it is clear, is frequently styled God. But, if, while they are called God, they have not made the heavens and the earth, they must necessarily be numbered among those gods who "shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens;"—which it would be blasphemous to allege.

LI. No man of piety will deny, that the world which God has created, is a most extensive theatre erected for the display of the Divine perfections, and that mortal men are unable to ascertain its exact dimensions. "Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his

hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?" "If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the LORD." Yet that the world is infinite, or, which is the same thing, that its extent is without bounds, no sober-minded person will affirm. God attributes to himself that power of measuring the waters and the heavens, which he denies to man; but the universe could not be measured even by God himself, unless its quantity had bounds and limits.

LII. The distinction betwixt infinite and indefinite might be admitted on this subject, provided it were ingenuously and properly explained. The world might be allowed to be indefinite with regard to us, as we are incapable of precisely assigning the bounds and measures of the universe; though we know in general, that it hath bounds and limits, and therefore is not infinite.

LIII. But, after you have affirmed, "that our understanding is able to conceive no bounds in the world, and that this is owing not to the weakness of the human mind, but to the positive idea of the world, in which we can imagine no bounds; and that, since this idea of the world has not arisen from our prejudices, and can be traced to no other quarter, it necessarily follows, that God has impressed it upon our minds, and consequently, that it is true, and gives a just representation of the nature of the world:"—After you have even said, "We know that this world, or this universe of corporeal substances, has no limits to its extent:"—After you have deliberately hazarded all these assertions, to subjoin, in order to escape the odium of so extravagant an opinion, "that you would rather call the world indefinite than infinite, that the term infinite may be reserved for God only,"—this is to amuse the reader in a manner contrary to all the laws of candour. If the idea of the world as having no imaginable limits be true, and be divinely impressed on our minds,—if we know that it has no bounds to its extent, why have we recourse to

subterfuges? Why do we meanly resort to evasions? Why do we not give every thing its appropriate name? Why not speak as we think, and call that which has no bounds or limits, infinite? Why do we seek a dishonourable and cowardly retreat, in the word indefinite? Let us speak roundly and properly. "Nothing remains but sound, and the graces of language."*

LIV. "That is infinite," says Aristotle, "to which, to whatever quantity is assigned it, you may always assign something further." † Now surely, the authors of the new philosophy give us an account of the world, which, this definition of what is infinite, exactly suits; for they affirm that whatever limits of the world be supposed, they always stretch beyond them, and conceive a further extension. Since, then, they boldly assert the thing, why do they, childishly and in a manner unworthy of men, cavil about the term infinite?

LV. Let us examine the thing itself. And, lest our arguments should be treated with supercilious contempt, because they are ours, let these candid gentlemen be obliging enough to allow us to make use, for a little, in this contest, of weapons with which we are furnished by the celebrated Cocceius, a name neither odious nor inconsiderable in their esteem. This writer reasons in the following manner.‡

LVI. "Melissus the Samnian, a disciple of Parmenides, whom Aristotle refutes, affirmed, 'that the world is infinite.'* This doctrine is contrary to Scripture. The heaven and the earth are not infinite; for the earth has bounds, and the heaven, whether the aerial, the starry, or the third heaven, according to its position with respect to us, is not infinite, but finite. That to which infinitude is denied, is wholly finite. We indeed are unable to measure the universe, and it surpasses our conception. But God bounds, and 'meteth out heaven with the span.' Extension belongs to all these parts of the universe; but the extension of things which are extended, has both a beginning and an end. If it has not, the same thing will at once have, and not have, a certain number of spaces and parts. It will not have them, because it is infinite; it will have them, because it has parts beyond parts. The

human mind does not admit number actually infinite; for there is no number, to which something may not be added," &c.

LVII. Let those who contend that the arguments against the existence of a body actually infinite, are mere sophisms, now reply to this reasoning. Or if it seem too obscure, which to men of erudition it ought not to appear, I should be happy to learn what they have to oppose to this single demonstration, which is plain and easy. Every body has a certain quantity. Every thing that has quantity, has parts beyond parts. That which is infinite, cannot have parts beyond parts; and, therefore, it can neither have quantity, nor be a body. That what is infinite cannot have parts beyond parts, is proved thus. Each of the parts supposed, must be either finite or infinite. If they are infinite, each part is equal to the whole; which is contradictory. If they are finite, they cannot make a whole, actually infinite; for finite parts, to whatever extent they may be multiplied, still remain finite. Besides, it is a maxim of unquestionable certainty, that the whole is not greater than all its parts taken together. If, therefore, finite parts, even when all of them are taken together, still continue finite, the whole which results from them, is also necessarily finite.

LVIII. As the world is finite with regard to EXTENT, it is also finite with regard to DURATION. The Scripture everywhere teaches, that its existence had a beginning. It is said, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth;"—which intimates that the beginning of time, by which the duration of all created things is circumscribed, coincided with the creation of the world. We read, too, of "the beginning, ere ever the earth was, (the beginnings of the earth,*) when there were no depths;"^o and our thoughts are elevated to that eternity of God, which preceded "the foundation of the world."

LIX. The most shameless sophistry is employed by those followers of Socinus mentioned by Episcopius,[†] who infer that the mountains and hills existed from eternity, because Jacob calls them "the everlasting hills."^q Episcopius justly opposes to them the following

passage in the Psalms: "Before the mountains were brought forth, ere ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God." The Patriarch's "everlasting hills," hills of ages,* are hills that existed from the beginning, and that are coeval with the world; for which reason they are called by Moses "ancient mountains."s

LX. But, supposing that the creation of the world took place in time, which has now been evinced from Scripture, it is asked, was it not at least possible for the world to have been created from eternity? To this question, Athanasius appears to me to have returned an acute answer in the following words. † "That although it may have been possible for God to produce works from eternity, yet it was impossible that the works made by him could have existed from eternity, if they really emerged from things that were not, and did not exist before they were made. But how could things which had no existence before they were made, be co-existent with God, who always existed?"

LXI. This demonstration may be thus elucidated. That all the perfections of God belonged to him from eternity, admits of no doubt. From eternity, therefore, he possessed the power to produce all things, whenever he pleased, by the mere act of his will. Yet as to the things to be produced, it is absurd to allege that they could exist from eternity; for that which is from eternity, exists necessarily, existed always actually, and at no time was merely possible. But with regard to that which God voluntarily effected without himself, ‡ so that, had he pleased, he might not have effected it—it implies a contradiction to say that it never was merely possible, and never only to be done, and consequently that it never was without an actual existence. Since these positions are sufficiently evident, I wish it had not been said by a learned man, "that it is difficult to refute those who hold, that the eternity of the world was possible." See the ingenious and solid reasonings of Cocceius on this topic.*

LXII. It is disputed among chronologers, how many years have now elapsed since the creation of the world; and the matter still remains undecided. We consider this contest as hopeless, and take no part in it at present. Let it suffice to know in general, that the world has not yet reached the age of six thousand years.

LXIII. It is somewhat easier to decide the question respecting the season of the year, in which the world was made; for those who refer the beginning of the world to the autumnal equinox, appear to support their opinion by the strongest arguments. 1st, It is certain that the civil year of the Israelites began in autumn, the first month of which is called Tisri,[†] the beginning, an old Chaldean word from the root Sarah,[‡] to begin. See Exod. 23:16. 34:22, on the use of this civil year. Now, according to Eusebius,[§] Alexander Polyhistor informs us, that Abraham, having received this account of the year from Enoch, delivered it to his descendants, and introduced it into Egypt. 2dly, The same idea is confirmed by the Sabbatical years which commenced at the autumnal equinox, according to the command of God. For what could be more proper than that the beginning of those years should be the same with the beginning of the world, that there might not remain the space of six months, not pertaining to the Sabbatical years. 3dly, The maturity of every sort of fruit adapted to the use of man, serves also to show, that autumn was more probably the time of the creation, than any other season of the year.

LXIV. Further, though it would have been easy for God to create all things in full perfection, "in a single moment, and by a single act and movement,"* he was pleased to employ six days in this work; as the Mosaic history, which ought by no means to be debased by rash and unnecessary allegories, expressly states. From this circumstance we learn, that we must not be superficial and hasty in our meditations on the works of God; that each of them ought, on the contrary, to be inquired into with attention and diligence; and that the whole period of our life should be devoted to this exercise, till, with an

understanding perfect in vigour, we behold all things in a state of the highest perfection, in a most blessed Sabbath of rest.

LXV. A question has lately begun to be agitated with reference to the progress of the works of God on each of the days; to wit, whether each of the works of a day was perfected in a single moment, or in some period of time? This controversy, however, is not of very great moment; nor do the sentiments held on either side seem, hitherto, to be either supported or overthrown, by cogent arguments from Scripture.

LXVI. As to the importance of this question, I rank it amongst those doubtful points, which may be disputed among the reformed, without any prejudice to faith or charity; provided it be firmly and conscientiously held, that there is a vast difference between the first creation of things, which was accomplished by the command of God, (in a manner quite different from that order which was subsequently to be observed,) and natural generation, which proceeds gradually from suitable matter, according to the rules of motion. As the denial of instantaneous creation is a step by which some proceed to maintain that most absurd hypothesis respecting all things spontaneously rising into existence by mere motion, the ordinary concurrence of God being supposed,—I utterly detest the denial of such creation. In the solution of the question itself, to which we will immediately proceed, an excessive refinement must be carefully avoided.

LXVII. Those who apprehend that the different days were occupied by the different works of these days respectively, make use of this argument chiefly;—that, otherwise, it would have been said that on each of the days God rested the whole day excepting merely the moment alleged, whereas the Scripture only makes mention of God's resting on the seventh day. But this reason is of no weight. If you understand by resting, ceasing from the production of a certain work till a new work be begun, God, no doubt, rested on each of the days. It is clear from the sacred narrative, that his works did not so rapidly

succeed each other as to admit of no interval between them. When the work of each day was finished, God first approved of it, before he proceeded to other works; and mention is made of his uttering several distinct words, or commands, at the production of the different works. A remarkable interval, too, in which it may be truly affirmed that God rested, took place betwixt the creation of other animals and of man, and also betwixt the creation of Adam and Eve. But the rest of the seventh day is quite of a different kind; partly, as it consisted in God's ceasing from the creation of new species of creatures; partly, as he beheld with complacency the fabric of the universe which he had now completed. Further, as to what is added respecting the single moment assigned to the work of creation on each of the days, it seems intended to excite an odium against the contrary opinion. Since several different works are ascribed to each of the days, no person, I apprehend, understands, that all those works were performed at once in a single moment of the day. This notion is expressly inconsistent with the account of the works of, at least, the first and the sixth day.

LXVIII. Those who hold, on the contrary, that the different works were done in different moments of time, support their opinion, principally, by the following argument. The creation, say they, is said to have been effected by the call and command of God; but God, when he enjoins any thing to appear, cannot be resisted, and at his command, all things must be present without delay. Neither does this argument, however, seem incontrovertible. Although, when God by his all-powerful command orders any thing to be present, it cannot refuse to come at his call; yet it is not necessary that it should appear, that very moment, in all its perfection. It is possible for God, to command it to come forward within some period of time. The Divine command is the cause of the existence of things; but the manner of their existing depends on the pleasure of him who commands them into being. If he command them to appear in a moment, in a moment they will assuredly appear. If he command them to go forward to perfection in some space of time, a space of time will consequently be requisite for this purpose. From the mere

command of God, then, respecting the existence of creatures, nothing can be inferred as to the particular manner of their rising into existence. Some things, which are done at his command, are unquestionably accomplished in a continued space of time. For instance, the coming of the animals to Adam in order to receive their names from him as their lord, undoubtedly took place at the command of God, yet not without succession. Nor let it be objected, that the inclination to come was infused into the animals in a moment; for their coming itself, and not merely the inclination, was the effect of the Divine command.

LXIX. My judgment, therefore, is, that this question cannot be decided without making a distinction. Some things were certainly produced out of nothing, as the highest heaven, and the chaos of the earth, angels, and the souls of men. These could not be otherwise created than in a moment. Since no medium can be imagined between existence and non-existence, the transition from nothing to something does not admit of delay or succession.

LXX. Other creatures were formed of pre-existing matter by means of motion. "I apprehend," said Gregory of Nyssa, "that all those things which appear in the creation, and which were brought into existence by the will of God, were produced by means of motion and rest."* We, for our part, are not inclined, at present, to adopt such unrestrained expressions. Some works, however, were certainly accomplished by means of motion; as the drying of the earth, and the collecting of the waters into one place, which the Palmist celebrates in the following manner: "The waters stood above the mountains. At thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunder, they hasted away. They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys unto the place which thou hast founded for them." This was probably the case, too, with regard to the division of the stars; which, being separated from the original globe of light, and formed into distinct parts, could not, without motion, be fixed in so widely distant regions of the heavens. Now, that motion cannot be performed in what is called a mathematical moment, excluding all succession, is thus

demonstrated. The body would, in this case, be in several places at once; it would be, at the same time, in the place from which it departs, the place to which it is going, and the intermediate place. Nay, it would be, and would not be somewhere, at the same time; for it is implied in the very idea of a body being moved, that it ceases to be in the place whence it removes, and is not yet arrived at the place whither it is going.

LXXI. We must hold, nevertheless, that this motion was altogether extraordinary, and extremely rapid. It is by no means to be reduced to the ordinary rules of motion which are now observed; it owed its beginning, its progress, and its whole modification, to a Divine, and a special command.

LXXII. We ought not to imagine, that the production of herbs and trees from the ground, of fishes and reptiles from the waters, and, in fine, of all the animals from the earth, was performed in so rigid and laborious succession, that, the larger parts and the minutest particles being gradually prepared and arranged, the works, at last, with difficulty, attained their perfection, in the course of the day. But, at the command of God, the herbs, the trees loaded with their respective fruits, the fishes, the birds, and the other living creatures, suddenly came forth in full maturity;—each of them in a very short space of time, which, in comparison of the succession of months and years during which they now spring and grow up to perfection, may be regarded as a moment "In a single instant of time," says Eustathius, "those things which existed not before, sprung out of the earth, each distinguished by its own properties."* The glorious change of our bodies at the last day, exhibiting a kind of image of the first creation, will, in like manner, be effected "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye."v

LXXIII. Since, on each of the days, God performed various and highly magnificent works, and some of them posterior to others, (though most of them were accomplished in an exceedingly short time,) yet in such a manner that it is impossible for us to assign the

moments of the commencement and termination of the works of each day to their own hours respectively,—Divines justly say, according to Scripture, that six days, not six moments, were employed in the creation of the world. It must not be thought that, like a workman restricted to his task or to his time, God laboured in the work from morning to evening.

LXXIV. There is only ONE world, this very world, if the creation of which we are now treating, which was made by Christ, into which Christ came, and which comprehends within its circuit all things that were made. To imagine a plurality of worlds, existing either at the same time or in succession, is the raving of men who are not afraid of "intruding into those things which they have not seen, vainly puffed up by their own fleshly mind."

LXXV. That God could have created more worlds, distinct and separate from this one, had it so pleased him,—it is reasonable for all to believe, who devoutly acknowledge the immeasurable and inexhaustible power of the Deity. As to the objection adduced by some, that this world is the universe,* besides which nothing can be created without a contradiction, it is a childish cavil. This world is now called the universe, because all things which are created, are, in reality, contained within its compass: were another world created, this would cease to be the universe.

LXXVI. Nor is another reason alleged of greater force, namely, that there would either be something intermediate, or nothing; if there were nothing, they would not be really different worlds; if something, even this would serve to conjoin them. That things betwixt which no body intervenes, are not different, is not true. It is sufficient to make them different, that they do not approach, and are not in contact with each other. Nor is it material whether another body be actually placed, or it be merely possible to place it, between them; neither of the extreme bodies being removed from its own station.

LXXVII. But it excites our surprise, that they who contend that more worlds similar to this universe cannot be made even by the Divine omnipotence, admit without difficulty a plurality of particular worlds, or bodies resembling the earth that we inhabit, in which either men or other living creatures reside. Although, too, according to the modesty which they affect, they allege that on this point nothing must be either rashly affirmed or denied; they cannot restrain themselves from severely censoring those who, merely labouring under prejudices, and in a manner infatuated by self-love, imagine that we men are the sole delight of God, and that our earth is the most pleasant spot of the whole world;—which they suppose cannot be done without despising the other works of God. "We know not, indeed," they add, "whether there be men or other creatures in the Moon; but if we intend to form any opinion at all, it seems more conformable to truth to affirm, than to deny, that it is inhabited by men."

LXXVIII. I know not whether the very learned men derive these notions from the Commentaries of Lucian, or from the report of that man of strict honour and veracity, who, not long ago, flying on the wings of a goose, took an accurate survey of those upper regions, which have been hitherto unknown to other mortals that are sustained by the fruits of this earth. I cannot help recollecting on this occasion, what I long ago read on this subject in Lucian; and for the sake of my pupils, I will here repeat the substance of it in a few words. His story is as follows:* After he himself, with his companions, had been carried through the air by a mighty whirlwind during seven days and an equal number of nights, he arrived in his ship on the eighth day at a certain great country in the midst of the air,—an island, which, having the form of a globe, glittered with a profusion of light They found it both inhabited and cultivated. But that they might not wander hither and thither, ignorant alike of the men and the places, and not knowing under what part of heaven or into what region of the world they were thrown; it fortunately happened, that certain Horse-vultures,* that is, men who rode on vultures instead of horses, and who were some of the King's principal

servants, conducted the extraordinary strangers to the palace. The King, having learned from their appearance and dress that they were Grecians, politely informs them that his name is Endymion, and also that the region into which they were conveyed, after having traversed so vast spaces of air, is called by the Greeks ΣΕΛΗΝΗ, (the Latins call it LUNA,) the MOON. He told them that he was engaged in an arduous and dreadful war with the King of the Sun, (for that part of the world is no less fully peopled than the Moon,) and added many other stories of the same kind, which it would be improper now to rehearse.

The learned men, however, may choose rather, perhaps, to acknowledge themselves indebted to Kepler, the celebrated astronomer, who relates,[†] that he saw through an optical tube, on the spotted face of the Moon, lofty mountains, great valleys, a vast number of deep ditches, also extensive forests, seas, and many other things closely resembling what is found in the earth which we inhabit. He alleges, too, that the Moon is inhabited, and that its inhabitants are short-lived, but of a stupendous size, fifteen times larger than the men of the earth, equal to whales; and that they build towns in situations exposed to the warm beams of the Sun. Lest doubts of the truth of this account should remain, Kepler conjectures that he saw the workmen employed in their labours.

LXXIX. But candidly to speak out what I think; I am fully convinced that it is not without exposing our holy religion to disgrace, that men devoted to the study of Theology thus contend for such notions; and that meteorologies of this sort furnish the profane, and the enemies of the Reformed Church, with copious materials for mockery and ridicule. Allowing that it appears from the observations of Hevelius, that there are in the Moon high and low places, similar to our mountains and valleys, what probable reason, I ask, have we to induce us to conclude, that it contains men, states, and commonwealths? Can even the slightest evidences of their existence be found, either in nature, or in Scripture?

LXXX. Nay, there are not a few passages of Scripture, that are contrary to this lunatic imagination. Moses, by the distinct account which he gives of the counsél of God respecting the creation of man, sufficiently shows, that at that time no living creature similar to him existed in the universe. Why should God be introduced, saying, "Let us make man in our image," &c. as if he were preparing for the chief of his works, if, perhaps only two days before, he had peopled the Moon, or the Sun, or even the other stars with men? For what purpose is it related, that, having discovered, so to speak, that it would not be good for man to remain alone, he thought at last of forming a companion for him? These transactions indeed are related in terms which allude to human infirmity;* but the expressions would be utterly void of propriety, and could afford no meaning worthy of God, if several pairs of the human kind had already existed elsewhere.

LXXXI. Add to this, that Isaiah ascribes it in a special manner to the earth, that it was not "created in vain," but "formed to be inhabited." Paul, too, whilst he affirms that "God hath made of one blood all the nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth,"^z acknowledges no other race of men that has sprung up elsewhere, and that inhabits the face of the Moon.

LXXXII. Reason, too, gives its suffrage in our favour. If there were men in the Moon or in the other stars, they must either have retained their original integrity, like the good Angels; or fallen into sin, as we have done. But it seems probable that neither of these would have been passed over in total silence in holy writ; especially since so many proper opportunities of mentioning them occur. Whether our sin were to be aggravated, or the unbounded mercy of God towards us extolled, or the extent of that blessed society in which we shall rejoice in heaven, to be shown; it would have been worth while, at least briefly to notice so many myriads of saints from another globe. This argument has the greater weight, as frequent mention is made, on such occasions, of Angels; who are no less the inhabitants of another world than the men supposed, and whose affairs seem not to

concern us so much as those of the other race, who are of the same species with ourselves.

LXXXIII. But, if the men inhabiting the Moon, or the Sun, or Mercury, are involved in the same misery of sin with us, it may be affirmed, either that they all remain eternally wretched, or that some of them are, in common with us, redeemed by Christ, or that another way of salvation is discovered to them. But no one of these suppositions is at all probable.

LXXXIV. Not the first: For it may be gathered from PSALM 89:48. that God would have created all those sons of men in vain, if none of them are to adore his perfections, and celebrate his praise. On this supposition, too, Paul would have had a singularly apt opportunity of inculcating the same thing, in that passage where he makes mention of Christ's not taking hold of angels, but of the seed of Abraham. He would, beyond question, have highly commended the love of Christ towards us, if he had chosen to add, that not merely angels that sinned, but also whole worlds of men of the same nature with us, were passed by, that so amazing an act of kindness and grace, might be done to the men of this earth alone, which is perhaps the least of them all.

LXXXV. The second supposition is equally void of probability. For since Christ has not assumed a human nature of the same blood with those men, he is neither their Brother, nor their GOEL.* Since he has neither lived nor suffered, nor taught in their world; once in fine, he has appeared in it neither in a humble nor in a glorious form, nor is to appear in it at the consummation of all things; b it is not probable that the salvation which he has obtained for us only by his appearing amongst us, is obtained for them without an advent of Christ to them. I might also mention the preaching of the Gospel, of which the Apostle testifies, that its sound went into all the earth, and its words unto the ends of the world; but he has not ventured to assert that it has reached the inhabitants of the Moon or of the other stars. Is it likely, too, that nothing would have been said respecting them, in

those passages which describe that glorious judgment which is to be conducted with incredible solemnity at the last day? It will redound greatly to the honour of the Lord Jesus, without doubt, if he is to be the Judge not only of this world, but also of other worlds of mankind, as well as of angels.

LXXXVI. Nor is the third supposition admissible. For neither is there salvation in any other;" nor would it become a Most Holy God to admit sinful men to communion with himself, without a satisfaction to his justice. Such a satisfaction, besides, can be made by none but a person who is GOD-MAN; which it is unnecessary to consider more fully here, as we have elsewhere proved it at large.* Indeed new schemes of Divinity widely different from that which our churches maintain, must be framed for the benefit of the men inhabiting the Moon; as has been avowedly done of late, for the sake of his Pre-adamites,† by him who has been the first to discover their existence.

LXXXVII. Since these things are so, it is truly surprising that men of intelligence and discretion could have allowed themselves, amidst so much light and learning, publicly to affirm in their writings, that they who think that the Moon is inhabited by men, hold a more probable opinion than those who choose rather to believe that it is uninhabited. I should have deemed the puerile rant of these writers quite unworthy of a serious confutation, were it not that it seemed proper to avert from our churches the reproach of so monstrous opinions.

LXXXVIII. Our plan does not lead us to speak particularly of the different works of each of the days. Let us only take a brief view of the order which God observed in creating. First of all, he made the heaven, the throne of his majesty, with the angels, his attendants, and the witnesses and spectators of his other works; as may be inferred from some expressions in Job. He then prepared these lower abodes for the accommodation of the animal life; that we might be taught always to give the first and highest place in our esteem to divine and heavenly objects.

LXXXIX. At one and the same time he began, and finished the heaven of his glory, and replenished it with glorious inhabitants. But to other things, he, in the first instance, gave rude beginnings, and perfected them by degrees; demonstrating his power and goodness, first, in the imperfection and weakness, and, then, in the perfecting of the creature. Of this sort was the producing of the world without light, that light might arise out of darkness: From which, too, we ascend, in delightful meditation, to the procedure of God in forming the new world of grace; where also, commencing with slight beginnings, he gradually perfects his design, till, in the blessed day of an eternal Sabbath, he calmly acquiesces, with entire approbation, in the consummated work.

XC. After all his other works, he made man; after man, nothing. This teaches us, that the rest of the creatures were made for man, the highest heaven itself, with its angels, not excepted; but that man was made for God only, to worship and obey him; since nothing was made posterior to man, to which as his superior he might do homage.

XCI. Nor must this observation be omitted, that God rested in none of his works, how magnificent soever, till he had made man; but when man was created, immediately "he rested, and was refreshed." Macarius elegantly says; "Man is a creature of high dignity. Behold the heavens and the earth, the sun and the moon, and consider how great they are. Yet it did not seem good to the Lord to rest in these works, but in man only. Man is, therefore, more exalted than all the other creatures."* This instance of the Almighty's acquiescence in man, intimates that it gives greater delight to God that he has man to hallow and glorify his name, than that he made heaven and earth, and a vast number of creatures, which, though otherwise admirable, are incapable of knowing and enjoying him.

XCII. Thus we are gradually led to the IMPROVEMENT of this article; which consists chiefly in these three exercises. First, That we attentively meditate on the works of God. Secondly, That by them, as by a ladder, we ascend to God. Thirdly, That we descend to ourselves.

The Psalmist has comprised all these in a few words: "When I consider thy heavens," (behold the soul attending to the works of God) "the work of thy fingers; the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained;" (behold the mind ascending to God) "What is man that thou art mindful of him," &c. Behold man descending to himself.

XCIII. Faith certainly requires, in the first place, that we contemplate and meditate on the works of God. It is the characteristic of beasts, or of drunkards, who are worse than beasts, that "they regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hand."j Even heathen philosophers often professed that they could experience no sweeter pleasure in life, than the contemplation of the stupendous works of nature; on which you may consult Seneca's Preface to his Questions on the Works of Nature.* Yet they were unable to discern in those works what faith causes us to perceive; to wit, the excellencies of God, not merely as an omnipotent Creator, but also as our most gracious Father. It is certain, too, that man was created for this very purpose, that he might be, as Gregory Nazianzen calls him, "the spectator of the visible, the priest of the intelligent, creation."†

XCIV. Now we ought to perform this duty, 1st, With care and attention. "Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things." We should hold a kind of conference with the creatures, and examine each of them respecting their admirable properties. "Ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee, ... or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee." 2dly, With admiration. "Marvellous are thy works," says the Psalmist.m "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches." 3dly, With joy and exultation. "Thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work; I will triumph in the works of thy hands."o This has been the exercise of angels even from the beginning. "When the corner-stone of the earth was laid, the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy."

XCV. Further, we should ascend by the creatures, as by an erect ladder, to God the Creator; who exhibits himself in them, not only to

be seen, but also to be felt,—whose glory the heavens declare, and to whom the brute animals of the earth, and the dumb fishes of the sea, bear witness, that they proceeded from his hand.

XCVI. Nor is a general acknowledgment of this sufficient. But those perfections of God which he has brightly displayed in the work of creation, ought to be particularly observed:—that infinite Power, at whose command all things rose into existence:—that unbounded Goodness, to which alone the creatures must owe themselves entirely indebted for whatever portion of good is in them:—that unsearchable Wisdom, which has arranged every thing in so beautiful an order, that it appears no less admirable in the least than in the greatest works:—that amazing Philanthropy, in fine, which he has shown towards man, not only adorning his body by so exact a proportion of all its parts, which has beyond measure astonished Hippocrates and other anatomists; but also suspending in his soul, as in the golden vault of the temple, an image of himself and a representation of his own holiness; and at the same time, granting him dominion over the rest of the creatures.

XCVII. "God," as Philo eloquently observes, "by endowing man with reason, having admitted him to communion with himself, which is the best of his gifts, by no means withheld other blessings; but prepared for him, as the most nearly related and the most dearly beloved of his creatures, all that the world contains. Having determined that he should be destitute of nothing conducive either to his living, or to his living happily, the Creator made provision for the one, by the rich abundance of comforts that were given him to enjoy; and for the other, by the contemplation of heavenly objects, with which when the mind is affected, it is inspired with an ardent desire of the knowledge of them."*

XCVIII. We should endeavour also to rise in our meditations, by the way of eminence, as it is called, from the greatness, the beauty, and the excellence of the creatures, to the consideration of the greatness and the beauty of God. I cannot better illustrate this than in the

words of the truly Great Basil. "Let us glorify the adorable Author of nature, who has formed all things with consummate wisdom and skill. From the beauty of the things that are seen, let us learn his transcendent beauty; and from the magnitude of these sensible and limited bodies, let us infer the infinite and immeasurable extent of his greatness and power, which no created understanding is able to comprehend."* Hence it follows, that it is our duty to esteem the Creator above the creatures; by no means to acquiesce in the creatures themselves, whose goodness is finite and circumscribed, and which are, consequently, incapable of imparting full satisfaction to the mind; and not even to rejoice in the creatures, except in so far as we observe the excellencies of their Maker manifested in them, that thus our delight may be placed, not so much in the creatures, as in and through them, in God the Creator.w

XCIX. In fine, we ought continually to honour the glorious Artificer of the universe with our praises and thanksgivings. The sweet Psalmist of Israel, unable to satisfy himself with so ample and so choice a collection of hymns for this purpose, solicits the assistance of all creatures in the discharge of this duty. The exhortation of Epictetus[†] to celebrate the praises of God as the Creator, is truly admirable; and I should have added it here, were it not that I recollect I have given it elsewhere.‡

C. But we should also descend to ourselves. 1st, That we may learn to fear and venerate the great Creator. "Fear ye not me, saith the Lord? Will ye not tremble at my presence, who have placed the sand for the bound of the sea?" All creatures are in his hand, to employ them either for us, or against us, according to his sovereign pleasure; and it is in him alone, too, that we ourselves live, move, and have our being.z

CI. 2dly, That we may render the worship and service due to Him, whom every kind of animals both in the earth and in the sea obey. When we behold all creatures hearkening to his word according to the laws of nature, truly we ought to be ashamed and blush, if we

who are enriched and distinguished above the rest by so many benefits, and who alone, in common with angels, are privileged with reason, are found rebellious against him, without whom we can do nothing; and against whom, in consequence, it is highly criminal for us to form one hostile purpose or thought. Hence God frequently makes use of the irrational creatures, to reprove and put to shame the rational.^b

CII. 3dly, That whilst we sincerely discharge these duties of piety, we may comfort ourselves, in various ways, in God our Creator. 1. If that God, who is the omnipotent Creator, be our God, he will certainly provide for us all that is necessary to our welfare. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." Since "he giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry,"^d how much less will he suffer men who so far excel other creatures, and who call upon him as their Father, to lack what is necessary?

CIII. A memorable instance of this care of Providence occurred to me to-day, when reading the Monody of Gregory Nazianzen upon Basil the Great.* He relates, that when Maximian's violent persecution was raging with its utmost fury, the ancestors of Basil escaped with a few servants to a certain cave in a mountain. Continuing there upwards of seven years, and dwelling in the open air, they lived on bread alone; nor did they, like the Israelites in the wilderness, utter any complaint on that account. God, who fed the Jews in the desert with manna and with quails, supplied them with provisions which they neither prepared nor expected—deer in good condition, which came of their own accord, no man pursuing them; and of which they killed what were immediately necessary, and dismissed the rest, reserving them as in a storehouse, ready to appear when required for future use. "The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger; but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing."

CIV. 2. If the Almighty Creator be our God, nothing is so wonderful but he is able and willing to effect it on our behalf. Jeremiah,

accordingly, reasons thus: "Ah! Lord God, behold thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee;" or, as our Dutch translators have well rendered the expression, "there is nothing too wonderful for thee,*—nothing which thou canst not easily perform in favour of thy people. He will govern all the creatures, too, in such a manner that none of them can hurt his people,^h but all of them, on the contrary, shall serve to promote their salvation.

CV. 3. To conclude, how great is this felicity of the saints, that it is given them to inherit not merely the creatures, but also the Creator himself! "The Former of all things is the portion of Jacob;"^k and our "Maker is our Husband;" in whom we are not only allowed to repose our confidence through the whole course of our lives, but to whom, also, in our dying moments, we may "commit our souls as to a faithful Creator."ⁿ

DISSERTATION IX: ON THE NAME JESUS

I. HAVING considered with some attention what we are to believe in relation to the FIRST PERSON of the Adorable Trinity, we now proceed to speak of the SECOND; to whom four titles are ascribed in the Creed, to wit, JESUS, CHRIST, the ONLY SON of God the Father, and OUR LORD. The two first of these titles are names of office; the third indicates his nature; the fourth points out his dignity, and the relation in which he stands to us.

II. Some have ingeniously remarked with respect to his official names, that the one of them is Hebrew, and the other Greek; because the Son of God is given to be a Saviour alike to Hebrews and Greeks,

to Jews and Gentiles; "a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of his people Israel." Others add, that the first name is Hebrew, and the surname Greek; because "salvation is of the Jews," and because to them it was first announced and exhibited. "To the Jew first," says the Apostle, and also to the Greek."^b I shall not anxiously inquire at present into the solidity of this observation. The circumstance itself which gave occasion to it, at any rate, is certain, honourable to Jesus, and delightful to us.

III. Some authors, with Moschopulus, derive the name Ἰησοῦς, JESUS, from ἰώ, the future of which is ἰάσω; whence comes ἰασοῦς, and, by changing the letter α into η, Ἰησοῦς, that is to say, a person who heals. But those writers are undoubtedly mistaken, and by such a derivation they would incur the ridicule of all who are acquainted with the Hebrew language, were we not to admit the remark of Grotius, that by a certain play of fancy they have found a Greek term which corresponds with the Hebrew יֵשׁוּ as well in sound as in sense; in which they follow the example of Philo, who delights in alluding to Greek words so as to depart as little as possible from the Hebrew notation. It is certain that the Hebrew term יֵשׁוּ and the Greek ἰασοῦς are very near akin, both in sound and in signification; and to this it seems to be owing, that several Jews, who resided among Greeks, having been called by this Hebrew name, assumed the name Jason in Greek.

IV. But Theophylact says with great truth, "The name JESUS is not Greek but Hebrew;"* and it becomes us to maintain that etymology which is suggested by the expression of the angel to Joseph; "Thou shalt call his name JESUS, for he shall SAVE his people from their sins." This conducts us, as if by the hand, to the Hebrew word יֵשׁוּעַ which occurs in various passages, and when written fully is יְהוֹשֻׁעַ. The Greeks, who were singularly fond of a soft and easy pronunciation transformed this name into Ἰησοῦς, JESUS; which is irrefragably proved by the consideration that, among them, Joshua, the son of Nun, is called by the same name, JESUS.

v. The following expressions which Rabbi Hakkados is reported to have used,* are worthy of notice. Because the Messiah shall save mankind, he will be called Jeschua. † But the people of another nation, who shall embrace his religion, will call him Jesus; and, therefore, you will find this name JESU pointed out in Gen. 49:10. יבא שילה ולו. For the first letters of these Hebrew words, joined together, will form the name ישו JESU."

VI. It is clear, therefore, that Damascenus has justly said, that "the name Jesus is by interpretation a Saviour." ‡ Cicero§ observes, that no one Latin word is sufficient to express the entire meaning of the Greek term; for the name Servator does not exhaust its whole energy. Grotius is of opinion, that the term Sospitator, which is more ancient, but employed more in sacred than in common discourse, is of the same origin and force with the Greek word. The term Salvator, however, though possibly not so good a Latin expression, has been generally used in the Church; and in this we readily acquiesce.

VII. Let it be considered, then, as decided, that JESUS is from JEHOSHUA, and that JEHOSHUA denotes (Salvator) A SAVIOUR. But it is inquired among the learned, whether or not it signifies something more. Eusebius makes the following remark: "The name Jesus, translated into the Greek language, signifies the salvation of God."* A little after he adds: Joshua is the Salvation of JAO (or JEHOVAH,) that is, the Salvation of God." † He seems to have thought that in this word, as also in Jehonathan, Jehotzedec, and the like, Jeho is from Jehovah.

VIII. Nor is this opinion utterly without foundation. Though the genius of the language can easily admit the verbal noun יהושע (Jehoshua) to be formed from הושיע (Hoshea,) it was not without some important reason that Moses changed the name of his servant, who was formerly called Hoshea, ‡ not merely into Jeshua, § as it is written in Nehemiah 8:17. but into Jehoshua, || Numbers 13:16. that it might contain all the letters of the name JEHOVAH. ¶ There is a certain remarkable emphasis in such prophetic changing of names,

importing an accession of honour and dignity. The word Hoshea, when taken as a noun, without doubt, means a Saviour. If Jehoshua signifies merely the same thing, and superadds nothing at all to the sense, why did Moses make this alteration of the name? Why did the Holy Spirit deem it worthy to be transmitted, in immortal records, to the latest posterity? The truth is, that he who from the private counsel and pious wishes of his Parents, was formerly called Hoshea or Saviour, is now by Moses, from a prophetic impulse, denominated Jehoshua, or the Saviour of the Lord; because he was appointed and sent by the Lord, to be the Author of a certain great salvation to his people, and to be in this a distinguished type of Him who was to bear the name Jehoshua in the whole extent of its import, so as to be at once the Saviour appointed by JEHOVAH, and JEHOVAH the Saviour.*

IX. We may here add the comment of John Geshard, which is as follows:† "Joshua, a type of our Saviour, was first called Hoshea: but Moses, by prefixing the letter Jod, changed this name into Jehoshua: 1st, To give the more certain assurance to Joshua himself and to the people, of that deliverance, and of that victory over the Canaanites, to be obtained by his instrumentality, of which the searching out of the land was the commencement. Hoshea, it should be noted, is formed from the imperative mood, and signifies SAVE; but Jehoshua, from the future, and signifies, HE SHALL SAVE. 2dly, To intimate that God would confer many blessings on the man, whom he had honoured by adding to his name the first letter of his own distinctive appellation. 3dly, Because Moses, by the Spirit of prophecy, foresaw that Joshua would prove a type of Jesus Christ both in name and in fact; to wit, by introducing the people into the land of Canaan. As God added the letter ה He from his own peculiar name, to Abraham and Sarah, to signify that he himself was to descend from them in human nature; so to the name Joshua he added the letter י" Jod (for in this manner I apprehend it should be read,) "that thus Jehoshua might contain all the letters of his own name; and that it might be intimated that Jesus, of whom Joshua was a type, would be JEHOVAH, that is, the true God."

X. It was not by private authority, nor merely by the direction of his pious mother, that this name was assigned; but by the express command of God the Father, which an angel was commissioned to announce. It was expedient that whatever was performed towards Christ, should be done according to the appointment of God; and it became his heavenly Father to claim to himself the right of giving a name to his Only-begotten Son. Who else, indeed, was capable of doing this? "What is his Son's name, if thou canst tell?"^g It was of great importance to us, in fine, to be assured that human wisdom bore no part in imposing that name, the contemplation of which is the foundation of all our comfort.

XI. This name was actually put upon Christ, and solemnly declared, in and with his circumcision,—a circumstance which was conformable to an ancient custom of the pious.ⁱ Nor is it without its mystical import; for from his very circumcision, and even in it, Christ began to do what was necessary to be done for our salvation. By this sign he recognised his subjection to the law; showed that he was eminently* the seed of Abraham; poured out in his infancy the first-fruits of that most precious blood by which our consciences are purged; and obliged himself to do and to suffer all that was requisite to secure to the heirs of promise the blessings of the covenant made with Abraham. In fine, by the cutting off of a small particle from his natural body, he prefigured the subsequent excision of himself out of the land of the living for the salvation of his mystical body. What could be more proper than that the name of JESUS, or the SAVIOUR, should be given the Son of God, in that sacred rite, in which so many signs and pledges of his procuring our salvation by himself were exhibited.

XII. Without controversy, this name is exceedingly illustrious. It designates a work, and includes a glory, which are proper to God only, and cannot be shared with any that is not God. When understood, therefore, in its full import, it far surpasses at once the dignity and the power of all creatures. Hence his own proclamation, "I, even I am JEHOVAH; and besides me there is no Saviour." As to

others besides our Lord, that have been called by this name, it was in them either an empty and high-sounding title, imposed by human wisdom and ambitiously assumed; or conferred by the gracious indulgence of God on those whom he employed as the instruments of a comparatively inconsiderable, a corporeal and temporal salvation, and whom he intended to be, in this respect, types of his Son. Its signification, consequently, when applied to those persons, was as much lower as the shadow is inferior to the body. In its full signification, it belongs, as well exclusively as eminently, to the Son of God.

XIII. Yet, without doubt, an erroneous opinion is entertained by those who imagine, that the name Jesus, as it is either expressed in writing or pronounced by the tongue, is of such superior dignity above all the other names of God or Christ, that it ought to be venerated either by the bending of the knee, or by any other token of homage. The Apostle, indeed, teaches us, that "at the name of Jesus every knee should bow." But in this passage, "the name" does not signify the term, but the Person himself, and the dignity conferred on him, expressed by this term; as may be frequently seen in sacred writ, and particularly in Acts 4:12. Let this passage also be compared with that in Isaiah 45:23. to which the Apostle manifestly alludes: "Unto me every knee shall bow."

XIV. It is not possible for him to whom counsel belongeth, to bear a title without performing the work and possessing the honour it implies. Whatever, therefore, may be designated by the word SAVIOUR, is found in reality in our Lord Jesus; the angel having added this reason for the name given him,—"for he shall save his people from their sins."

XV. Further, he is said to save us, not because he has explained the doctrine of the Gospel of salvation in the clearest terms, and has confirmed it at once by the example of a most holy life, by stupendous miracles, by an almost incredible patience under sufferings, and by the martyrdom of a most grievous and bitter

death;—not because he has openly shown the way to immortality by his resurrection, and has obtained authority from God to bestow upon us everlasting life. This is the Semi-Mahometan blasphemy of Socinus. If the salvation of Christ consist in nothing else, how slight, at least, is his superiority to several other Prophets, and in particular, to his Apostles!

XVI. Nor does he sustain the name of Saviour for this reason, that he has restored us to a state in which God, without any remaining obstacle from his avenging justice, and according to the inclinations of his mercy, is both able and willing to communicate his blessings anew, in that manner and upon those conditions which seem good to him; while, however, this procuring of salvation by Christ, so far as the nature of the thing is concerned, (though God knew that the event would certainly be otherwise) may remain entire and perfect in itself, although there were none to whom it should be applied, and who should experience its happy fruits. In this manner the Remonstrants, in their synodical writings,* debase this magnificent title of our Lord.

XVII. Were these allegations true, he would not have obtained for mankind the actual restoration of any to a state of favour and acceptance; he would not even have acquired for them any thing by which they can be saved: but would merely have removed the impediment arising from punitive justice, and thus obtained for God the power of acting graciously towards men. Nay, he would not even have obtained this for God, since, according to their sentiments, God possesses this power of himself, without the intervention of Christ, and previously to any work which he has done. For they hold the following language in their Apology;† "To affirm that the avenging justice of God is so essential to his nature, that by virtue of it God is obliged and necessitated to punish sin, is very absurd, and very unworthy of God." Corvinus in like manner says, "God could have saved us without the satisfaction of Christ, but he would not do it."‡ These expressions obviously tend to make void, by bold inventions, the whole doctrine of Christ's having procured our salvation.51

XVIII. In fine, he is not called a Saviour on this account, that by his sufferings and death he has made satisfaction for what they call mortal sins, and delivered us from eternal punishment, leaving it to believers themselves to satisfy for venial sins, and to suffer temporary punishment, partly by deeds of penance in this life, and partly by the torments of purgatory in the life to come:—or even because he merited by his own most perfect holiness, that those works of holy obedience which we are bound to perform, if done from faith, should, though imperfect, merit salvation itself; and that those which we perform beyond what is due, should also merit a certain eminent degree of salvation and happiness. In this manner, the Doctors of the Popish class most unjustly divide the work of our salvation between Christ and men; vainly attempting to shelter sentiments palpably erroneous, by closely heaping absurdities upon absurdities.

XIX. To these prodigious errors we oppose the Apostle Peter's sacred announcement of the truth in the following words: "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." Now Christ saves us, as he PROCURES for us and APPLIES to us, a real, spiritual, and eternal SALVATION.

XX. To attain a distinct view of this subject, it is necessary for us to consider, first, the SALVATION of which Christ is the author; and then, the ACTS OF CHRIST with respect to this salvation.

XXI. SALVATION consists of two parts; Freedom from all evil, and the participation of all good.

XXII. SIN is the greatest of all evils, the spring and origin of every other misery, and sufficient of itself to render a man extremely wretched. No other evil is mentioned by the angel, when he explains the reason of the name JESUS. That sin is the sum and quintessence of all misery, is demonstrated in the following manner.—The chief happiness of man consists in likeness to God. This is not only

affirmed by the Apostle John, but it was even discovered by the light of nature to several of the Heathen philosophers. It is a principle so evidently true, that the Devil himself, in his reasoning with our first parents, took it for granted as of unquestionable certainty. Hence it follows, that he who is the most unlike to the blessed God, is in by far the most miserable state. Besides, the unspotted holiness of God is the glory of all the Divine perfections; and, accordingly, he is called "glorious in holiness." Sin is an evil extremely contrary to that holiness. We must conclude, therefore, that sin, which places man in a condition the most unlike, nay, diametrically opposite, to the Divine blessedness, is the greatest misery of man.

XXIII. The malignity of sin will still more deeply penetrate the conscience, if we consider that the three following things are in it. 1st, An extreme pollution, which infects the whole soul, and which is directly contrary to the glorious beauty of the Divine image. 2dly, A power of tyrannical domination, by which it deprives men of all that liberty and dignity which are worthy of the sons of God, and wreathes about their neck a galling and oppressive yoke, setting no bounds or measure to their labour, but, with the daughter of the horseleech, incessantly crying, Give, give. 3dly, Guilt, which renders the sinner obnoxious to every kind of punishment in soul and body, to be undergone through eternity. The truth is, that unless satisfaction to Divine justice arise from some other quarter, all hope of recovery being utterly cut off, there remaineth nothing to the man that has offended even in a single instance, but "a certain fearful looking-for of judgement and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversary." Thus all other evils and miseries may be referred to sin, because the obligation to suffer them arises from sin.

XXIV. But when sin is put away, no evil can remain. Why should God punish an admirable work of his hands, in which he finds nothing contrary to his nature, or offensive to the eyes of his holiness? Hence the blessedness mentioned by David; "Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven."

XXV. It is not intended, nevertheless, that the absence of this evil, or that freedom from misery, includes the whole of happiness; for a state of perfect happiness also comprises the possession of all that is good. But as darkness is dispelled by nothing but light, as nakedness is remedied by nothing but garments, as poverty is removed by nothing but riches; so sin can be removed,—with respect to its guilt,—only by such a righteousness as is, at the same time, the ground of a title to life;—with respect to its dominion and pollution, only by the sanctification of the Spirit;—with respect to the curse which it brings, only by the communication of the Divine favour. It is because these blessings cannot be separated, that our salvation is represented as consisting in the removal of sin.

XXVI. The following benefits are essential to salvation. 1st, The participation of a righteousness by which we may obtain "justification of life." 2dly, "True holiness," in which the glories of the Divine image may shine forth;w which is the ornament of the house of God, and the beauty of every daughter of the king.y 3dly, Communion with God in grace, so that we may say, The LORD is the Portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup; thou maintainest my lot. This communion with God includes, not only the privilege of approaching familiarly to him, to behold him, with open eyes, in the sanctuary of devout prayer and meditation;a but also that boldness* by which we can pour forth all the sorrows of a distressed heart into his bosom, and confidently express our stammering requests, soliciting a richer supply of grace;b—that descent of divine grace, by which he kindly visits the soul whom he loves, and that loves him in return, and by which he speaks to the heart in the most affectionate terms;—and, in fine, that enjoyment of God which consists in this, that the soul sweetly acquiesces in him as its treasure,e is enriched by his riches, nourished by his abundance, protected by his power, guided by his wisdom, refreshed by his goodness, replenished by his sufficiency; so that it knows nothing desirable except the full enjoyment of him, a felicity of which in this world it has only the first fruits. 4thly, Then follow, peace of conscience, "the riches of the full assurance of understanding," and the strongest certainty with regard

to the possession of perfect felicity in due season; from whence arises a "joy unspeakable and full of glory." "In whom," says Peter, "though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice."g 5thly, The perfect enjoyment of God in glory; first, in the soul after its departure from the prison of this animal body, and then in body and soul together, when the body shall have become glorious and heavenly, after a blessed resurrection.i

XXVII. Such is the salvation, in reference to which the Son of God is called JESUS. We now proceed to speak of his ACTS with regard to it; of which the two following, in particular, require to be considered: first, the IMPETRATION,* secondly, the APPLICATION of it. Of these, the former gives us a title to Salvation; the latter, the actual possession and enjoyment of Salvation. Jesus accomplished the one in his state of humiliation; he is constantly engaged in performing the other in his state of exaltation till the end of the world.

XXVIII. Jesus PROCURED our salvation in the following manner. 1st, By taking upon himself the guilt of our sins, and suffering the punishment due to them in body and soul, he, being God-man and consequently a person of infinite dignity, gave the most ample satisfaction to the avenging justice of God, and obtained for us deliverance from all penal evil. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." 2dly, Having fulfilled the whole obedience of the law in our room by the most perfect holiness as well of his nature as of his actions, he has procured for us a right to that consummate felicity, the only condition of possessing which, in a manner consistent with the veracity, purity, and justice of God, is the persevering practice of perfect holiness, agreeably to these words of the law, "The man that doth these things, shall live by them."k It was necessary, that this righteousness of the law should be fulfilled by Christ: and thus there is in Christ a righteousness, which "comes upon all men to justification of life;" "by the obedience of one many are made righteous;" and grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life."m

XXIX. The effect of this impetration, therefore, is not a bare possibility of the remission of sin, and of our reconciliation with God, as the Remonstrants contend; but the actual remission of sin, and actual reconciliation. In consequence of what Christ has done and suffered, God cannot, consistently with his own truth and justice, and consistently with the covenant which he made with his Son, abandon to condemnation, or exclude from partaking of salvation, any one of the elect. He has even declared, on the contrary, that, since satisfaction has been already made by his Son and accepted by himself, there is nothing which he can require his elect either to suffer or to do, in order to acquire for themselves exemption from punishment or a title to life; but that this one thing only remains for them, that they rejoice, each in his own order and time, in that title to salvation which Christ has obtained for them, and in the possession of salvation by virtue of that title. This is what the Apostle teaches in these words: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them."*

XXX. Further, Jesus powerfully APPLIES the salvation which he has obtained. He applies it to all those, and to those only, for whom he obtained it; that is, those whose sins he took upon himself, and whose persons, he, as their Surety, represented. They for whom Christ died, may boldly say, Who shall lay our sins to our charge? "It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth?" They whom Christ hath redeemed from the curse of the law, remain no longer under the curse; but the blessing of Abraham comes upon them.^p Those for whom Christ gave himself, he has redeemed from all iniquity, and purified unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. In short, the impetration and the application of redemption are of equal extent: the object of both is evidently one and the same.

XXXI. Salvation is applied to the elect, initially, in this life;—perfectly, in the future life. Even in this life, the first-fruits of the Spirit, who is the Spirit of glory,^s are imparted to the sons of God. "He that believeth on the Son," not only shall have hereafter, but already "hath everlasting life;" and is "saved by hope." He has

received from Christ, not merely what serves to comfort him amidst the adversities of the present world, but also what enables him to infer the inexpressible greatness of that felicity which is reserved for him in heaven.

XXXII. The application of salvation, as to the present life, is effected by the following acts. 1st, Christ effectually calls, invites, and allures his chosen and redeemed to the participation of the purchased salvation, outwardly by the word of the Gospel, and inwardly by the Spirit of grace. 2dly, By the same word and Spirit, he regenerates them, by implanting in them the principle of a new life, that they may be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures.^w 3dly, Having given them faith, he justifies them. 4thly, He admits them, when justified, to a blessed intercourse of peace and friendship.^y 5thly, By a gracious adoption, he grants them the privileges of sons; he blesses them with the Spirit of adoption, and by an unalterable testament, gives them a title to the heavenly inheritance. 6thly, He adorns them more and more, with the beautiful garments of holiness.^a 7thly, He seals and comforts them by his Holy Spirit, who is the earnest of the future inheritance. 8thly, He keeps them by his power through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last, the appointed time.^c 9thly, He sometimes affords, in fine, to the objects of his love, particularly amidst the approaches of death, so clear a vision, and so rich a fore-taste of celestial things, that they appear to see them before their eyes, and are affected by them just as if they were present in the place where these things are.

XXXIII. The future life may be considered, either with regard to the soul in the separate state, prior to the day of judgment; or with regard to the whole man, after the consummation of all things.

XXXIV. He receives the soul, immediately after it has finished the labours of this animal life, to heavenly joys and heavenly mansions. Its place of abode, as well as its state and condition, is gloriously changed.

XXXV. But when all that respects the completing of the Church in this earth shall have been accomplished, Jesus himself will appear in the clouds of heaven, in all the splendour of Divine magnificence, to judge the world; will raise the bodies of his people from the dust of death, adorn them with celestial qualities, unite them to their blessed spirits, never again to be separated from them by death, and conduct them to his Father's house; where all things concurring to exhibit the brightest manifestation of the glory of God, the whole assembly of the elect shall be satiated with those felicities, which "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, and which have not entered into the heart of man."

Since Christ is so illustrious an Author of so great a salvation, who would deny that he has every possible title to bear the name JESUS?

XXXVI. It now remains that every one prove himself, whether he truly believes that the Son of God is JESUS, that is, an all-sufficient and the only Saviour. Such self-investigation is highly necessary. Because we have heard of Jesus from our earliest years, because we are accustomed to call the Son of God by this name, because the profession of the contrary would justly sound horrible in the ears of all as a renunciation of the whole of Christianity—on these accounts, every one rashly persuades himself, without ever having rightly examined the matter, that he believes in the Son of God as Jesus, and his own Saviour; while a great number give evidence by the whole tenor of their life that they do not believe.

XXXVII. The man who, in reality, believes that Christ is JESUS, or in other words, that all his salvation is laid up in him alone, may be thus distinguished. 1st, He will undervalue all other things in comparison of Christ; and how excellent or splendid soever they may seem, yet if they are laid in the balance with the Saviour, or opposed to him, he will count them but loss and dung. As the sun in the firmament darkens all the stars, so the glory of Christ's sufficiency, perceived by the eye of faith, eclipses the lustre of all other objects. After it is once fixed and settled in his mind that Jesus alone is all,

the believer says, "What will other things be to me, if I am destitute of Jesus? What will riches avail, or honours, or pleasures, or all those other enjoyments that are invidiously styled good things, whether of fortune, of the body, or of the mind? Since I am thoroughly persuaded that salvation is found in Jesus alone, salvation cannot be in those things. They can neither confer salvation by their presence, nor take it away by their absence. Without Jesus, they are nothing; because Jesus is all. If they are any thing at all, when possessed in Jesus, they derive their value entirely from him; from whose love they then proceed, and who has infused into them any slight taste they may have of his sweetness. If, therefore, they ought to be regarded with any degree of esteem, it is merely because they come from Jesus, and lead to Jesus."

XXXVIII. 2dly, He will desire Jesus above every other object. According to the definition of Aristotle, "A good thing is what all desire."* When a man believes, therefore, that not merely a good, but the Chief good, is found in Jesus Christ, and in him alone, it is impossible but he must ardently love Jesus, hunger and thirst after him, and seek him by earnest prayer and at any cost that may be necessary; prepared to sell all other things, that he may obtain this pearl, this true and invaluable pearl. In private and in public, at home and abroad, in hours of leisure and in hours of business, in solitude and in company, he will often say in his heart with unutterable sighs, "Lord Jesus, O that I were thine! O that thou wert mine!"

XXXIX. 3dly, He will not be able, too, to acquiesce in any thing short of the possession of Jesus, or to rest until he arrive at certainty, and complete security, with regard to the possession of him. If a merchant knew that his whole property and treasure were contained in one ship, what anxious days and nights would he spend, and how would he tremble at every appearance of the dark clouds collecting, at every burst of the raging storm, never at ease till he see the longed-for vessel arrive in the harbour? So also, he who believes that all his salvation is laid up in Jesus alone, will experience constant

solicitude, till Jesus say to his soul, "I am thy salvation." In a matter of so great moment, he will not venture to depend on slight and insufficient grounds, or on the flattering suggestions of a fatally deceiving heart. An "exceeding and eternal weight of glory," is of too great importance to be suspended on a spider's web,—on the slender thread of a presumptuous imagination.

XL. 4thly, In fine, when he is certain of his communion with Jesus, 1. He will exult in him, and rejoice with an inexpressible joy, the nature and properties of which we have elsewhere described.* 2. With all care and diligence he will solicitously keep possession of his Jesus, lest any thing intervene to mar the delightful enjoyment of his Saviour, and of the salvation which is in him.j 3. His heart will be dissolved in love to Jesus; and carried away by a sacred transport, he will not suffer himself to be torn from his embraces.

XLI. These and similar affections, exercised towards Jesus by the believing and loving soul, are described by Bernard, in an elegant Song, which well deserves to be committed to memory, and to be frequently sung to the LORD JESUS, in spirit and in truth. I will, therefore, give it here, for the sake of those who have not a copy of Bernard's Works.

*Most blessed Jesus, dearest Friend,

Hope of my longing, panting mind,

I seek thee with my tears and sighs,

To thee my soul lifts up her cries.

O Jesus, cordial to the heart,

Who hight and life dost still impart,

A living Fountain, full and fresh,

Surpassing every joy and wish;
When on my heart thou'rt pleas'd to shine,
My soul is cheered with truth divine;
All I contemn but things above,
My bosom glows with heavenly love.
Jesus, my chief and lasting Good,
My Saviour, strength, and precious food,
Thy presence grant, thy glory show,
Thy boundless love, cause me to know.
He whom the love of Jesus warms,
Approved by Jesus, knows his charms,
Bless'd is the man he fills with grace:
'Tis all I crave, to see his face.
Jesus, thou Lord of Angels bright,
Great source of all their radiant light,
Thy name's to me supremely dear,
Delightful music to my ear;
The choicest honey to my taste,
Celestial nectar, rich repast.
Nor nature's stores, nor toys of art,

Afford such pleasure to the heart.
A thousand sighs for thee I heave,
To thee, my Jesus, still I cleave.
When wilt thou come, and give me joy;
A joy that fills, but cannot cloy?
Now what I sought, my eyes descry;
Behold! he comes on mountains high.
My arms embrace my Saviour kind,
His love inflames, dissolves my mind.
Happy the flame his love creates!
Happy the soul his grace dilates!
How sweet my love for God's dear Son!
It makes me feel a heaven begun.
Jesus, thou art my heart's delight;
Love rises to perfection's height,
Jesu decus Angelicum,
In aure dulce canticum,
In ore mel mirificum,
In corde nectar cælicum.
Desidero te millies

Mi Jesu, quando venies?

Me lætum quando facies?

Me de te quando saties?

Jam quod quæsivi video,

Quod concupivi teneo.

Amore Jesu languero,

Et corde totus ardeo.

O beatum incendium,

Et ardens desiderium!

O dulce refrigerium,

Amare Deum Filium!

Tu mentis delectatio,

Amoris consummatio.

In thee alone, my song, my boast,

Dear Saviour of a world that's lost.

In thee the choirs of heav'n exult,

To thee my heart doth sing and shout.

Thy glory, love, and mercy sure,

My cares dispel, my thoughts allure.

Thou art the Martyr's crown, the prize,

Which every Christian soldier eyes.

Thou art the fair, th' unfading flower;

The lily, fragrant every hour.

The virgin heart, the soul that's pure,

In thee finds peace and joy secure.

My humble suit, Lord Jesus, hear,

For then I live, when thou art near.

Tu mea gloriatio,

Jesu mundi salvatio.

Tu verum cœli gaudium,

Jesu cordis tripudium,

Tollent omne fastidium,

Mel, nectar, melos suavium.

Jesu corona Martyrum,

Et flos perennis virginum:

Tu casti cordis liliū,

Tu decertantis præmium.

Exaudi preces supplicum,

Nil extra te quærentium.

DISSERTATION X: ON THE NAME CHRIST

I. CHRIST is the second name of Jesus our Saviour. This designation is in Hebrew, MESSIAH,* pronounced by the Hellenistical Jews, MESSIAS; and in Latin, UNCTUS.† Although it has been attributed to other illustrious persons, both amongst the people of God,^b and amongst the Gentiles, yet as ascribed to our Saviour, it is "a more excellent name;"^d for he is "Messiah the Prince,"—being so called, by way of eminence, as one who is "higher than the kings of the earth,"^f and who "in all things has the pre-eminence."

II. Owing either to ignorance or to malice, the heathen populace and several profane, writers, by changing one letter, transformed this venerable name of our Lord into CHREST. Thus Lucian says, "If indeed CHREST were among the nations."* Tertullian and Lactantius have imputed this manner of expressing our Lord's name to ignorance. "Since," says the former, "it is erroneously pronounced Chrestian by you, (for you know not even the name,) it is composed of gentleness and benignity. Thus an innocent appellation is hated in the innocent persons that bear it, and the sect is now hated under the name of its Founder."† "It is necessary," says the latter, "to explain the reason of this name, on account of the ignorance of those who, by changing one of the letters, commonly call him Chrest."‡ This mistake arose, possibly, from a confusion in the pronunciation of the Greek vowels (η) Eta and (ι) Iota; for the Æolians, as grammarians affirm, often interchanged these two letters. In consequence of the same erroneous mode of pronouncing the letter Iota, the ancients sometimes wrote the name with a diphthong, saying Chrest§ instead of Christ.|| But malice appears also to have had its influence in producing this false pronunciation. The true name of our Lord was so often to be heard from the lips of his followers, that, at any rate, it could not have remained unknown to most of the heathen. Though the word Chrestus, too, signifies gentleness and benignity, as

Tertullian finely retorted, and though Christ was in reality gentle, yet a reproach and an indignity were couched under this appellation. Thus Capitolinus relates of Pertinax that he was styled Chrestologus, that is, smooth-tongued, because he spoke well and acted ill, was kind in words, not so in deeds.

III. To the same cause I would also refer the following expression of Suetonius in his Life of Claudius: "While the Jews, at the instigation of Chrest, were continually creating disturbance, he banished them from Rome."* Though Christ himself had never been at Rome, yet the doctrine of Christ disseminated there by his disciples, might be the cause, at least the occasion, of great dissensions amongst the Jews who resided in that city; some of them embracing it with distinguished alacrity and fortitude, others resisting it with frantic zeal and inveterate obstinacy.⁵⁴ From those contentions the edict of Claudius took its rise; for, as Marcellus Donatus has learnedly observed on this passage of Tranquillus, † historians make no mention of any celebrated man of the name Chrestus, excepting Chrestus the Sophist of Byzantium, who was a scholar of Herodes Atticus at Rome, during the reign of the Emperor Adrian. But this we notice in passing. Let us now return to Christ our Saviour.

IV. In order to understand aright the import of this name, three things must be distinctly illustrated. First, What is signified by the Anointing, from which Christ receives the name. Secondly, To how many, and to what offices he was anointed. Thirdly, In what way all believers are admitted to a participation of that Unction, as also of the name. For his "name is as ointment poured forth," which he not only retains for himself, but also graciously imparts to "his fellows."j

V. The Anointing of Christ denotes two things. 1st His DESIGNATION to the Mediatorial office: for "he glorified not himself to he made an High Priest," but God "hath ordained" him.l 2dly, The COMMUNICATION OF THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, who was not given him "by measure." Each of these has its distinct seasons, and its several periods or degrees.

VI. The DESIGNATION includes, 1st, The foreknowledge, pre-ordination, or predestination of the Son of God to the office of Mediator, which took place from eternity. If we were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, o to be saved by him, Christ must of necessity have been chosen together with us, to be our Saviour. 2dly, The promise of Christ in the prophecies, and a delineation of him so accurate, that as soon as he came into the world he might be immediately recognised in his true character by those who waited for the Consolation of Israel, and duly considered him. "For him hath God the Father sealed:" q that is, he has so distinguished him by certain characteristics, and has impressed such marks and "engravings" upon him, that by these he might be "declared to be the Son of God with power." s 3dly, The introduction of Christ to his mediatorial work, by his mission into the world. 4thly, The Father's bearing testimony to his Son by a voice from heaven; of which we have three instances. 1. Immediately after his Baptism at Jordan. u 2. On the holy mount. 3. When he had an anticipation of his passion. w —All these are comprised in the general idea of the Unction. The eternal pre-ordination, at least, of which the rest are only the execution and declaration, is expressly denominated the anointing. "I was set up, anointed, from everlasting, from the beginning, ere ever the earth was."

VII. To the Second part of the Anointing I refer, 1st, That fulness of the Spirit which was imparted to the human nature of Christ from its conception and birth, by the indwelling of the Divinity in the flesh which he assumed. Astonishing indications of this shone forth when he was a boy twelve years old; and the more illustrious instances of it which he gave as he made progress in life, excited the admiration of every spectator. z 2dly, The copious communication of those gifts of the Spirit, by which he was to demonstrate, in the public discharge of his office, that he is the promised Messiah, and infinitely superior to others who preceded him, either as the Preachers, or as in any respect the Authors, of salvation. This was denoted by the emblem of the Spirit descending upon him in the likeness of a dove, when by the baptism of John, and the testimony of the Father, he was publicly

installed into his office. 3dly, That unparalleled height of glory and joy, to which he was advanced, as the reward of his labours, after his resurrection from the dead and ascension to heaven. This idea is suggested by the following words of the Psalmist: "Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness," thou hast fully accomplished the whole work of the office with which thou wast intrusted; "therefore," as a recompence for thy merits, "God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness," has honoured thee with distinguished glory, and with glorious joy, "above thy fellows."55

VIII. The three-fold anointing of David, seems, in some measure, to correspond with these three degrees of our Lord's unction. 1st, At Bethlehem by Samuel, while Saul was yet living and reigning; after which he lived privately for a time. 2dly, At Hebron, when he was anointed King of Judah, after Saul's death; at which period he took actual possession of the kingdom, yet had many conflicts to sustain with the house of Saul. 3dly, At Hebron again, when he was proclaimed King of all Israel, with the universal consent of the people, the family of Saul being now divested of all authority;—in consequence of which unction, finding himself confirmed in the kingdom, he took the strong hold of Zion. In like manner, our Lord was anointed with the unction of the Spirit, even when he was yet leading a private life. He was enriched, too, with an ampler measure of this unction, when he entered on the actual execution of his mediatorial office, which he could not discharge without most arduous conflicts. But after it was demonstrated by his resurrection that he had conquered and triumphed over all his enemies, the oil of joy was poured without measure on his head, and "the rod, the sceptre, of his strength, was sent out of Zion." To this, if I mistake not, Peter expressly referred when he said; "Therefore, let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."

IX. The offices with which our Lord was invested by the unction he received, are three; in conformity to the three-fold order of those, who, according to the Divine appointment, were sometimes anointed

of old. These were, first, PROPHETS, as is commonly inferred from the instance of Elisha. "Elisha the son of Shaphat of "Abelmeholah, shalt thou anoint to be Prophet in thy room." With respect to this anointing of Elisha, however, to the prophetic office, as also of Hazael to be King of Syria, and of Jehu to be King of Israel, it is disputed amongst the learned, whether it is to be understood properly and literally; or figuratively and improperly,* for designating, constituting, and declaring. Some, for the following reasons, prefer the latter. 1st, Because we nowhere read that either Hazael or Elisha was anointed by Elijah. Jehu, indeed, was anointed, but not by Elijah, nor even by Elisha, but by one of Elisha's disciples; and the ceremony, too, was done in a very slight and cursory manner. 2dly, Because Elijah, when executing the Divine commission regarding Elisha, is not said to have anointed him, but to have "cast his mantle" upon him. 3dly, Because we find nowhere else either a command relative to the anointing of prophets, or an example of such anointing.

Such is the reasoning of our Protestant brother Piscator, after Theodoret, Abulensis, Salianus, and others quoted by Cornelius a Lapide. But in opposition to these arguments, it may be said, 1st, That we ought not to depart from the proper and usual signification of a word, without urgent necessity; which cannot be pleaded in this instance. 2dly, Although it is nowhere recorded that Elijah anointed those whom he was charged to anoint, it does not follow that this was not done; since it is not even recorded that he announced Hazael king of Syria, and Jehu king of Israel, which, however, is supposed. 3dly, It would be an exceedingly harsh impropriety of speech,* if the designation of a Prophet were called an anointing, and yet in the ordination of the Prophet no anointing properly so called, took place. Thus it would be absurd to say, that the Roman Consuls were anointed to the Consulship. 4thly, There is nothing to hinder us from believing, that Elisha was called and invited to the prophetic office by more than one ceremony. Sanchez observes not amiss, that "the anointing made Elisha a prophet; the mantle made him a colleague to Elijah."† A mantle, however, seems to have been usually worn by

the Prophets.j As to the expression which immediately follows in Sanchez,—“and a Monk,” † it is ridiculous and absurd. 5thly, We would not rashly allege, in the mean time, that Prophets were constantly and universally anointed. This command respecting Elisha is sufficient for our purpose, whether we consider it as a departure from the ordinary usage, or suppose that anointing was not uncommon on similar occasions.

X. Further, the PRIESTS, also, were anointed, according to the Divine appointment: “Thou shalt anoint Aaron and his sons, and consecrate them, that they may minister unto me in the priest's office.” The Jewish Doctors affirm, that this precept is to be understood in this sense, that all such descendants of the sons of Aaron as were common priests, were to be considered as anointed in them, without the repetition of the ceremony towards those individually, who succeeded the dead, in the priestly office. They add, however, that a new High-priest was always anointed at his instalment, as, also, the priest whom they call the anointed for war,* according to the law recorded in Deuteronomy 20:2. But they will have this anointing to extend only to the period of the first temple; for it could be done only with that sacred ointment, which was prepared agreeably to the Divine direction, and the making of any composition similar to which, was strictly prohibited.m The Talmudists, however, affirm, that this ointment was made use of for the purpose of installation and consecration till the reign of Josiah, who hid it under ground in the temple, in a secret place, which King Solomon had long before prepared with the greatest care, after having learned from the predictions of prophets that the time would come when the Assyrians should level the temple with the ground. See Cunæus, † Outram, ‡ Selden;§ and particularly Simeon,|| who produces a long comment by Aberbenel on the thirtieth Chapter of Exodus, where the manner of anointing the priests is expressly treated.

XI. KINGS, in fine, were consecrated by anointing; which has been copiously and ably illustrated by William Schickhard.* Yet the

Talmudists hold, that all the kings were not anointed, but only those who were either the first in their own family, or whose pretensions to the kingdom were disputed by rivals. Saul, David, and others, were anointed for the first of these reasons; others, in consequence of opposition from an adverse party. Thus Solomon was anointed on account of Adonijah's party, Joash on account of Athaliah's, and Jehu on account of Joram's; though Jehu appears also to have been the first of his family that was advanced to the royal dignity. The modern Doctors, meantime, say they, have learned from wise and venerable men, that the kings of Israel, who, after the separation from Judah, made Samaria the seat of government, were not anointed with the oil which was prepared by Moses conformably to the Divine appointment; and that Elijah, consequently, made use only of common balsam, when he anointed Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat.

XII. In conformity to this three-fold order of persons that were anointed of old, the office of Christ consists of three parts. In the sixty-first chapter of Isaiah, there is a passage relating to his Prophetical unction which Christ applies to himself, Luke 4:17, 18, 19. His Priestly unction is referred to in Psalm 110:4. compared with Heb. 5:4, 5, 6. and Dan. 9:24, 26., where we read of the anointing of the most Holy, that is, Christ, whose unction was prefigured by the anointing of the sanctuary and the ark; of the cutting off of the Messiah; and of the confirmation of the covenant by the Messiah's being cut off. His Kingly unction is dear from Psalm 2:6.—With regard to the order of these offices, and the question as to which of them ought first to be considered, it is scarcely worth while to contend. They are all so intimately blended together in their exercise, that it is more necessary to distinguish them from each other in their nature, than in respect to the time of their execution.

XIII. Agreeably to custom, therefore, we begin with the PROPHETICAL office. That Christ was a Prophet, not merely equal but superior to Moses,—a Prophet who was to speak the words of God, words which God had reserved for himself to declare in the last

days, and which it was not lawful for a mere man to utter, is collected from Deut. 18:18. compared with several other passages of Scripture. He is denominated "the Apostle of our profession,"^p that is, one whom we confess as a Teacher divinely commissioned, who teaches doctrines which are to be believed with the heart unto righteousness, and confessed with the mouth unto salvation, and to whom we are bound in all things to hearken; vowing submission to his authority, and saying Amen to him when we make a covenant with God.

XIV. The office of prophets consists of the three following parts. 1st, To teach the way of salvation. 2dly, To prophesy, or to foretel future events, otherwise unknown. 3dly, Rightly to confirm their doctrine and their prophecies, by a certain exemplary holiness of life, and if circumstances render it necessary, by miracles, and by martyrdom.

XV. Each of these is performed by Christ in the most excellent manner. 1st, He revealed, and placed in the clearest light, the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, and the secret counsel of God respecting our salvation. 2dly, He accurately foretold in his prophecies the various events that are to befall the New Testament Church till the end of the world.^s 3dly, He confirmed his whole ministry, 1. By an exhibition, and an example, of the most unspotted holiness of conduct, both in his life, and at his death. 2. By stupendous miracles, none equal or similar to which were ever beheld.^u 3. By the martyrdom of his death, to which the Apostle refers when he says,—"Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession." In reference to this, too, Jesus Christ appears to be called, "the faithful witness, and the first-begotten of the dead."^w Gregory Nazianzen calls Christ "the chief Martyr:"^{*} and that Christ might not seem to be deprived of any part of his honour, the Christians of Lyons and Vienne of old, chose rather to be called confessors than martyrs.[†]

XVI. We must not here omit to notice the superiority of Christ to other Prophets in every part of his office. If you consider his doctrine, not only did he utter dark sayings of old, and reveal mysteries which

were kept secret since the world began,^y and which he had learned from no other, but had seen in the bosom of the Father; but he also taught inwardly by the Spirit, and "opened the understanding of his disciples, that they might understand the scriptures."^a He did not utter prophecies from any foreign impulse or inspiration; but from the fulness of the godhead dwelling in him bodily, he knew of himself all future events; and he instructed other Prophets by his Spirit. He performed miracles by his own might; others performed them in his name, and by his power.^c The pains of eternal death were added to the martyrdom of a bloody decease; whilst other martyrs, on the contrary, have, in the midst of their tortures, been generally indulged with no slight foretastes of celestial joys.

XVII. Further, Christ discharged the office of a Prophet not only during the time of his abode upon earth, but also from the beginning; frequently appearing in a visible form, as a prelude of his incarnation, to give instruction to his favourites. He went also by the Spirit and preached to the inhabitants of the old world;^f and hence he says, "I have not spoken in secret from the beginning." Even now, too, he continues to instruct the Church by the Spirit, by the Scriptures, and by the ordinary ministry of pastors and teachers.^h

XVIII. We must know, that what has been said respecting the holiness of Christ's life, his miracles, and his death, while it pertains to his prophetic office, is, in a different view, to be referred to his other offices. Holiness was indeed necessary to Christ as a Prophet, for two reasons. 1st, That he might teach, not only by words, but also by deeds, proposing himself as a pattern. 2dly, That he might confirm his whole doctrine, and in particular his declarations respecting himself as the Messiah, the Son of God, and the Saviour of the world; which, certainly, he could not be, unless he were pure from every blemish.^j But the same holiness was equally requisite to his Priestly office, and that, also, on two accounts. 1st, That he might be a holy Priest, and a holy victim, well-pleasing to God. 2dly, That by fulfilling, in the capacity of our Surety, the whole righteousness of the law, he might supply our want of righteousness, and acquire for

us a title to eternal life.^l In fine, it belongs also to Christ's Regal office, which cannot be administered at all without holiness and righteousness.

XIX. The same observation applies to the miracles of Christ. As his miracles not only testify, in general, that he is the Messiah promised of old to the church, and now sent by the Father, but also confirm the truth of the doctrine he taught, they respect his Prophetical office.^o As they included the removal of temporal miseries and the communication of corporeal benefits, which served to shadow forth the healing of the soul distempered with sin, they are to be referred to his Sacerdotal office. Finally, as by his powerful word he controlled the winds and the sea, diseases and death, and him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil, they were manifestations of a Royal authority, which every thing that exists is obliged to obey.

XX. In fine, although the death of Christ, as it was a martyrdom, may be referred to his prophetical office, yet it belongs chiefly to his priesthood; for, as we will show immediately, it included the oblation of Christ, and the expiation of our sins.

XXI. Since it was not sufficient that salvation be announced to us, unless it were also purchased and procured, it was necessary that Christ should not only be a PROPHET, but likewise a PRIEST. Paul, accordingly, ascribes to him a priesthood incomparably more excellent than the priesthood of Aaron.

XXII. The business of a Priest, is, in general, to be employed in "things pertaining to God," for the benefit of the people. More particularly, it includes three things. 1st, To offer gifts and sacrifices for sins.^s 2dly, To intercede for the people:—a service which was especially incumbent on the High-priest on the solemn day of expiation, when he entered into the Holy of Holies, with incense and the blood of the consecrated goat.^u 3dly, To bless the people. If we may give credit to the Hebrew Doctors, the prayers which were offered by the High-priest on the day of expiation had something

remarkable in them—which it seems proper not to omit in this place. Three distinct formularies of prayer, they tell us, were made use of by the High-priest, on that sacred anniversary. He first prayed for himself, then for his relations and the whole family of Aaron, and lastly for all the people. The first prayer was presented at the offering of the bullock for the sin-offering, in this form of words: "I beseech thee, O Lord; we have sinned, we have offended, we have rebelled in thy sight, I, and my family, and the sons of Aaron, thy holy people; I beseech thee, O Lord, forgive now the sins, the offences, the rebellions, whereby we have sinned, offended, and rebelled in thy sight, I, and my family, and the sons of Aaron, thy holy people. As it is written in the law of Moses thy servant, where it is said, on this day shall an atonement be made for you, to cleanse you from all your sins; you shall be made clean before the Lord." To this prayer of the High-priest, the priests made the following response: "Blessed be his name, and the glory of his kingdom for ever and ever." In the other form, which was used when he laid his hands upon the goat that was to be carried away into the wilderness, the High-priest prayed for all the people in similar terms. To this prayer, the people, with the priests, responded as above. The third prayer was made, when the High-priest entered within the vail to burn incense, and to fill the holy place with a thick cloud of the incense; at his return, moving gently backwards step by step, he thus commended the people to God: "May it please thee, O Lord God, to grant, that if this year the weather shall be warm, the heat may be tempered with showers; that the sceptre may not depart from the family of Judah; that thy people Israel may not be destitute of food; and that the imprecations of the wicked may be without effect." It will appear from the sequel, that these ancient forms are not noticed here without cause.

XXIII. There is none of these parts of the priestly office, which our Lord doth not exactly perform; for he is "a merciful and faithful High-priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." 1st, "Through the eternal Spirit, he OFFERED himself without spot to God, that by his own blood, he might purge our conscience from dead works;" and "by one offering he has

perfected for ever them that are sanctified."y 2dly, He PRAYED for his disciples on earth; and he still prays for them in heaven;a "appearing in the presence of God for us," not with blood of others, but with his own blood, founding his intercession upon the dignity and efficacy of his oblation. 3dly, He imparts a more than sacerdotal BLESSING to his people, not only when dying on the cross, or when about to ascend to heaven;d but, in particular, when reigning on his celestial throne; yet most abundantly, at the last judgment.f

XXIV. In the OBLATION, the Priest is Christ as God-man, but chiefly according to the Divine nature, and the power of an endless life. The Sacrifice is also Christ, principally according to the human nature; to which, at the same time, the Divinity, personally united to it, imparted dignity and worth; as it is owing to this, that not the blood of a mere man, but "the blood of God"⁵⁶ was shed.—As to the Altar, some hold that it is the Divinity of Christ, others, the cross. To us it appears that both views are consonant to truth, according to the twofold use of the altar of old. The altar was intended, first, to support the victim to be offered by fire unto God; secondly, to sanctify the victim, which it did not effect of itself but by the sacred fire that descended from heaven, and was a type and figure of the Holy Spirit. In the former respect, the cross on which Christ was lifted up, may and even ought to be called the altar. In the latter, it must be referred to Christ's own Divinity, and his eternal Spirit, through which he offered himself without spot unto the Father.k In this way we may reconcile the seemingly contradictory expressions of the Dutch Annotators, who assert sometimes that the cross, and sometimes that the Divinity of Christ, was the altar upon which this sacrifice was offered.*

XXV. The oblation itself consists in the sufferings and death of Christ, as appears incontrovertibly from the reasoning of the Apostle, Heb. 9:25–28. The flames with which he was burned, were zeal for the glory of God, and unbounded love towards, his brethren; to which was added the baptism of the fire kindled by the wrath of God against our sins.m

In this oblation of Christ, however, as in other sacrifices, three articles may be distinctly observed. These sacrifices, were first offered alive at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation; then killed for the honour of God, and laid upon the altar, to be consumed by fire, either in whole or in part; lastly, the blood of some of them was carried into the most sacred apartment of the tabernacle. Christ, in like manner, offered himself, 1st, While yet living and vigorous, when of his own accord he went to the spot, from which he knew he was to be led to judgment, and thence to the cross as an atoning sacrifice; and voluntarily presented himself to God, to suffer impending death. Accordingly he says, "For their sakes I sanctify myself," I offer myself a sacrifice to God. To sanctify* has sometimes the same meaning as to offer,† nor can the word well admit any other signification in this place. Chrysostome very properly explains the expression, "I sanctify myself," in this manner, "I offer myself a sacrifice to thee."‡ 2dly, When suffering and dying, and shedding his blood in the manner just explained, and for that purpose led forth without the gates of Jerusalem; as the sacrifices by which he was most remarkably typified were burned without the camp, and without the city.¶ 3dly, When he carried his blood, or his soul now separate from the body, (for the blood is taken for the life, the soul) into the holy place not made with hands, and presented it to his Father; for Christ is in heaven not merely as a High-priest, but also as a Lamb slain.¶ I see no reason why we should deny that this entrance of Christ into the heavenly sanctuary, to present his blood as a token that the sacrifice was slain, belongs to his oblation.

XXVI. The end and effect of the oblation, is the full expiation and blotting out of our sin, so that it can neither be imputed to believers in order to punishment, (a privilege which they possessed also in ancient times by virtue of the suretyship engagements of Christ, and the oblation which was, in due time, to be accomplished,) nor henceforth can any demand of the hand-writing be made, or any confession of guilt by reiterated sacrifices, as if it were not yet expiated; which is the consequence of the oblation's having been actually accomplished.u

XXVII. The INTERCESSION of Christ is not a mere presenting of petitions for us, similar to that which believers owe one another. It is, on the contrary, a glorious representation of that will of Christ, by which we are sanctified; founded on the dignity of his person, the efficacy of his oblation, the merit of that righteousness which he fulfilled in our stead, and on that sacred covenant by which he has obtained for himself the right not only of praying for favours on our behalf, but also of demanding the heathen for his inheritance,—demanding them as a due reward, and the purchase of his labour.^w Hence, with a certain authority, which would be indecorous in all excepting the Son of God and the Surety of so excellent a covenant, he says, "Father, I WILL that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am."^x So great, indeed, is the dignity, authority, and efficacy of this intercession, that it can no more be transferred to another, than even the expiation of our sins, upon which it depends, and with which it is inseparably connected. It is a work of the GOD-MAN,—a work in which there is a joint concurrence of the human will of Christ, representing the right he has obtained, and praying from sympathy for our infirmities,—and of his Divine will, securing audience and an answer to his requests.

XXVIII. But we must here notice the correspondence of the prayers of Christ with those which, as we have seen, the Jewish High-priest preferred on the day of atonement. As a threefold prayer is ascribed to the High-priest, so also we find that Christ, when discharging the most arduous part of his sacerdotal office, prayed chiefly thrice. First, when he was now ready to offer himself. Again, amidst his sufferings themselves, which taken together constitute his oblation, when, though his prayers were several times repeated, they are comprised in one formulary, in the twenty-second Psalm. In the last place, after his entrance into the most holy place not made with hands; where he obtains by his intercession, that, amidst the violence of persecution, the Church may be refreshed with the dew and the rain of spiritual consolations, and become "as a watered garden;"^a that his spiritual kingdom may be perpetual, like the sun and moon which endure throughout all generations; that the souls of the priests

may be satiated with fatness, and his people satisfied with his goodness; in fine, that all the malevolent wishes and machinations of enemies may prove abortive.^c In that prayer too, which is recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John, we find that Christ observes, the following order. He prays, first, for himself; then, for the Apostles who were in a peculiar sense his own, and formed, so to speak, his family; and, lastly, for all the people, for all that shall believe on him through their word.

XXIX. The sacerdotal BLESSING of Christ, is, in like manner, of an entirely different sort from that by which, either the pious wish all peace and prosperity to each other, or pastors express similar wishes for the Church. This kind of blessing consists merely in words, and the sincerity of the soul that desires good things for others; and is a beseeching of God to show kindness to men. But Christ's benediction consists in nothing short of deeds, and the real communication of spiritual benefits, which he does not solicit from another, but takes from what is his own, to impart unto us. Hence it is said in Ezekiel: "He shall give his sons inheritance, out of his own possession."

XXX. In reference to this sort of benediction, the maxim of the Apostle is indisputably certain: "Without all contradiction, the less is blessed of the better." This aphorism, which is not of universal application, ought to be restricted to that species of blessing, in which the person who blesses represents Christ, and either the Church or one of its members receives the benediction. Such was the typical blessing with which the priests blessed the people according to the command of God; for a blessing of that nature was neither given by the people to the priests, nor by the priests to the High-priest.

XXXI. Even under the Old Testament, Christ exhibited some preludes of his priestly work. 1st, He took upon himself; as a Surety, the sins of the elect, to be expiated at the appointed time; and in the sacrifices; which were types of his oblation, he was "slain from the foundation of the world."^j Hence believers of those times obtained

justification and other saving benefits. 2dly, By virtue of his suretiship, he also made intercession for believers. 3dly, He was the sole Fountain of all those blessings which were liberally imparted to the Old Testament Church.

XXXII. We now pass on to the REGAL dignity of Christ. Here a distinction must certainly be made between the Divine, natural, and essential kingdom of Christ, which at God he possesses in common with the Father and the Holy Spirit; and the Personal, economical, and mediatorial kingdom, which is committed to him alone, by the Father. These kingdoms, however, are to be so distinguished from each other, as to show, that they do not differ so much in substance, as in a certain respect and application. The former kingdom belongs to Christ, as God; the latter belongs to him as God-man. The one comprehends all creatures, as they depend upon God as the Lord of the universe, both for their existence and their attributes; the other has a special respect to the Church. Yet the economical kingdom of Christ is of such dignity and eminence, that it could not pertain to one that is not God, and it supposes or includes his Divine kingdom.

XXXIII. The Mediatorial kingdom, of which we are here to treat, may be considered in a threefold view. 1st, As a kingdom of POWER over all, not excluding even angels, whether good or bad; but yet with a certain reference to the Church, since he makes use of all creatures for the benefit of the Church. 2dly, As a kingdom of GRACE, which is exercised in the Church militant; of which we are to contemplate both the external form, consisting in a visible society, collected by the ministry instituted by Christ, in which sense even those belong to the kingdom of Christ, who lie to the King and yield him a feigned subjection;—and the internal form, which is the mystical and spiritual subordination of believers under Christ as their Lord and Head, in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. 3dly, As a kingdom of GLORY, which is exercised towards the Church triumphant in heaven,—imperfectly at present, with respect to the souls of the saints,—perfectly hereafter, with respect to their entire persons.r

XXXIV. The office of a King consists chiefly of the three following parts. 1st, To prescribe just and sacred laws for the people that are subject to him. 2dly, To rule, govern, and judge the people according to those laws. 3dly, Valiantly to protect and defend his people against enemies of every description.

XXXV. Nor is the Anointed of the Lord wanting either to himself or to his people, in the discharge of this office. 1st, Because he is the King, he is, of course, the Lawgiver of his people. He is not indeed our Lawgiver, by promulgating a new law that is purer than the law of Moses, and to which as more perfect the promise of eternal life is annexed. Even the Mosaic law, as we will shortly show, was published by Christ our King; it demands, too, a holiness corresponding to the Divine image, that is, a holiness absolutely perfect; and it is only by virtue of the same law, as satisfied by Christ, that we expect eternal life. But Christ is our Lawgiver by inculcating that same law as a rule of new obedience and of gratitude.⁵⁹ 2dly, He rules his people in righteousness, holiness, wisdom, and clemency, according to the laws which he has given; and, conformably to the same laws, he will one day judge the whole world.^v 3dly, He powerfully protects his people, and, in spite of the utmost efforts of "the gates of hell," causes them to triumph over all their enemies.^w

XXXVI. Christ employs the ministry of his word and the operations of his Spirit in the administration of his kingdom; but in a different manner and form from that in which he makes use of them in the discharge of his prophetic office. In the latter, he instructs them by his word, as "the Teacher of righteousness;" in the former, he commands, as "a Leader and Commander to the people." In the one, he enlightens our minds by his Spirit to understand the truth;^z in the other, he bends our hearts, and causes all our faculties, both of soul and body, to yield a prompt obedience.

XXXVII. It cannot indeed be denied, that the kingdom of Christ is much more illustrious under the New Testament, than under the Old. Accordingly, the New Testament state, in contradistinction to the

ancient condition of the Church, is often denominated in the Gospel, the kingdom of heaven. The prophets, too, when prophesying of the introduction of the new dispensation, represent Jehovah as then taking possession of the kingdom. But yet the Son of God was King of Israel even under the old dispensation.^c He showed himself King, 1st, When he delivered the fiery law amidst thunders and lightnings in the presence of a very large assembly of people. 2dly, When he instituted the whole hierarchy of elders, priests, and high-priests, who were merely the servants and officers of the Son of God in ruling and governing the people according to the laws prescribed;—of whom therefore we may consider these words of Wisdom as eminently true, "By me kings reign, and princes decree justice."^e 3dly, When he so often rescued his people from their calamities, and so powerfully defended them against all their enemies. For this reason King David himself adores the Son of God as King: "Thou art my King; O God; command deliverances for Jacob."^g

XXXVIII. But how splendid soever these displays of his royalty may seem, they were only faint shadows of a better kingdom which the Lord reserved for the New Testament economy; of which the beginnings were seen while Christ was yet alive, but the chief glory was displayed after his resurrection from the dead. Notwithstanding his being clothed with the form of a servant, the rays of his royal majesty shone forth in the days of his flesh, 1st, At his birth, which the heavenly hosts joyfully celebrated, announcing that a Saviour was born, "who is Christ the Lord;" and which was honoured by the Magi, who came from a distant country, offering such gifts as are due to a King, or to one who is more than a King. 2dly, In the course of his life; during which he exhibited, particularly to his disciples, proofs of his dignity, which compelled them to say with Nathanael, "Thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel." With such authority did he command even the winds, and the sea agitated by the fury of the tempest, that the astonished spectators exclaimed, "What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!"^k But he gave the most signal display of his royal dignity on that occasion, when, in order to fulfil the prophecy contained in the

book of Zechariah, he went in procession to Jerusalem sitting on an ass, amidst the acclamations of a vast multitude of people that preceded and followed him, crying out, "Hosanna to the son of David! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!" 3dly, Amidst his deepest debasement and most dreadful sufferings, when he asserted his royal dignity," and was recognised as a King, not merely by the penitent robber,n but also by Pilate; though the latter had a different purpose in view.

XXXIX. But after Christ's resurrection from the dead and ascension to heaven, every thing became more bright and glorious. Here again, four principal periods present themselves to notice. 1st, In the gathering of the Church from among Jews and Gentiles by the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom; with which the destruction of the Jewish polity and hierarchy, in subserviency to the erection of the kingdom of liberty, was connected. To this we refer, Mat. 16:28. 26:64. Coming in a cloud is the symbol of coming with power to inflict on a country some surprising and inevitable judgment. 2dly, In the subjugation of the kingdoms of the world by Constantine the Great. A great voice was then heard in heaven, saying, "Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ,"r &c. 3dly, In the destruction of the kingdom of Antichrist and the Beast, which was begun at the Reformation, and will be completed at the appointed time.t 4thly, In the conversion of the Jewish nation, and in the glory of the whole Church, with which that conversion will be attended. All will issue in the glorious appearing of Christ to judge the world.v

XL. The Scriptures often affirm, that the kingdom of Christ and its glory will be eternal. Nor can it possibly be otherwise. If a kingdom come to an end, this must be owing to one or other of the following causes. Either the king himself dies, or enemies deprive him of the kingdom, or the subjects rebel and withdraw themselves from his government, or he himself abdicates the kingdom. But none of these events takes place here.

XLI. Not the first;—for having died once to obtain this glorious kingdom, Christ lives for ever to retain it in secure and everlasting possession. Not the second;—for because he has already vanquished and triumphed over all his enemies by his death, they have learned, in spite of themselves, to submit their stubborn neck to the yoke; and if any thing of this sort remain to be done, the Father has taken it entirely on himself, Christ in the mean while resting securely at his right hand.^z Not the third;—for his subjects are "a righteous nation which maintains universal fidelity." He establishes his kingdom in their hearts and wills, and implants such a holy fear of himself in their minds, that they cannot depart from him.^b Whoever revolt from him, give evidence that they never pertained to the number of his faithful subjects; and notwithstanding their defection, he will compel them to confess his power and dominion, "ruling them with a rod of iron, and breaking them to shivers, as the vessels of a potter."^d In fine, not the fourth;—for he will do nothing derogatory to the decree of the Deity, or to the promise of the Father, or to the predictions of Scripture, or to the fruit of his own merits, or to his own proper dignity, acquired at so vast an expense, with which the glory of the elect is indissolubly connected.

XLII. It is not, however, to be dissembled, that there are several expressions in the writings of Paul, which seem to intimate that Christ is one day to divest himself of the kingdom; in particular, 1 Corinth. 15:24–28. This is truly a difficult passage; and many have used their endeavours to explain it, and to reconcile it with what has just been said. Let us, too, make a similar attempt. We will first show, what of the eternal glory of Christ, as King, and of his kingdom, is quite indisputable; which, consequently, Paul does by no means here contradict; and then, in what sense the Apostle, nevertheless, may say, that there shall be an end, and that the kingdom shall be delivered to God even the Father, and that the Son himself shall be subject unto Him who subjected all things to him, in order that God himself immediately, rather than the Mediator, may be all in all.

XLIII. It is certain, 1st, That the Divine, essential, and natural kingdom of Christ, is eternal. 2dly, That the humanity of Christ will always remain personally united with the Divinity, and will on that account enjoy a glory very far surpassing the glory of all creatures. Even the human nature partakes, in its own place, of that "name above every name," which God has given to the Mediator, as a reward of his foregoing abasement. 3dly, That Christ will always be the Head, that is, by far the most noble member of the Church, and as such will be recognised, adored, and praised by the Church. 4thly, That the Mediatorial kingdom itself will be eternal as to its glorious effects, as well in the Head, as in the members. Some of those effects are,—in Christ, the effulgence of the Divine Majesty shining most brightly in his Person as God-man, which will never be diminished in any degree;—in the elect, complete liberty; the subjugation of all their enemies; the entire abolition of sin, as to its guilt, dominion, remains, and all its direful consequences; and unutterable joy, arising from intimate communion with God. These will to eternity be acknowledged and celebrated as the blessings of Christ our King, and as flowing from the indwelling of his Spirit, who is always the Spirit of Christ. In these respects, then, the kingdom of Christ is eternal; and Paul is here so far from opposing these sentiments, that, on the contrary, he teaches them at great length.

XLIV. It must be confessed, however, that after the day of the last judgment, the exercise of Christ's Kingly office, and the form of his mediatorial kingdom, will be widely different from what they now are. 1st, The economical government of this kingdom, as now exercised by an ecclesiastical ministry, and by civil authority as conducive to the protection of the Church, will then cease, "when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority, and power." 2dly, After the last judgment, Christ will render an account to God the Father, of his whole mediatorial office, as most perfectly accomplished, in what relates not only to the purchase, but also to the full application of salvation to the whole Church; presenting to him a truly glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. This will be an evidence that he has in no respect been wanting

to the office committed to him; and to this may be referred the expression, "He shall deliver up the kingdom," that is, the Church in her perfect state, "to God, even the Father." 3dly, That account having been rendered, the godhead itself without the intervention of a Mediator, (for which there seems no more occasion, sin with all its remainders and consequences being entirely removed) will hold communion immediately with the redeemed, in almost the same manner in which it holds fellowship with angels; with this difference, however, that the redeemed will through eternity acknowledge themselves indebted to the merits of Christ for this immediate communication of the Deity. This is what is intended by the expression, "that God may be all in all." 4thly, Then also Christ, no longer discharging any part of the Mediatorial office, will, with regard to his human nature, be subject unto God, as one of the brethren, possessing manifold and most excellent glory, without any diminution of the glory which he now enjoys. In this view, he may be compared to the Son of a King, who, having received from his Father a commission and supreme authority to subdue a number of rebels, and to rescue citizens from a tyrannical usurpation, after accomplishing every thing with happy success according to the will of his Father, resigns a laborious authority which is no longer necessary, and lives in security, enjoying an honourable repose amidst the delights of the royal habitation. This seems to be intimated by these words, "And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him." 5thly, Thus far there "shall be an end" of the mediatorial kingdom, the exercise of which supposes some imperfection in the Church; and this end will be so far from reflecting any dishonour on Christ as King, that, on the contrary, it will redound to his glory, agreeably to the following expression of Paul; "When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." It is an end of such a nature, as brings all things to a state of complete and endless perfection.*61

XLV. It is, doubtless, a signal instance of the power, wisdom, and goodness of God, that Christ, by these three offices, remedies all

those defects, and delivers from all those evils, which render us miserable. He cures our ignorance and blindness, as a Prophet; expiates the guilt of our sins, as a Priest; perfects his strength in our weakness, as a King. As a Prophet, he shows the way of salvation; as a Priest, obtains a title to salvation; as a King, bestows salvation itself. As a Prophet, he furnishes our understanding with a spiritual knowledge of spiritual things; as a Priest, cleanses us from all pollution of the flesh and of the spirit; as a King, bends our wills into obedience to himself.

XLVI. Happy, then, the diligent disciples of so great a TEACHER!—who instructs them in most important, and most wonderful, saving truths, "which angels desire to look into;"—instructs with a perspicuity which "makes wise the simple,"ⁿ and with an almost incredible sweetness and grace, which is not only extolled by the Church in words breathing pure affection,^p but acknowledged, in their own way, even by carnal men, and enemies themselves. Nor doth he merely exhibit those sublime mysteries externally to the ears and eyes; he also gives inwardly the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of himself,^r and grants his disciples a new and heavenly understanding that they may discern divine and heavenly things in their native beauty, and know the truth "as the truth is in Jesus," and may even "have the mind of Christ."^t What is the most delightful and most efficacious of all methods of instruction,—this incomparable Teacher presents his truths not only to be seen, but also to be tasted and experienced. The genuine disciple of Christ not merely knows, and not merely believes, but sometimes tastes and feels what is implied in the remission of sin, in the privilege of adoption, in familiar intercourse with God, in the grace of the Spirit dwelling in the breast, in the love of God shed abroad in the heart, in the hidden manna, in the sweet embraces of Jesus, and finally, in the earnest and pledge of perfect felicity. This kind Teacher brings his followers into his school, as into a banqueting-house, and says, "Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved;"^v and being thus liberally entertained, not by a generous Father, but by the blessed Redeemer, they obtain far clearer eyes for contemplating celestial

objects, than Jonathan had of old, after having tasted of the honeycomb. With great truth, therefore, the Supreme Wisdom uttered this, as well as every other expression that proceeded from her lips: "Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors."x

XLVII. Happy, also, are contrite sinners in so great a HIGH-PRIEST!—who is both "merciful and. faithful in all things pertaining to God;" and who "by one offering hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." The whole guilt of our sins being thus expiated, there remains no condemnation to us;a and we have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which he has consecrated for us through the vail, that is to say, his flesh. Besides, this unparalleled High-priest, "when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty" of God "on high;"c and there he makes continual intercession for us. Our prayers truly are often so frigid and languid, that we can scarcely hear them ourselves, and much less can we presume to imagine they have entered into the ears of the Lord of Hosts, unless perhaps to solicit vengeance against us for not treating his Majesty with becoming reverence. How rich the consolation, then, that we have a High-priest so near to God, who is always interceding for us, and whose intercession is never disregarded by the Father; who, putting our prayers into his golden censer, offers them with his own incense upon the golden altar which is before the throne, that they may be a fragrant odour to the Lord!e Whilst he does this for us, he cannot fail at the same time to enrich us with his most abundant and delightful benedictions, that so we may "come and sing in the height of Zion, and flow together to the goodness of the Lord, that our soul may be like a watered garden."

XLVIII. Happy, in fine, the faithful subjects of so great a KING!—all whose laws are at once wise, just, holy, and good, and rejoicing to the heart; whose whole administration is full of righteousness, wisdom and equity; and whose protection is omnipotent, so that none can hurt any one of his people, none can destroy in all his holy mountain.

XLIX. But whoever wish to be partakers of this inexpressible happiness which is found in Christ, must by faith receive him in all his offices, and in the whole extent of his character. He cannot possibly be divided into parts. He is either wholly enjoyed, or wholly lost. If men have no inclination to acknowledge him as a Prophet, to whose instructions and discipline they must cordially submit, and as a King, whose will they must obey with alacrity and reverence, it is certain that their glorying in him as a Priest is vain and presumptuous. He expiates the sins of none as a Priest, but of those whom he also instructs as a Prophet, and governs with sovereign authority as a King. The same persons are at once his disciples, his clients, and his subjects.⁶²

DISSERTATION XI: ON THE NAME CHRISTIANS

I. ALL believers are called CHRISTIANS, from CHRIST, their Master, Lord, Husband, and Head. They are partakers of his anointing, and consequently of his name.

II. Of the origin of this denomination, which occurs but thrice in the sacred volume, we have an account in Acts 11:26.... "And it came to pass that a whole year they assembled themselves with the Church, and taught much people. AND THE DISCIPLES WERE CALLED CHRISTIANS FIRST IN ANTIOCH." Here the exchange of the ancient and more simple name for the new and more significant one, and also the time when, and the place where, this alteration was introduced, are distinctly stated.

III. The faithful were originally denominated either disciples absolutely, or the disciples of the Lord. Christ had given it in charge to his Apostles to make disciples of men of all nations, by the preaching of the word; and the whole ministry of the Gospel was subservient to this object, that those who were once disciples of men that were teachers of wisdom falsely so called, whether Jewish or Pagan,—disciples of Satan that most artful seducer,—and disciples of licentious appetites and passions, which instil nothing good into the ear or mind, might become disciples of God and Christ, lovers and students of true, heavenly, and divine wisdom. The name of disciples is peculiarly suited to them who sedulously cultivate this wisdom; for it denotes both diligence and modesty; and it served to remind believers, that they ought carefully to search the oracles of God, and to hang submissively on the lips of one Teacher; and also, that, whatever proficiency they may have made, they should always remember that they occupy the place of learners.

IV. But, as the followers of philosophers usually receive their designation from the founders of the sects to which they respectively belong, so it seemed proper to the Holy Spirit, that the disciples of Christ should henceforth be termed Christians, from Christ himself. There is none more worthy than this greatest of Prophets, "of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named;" and it was truly honourable for Platonists, Aristotelians, and the pupils of Gamaliel the Hebrew, renouncing their former studies and sects, to give their name to Christ, and to receive a name from Christ in return. "Who teacheth like him?"e "What know I," says Tertullian,* "but under any discipline, a name may pass from the Master to his followers? Are not philosophers styled Platonists, Epicureans, and Pythagoreans, from their respective leaders? Do not the Stoics and Academicians receive their denomination even from the places to which they commonly resorted, and where they held their assemblies?* Do not physicians derive a name from Erasistratus, grammarians from Aristarchus, and even epicures from Apicius?"

V. Divine Providence, which is so conspicuous in every thing, appears particularly admirable and adorable, in the time and the place of the giving of this name to the faithful. The name of Christians was not given them, till, in Cornelius and his family, the first-fruits of the Gentiles were dedicated to God, and it became evident to the Church that "God had also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life;"—till a great number of Grecians,⁶⁴ to whom men of Cyprus and Cyrene preached the Lord Jesus, believed and turned to the Lord;—till, in fine, Paul and Barnabas had for a whole year taught a great multitude, consisting principally of Gentiles. The Jews might, perhaps, have somewhat indulged in superciliousness, had this honourable name of Christians been granted first to themselves, and at a time when the word of life was confined within the narrow limits of their nation. It was, therefore, given in the first instance to Gentiles, or at least to a Church composed partly of Jews but chiefly of Gentiles, and that in a Gentile city; that thus it might be clear to all, "that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him;" and that, "in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature."ⁱ

VI. Several circumstances relative to Antioch, are worthy of notice. 1st, That it was a Gentile city,—lest Jerusalem should boast of the illustrious name of Christians as having been first given to her own citizens. 2dly, That it was the metropolis of Syria, and the principal residence of the tyrannical Antiochus, who, by the dreadful havoc which he made of the ancient Church, approved himself the Antichrist of that period, and the forerunner and type of the great Antichrist of latter days. Thus Christ Jesus erected his trophies in the same city, where the throne of Satan and of his noted Enemy had been established; and caused the name of his kingdom and people to go forth to the whole earth, and to the remotest parts of the globe, from that very place, whence the most horrible persecution of his people and profanation of his sanctuary had taken their rise. 3dly, That it was, at that time, the greatest and most powerful city in all Asia, as Alexandria in Africa, and Rome in Europe;—not merely that

the splendour of the city might impart a certain lustre to the giving of this name of Christians, but, chiefly, that it might be diffused through the world with the greater ease and rapidity.

VII. It was inconsiderate, however, in the Church of Antioch to conclude from this circumstance, that they were entitled to a preference above other Churches. This presumptuous notion was long ago reprov'd by Chrysostome, who addresses himself to the inhabitants of that city in the following words:* "But, if any dispute about honour and precedency arise, you, from an extravagant ambition, contend that you are entitled to preside over the whole world; overvaluing yourselves for the distinction, that this your city first gave the name of Christians to the faithful." Ambition of this kind amongst the churches, is, in reality, very pernicious. They are all equal in Christ, "having obtained like precious faith;"j they are sisters in the same family; nor are they at liberty to glory against one another, or to exalt themselves, on account of the external magnificence of their cities, the greatness of their numbers, the antiquity of their origin, or for any peculiar privilege. In other respects, the Church of Jerusalem, doubtless, was immensely superior to the rest of the churches; for she not only had the whole company of Apostles, but the Lord himself for her immediate Teacher and Founder, and the greater part of the stupendous transactions recorded in the Gospel, took place in her presence.

VIII. In vain also does Baronius adduce it as an argument in vindication of Peter's pre-eminence, that the highly auspicious name of Christians originated in the Church of Antioch, which he pretends was the seat of Peter, and was erected and founded by that Apostle. It is without authority from Scripture, and even in opposition to its statements, that all these assertions respecting Peter are made. It is not true, that he erected or founded the Church of Antioch. The first that preached the Gospel there, were the disciples of Jerusalem who were scattered abroad by the persecution which arose after the martyrdom of Stephen. These were succeeded by certain Cyprians and Cyrenians. Barnabas, by common consent, was afterwards

commissioned from Jerusalem for that purpose; and, in fine, he was joined by Paul, whom he brought from Tarsus to Antioch, to assist him in the work. Of Peter we read not a word. These facts are so manifestly certain, that they have extorted from Baronius himself the confession, how reluctant soever, that the Gospel was not first preached at Antioch by Peter.* Now what is it to found and erect a church, but by means of the preaching of the Gospel, to lay the one only Foundation, namely Jesus Christ, and to build believers upon him, "for an habitation of God through the Spirit."† But these services are by no means conducive to pontifical greatness. The Father of the Annals had quite a different matter in view. "It is to be understood," says he, "that the Church of Antioch is said to be founded by Peter in this respect, that the chief dignity was conferred on it by Peter, that thus it might be called, and be in reality, the greatest of the Oriental Churches. It is to be affirmed, also, that Peter first erected or established the patriarchal seat of Antioch; for effecting which, Peter was under no necessity of taking a journey to Antioch; since, wherever he might be, he was able to do this, by his pre-eminent authority." But, pray, Baronius, why should this be affirmed, understood, and believed? What passage of Scripture attests it? Where does the Holy Spirit, when making mention of the founding or building up of a church, intend the establishment of a patriarchal seat? Where does Luke, or any other authentic and credible historian of the Acts of the Apostles, if you know of any such, show by satisfactory proofs that Peter was the Patriarch of Antioch? These assertions do not accord with the simplicity of the Apostolic Church. They are quite foreign to the diction of the Holy Spirit. They are at variance, too, with the sacred history. For when a contention respecting ceremonies arose at Antioch, recourse is not had to Peter, to terminate the controversy by interposing his patriarchal authority, which, no doubt, ought to have been done; but the matter is referred to the whole college of Apostles; whose decision is sent to Antioch by chosen men, no mention being made of a patriarch. Dismissing, therefore, this fictitious eminence of the Church of Antioch derived from its having been the seat of Peter, let it suffice us to know, that

God made choice of that Church to give the name of Christians to believers.

IX. This name was no less despicable and odious in the esteem of the heathen, than it was grateful, precious, and glorious, in the eyes of the faithful. To the heathen, Christians appeared men of no consideration. If the apparel of a Christian did not accord with the pomp and fashion of the world, he was everywhere insulted in the streets by the cry, There goes an impostor and a knave!* The name alone was deemed a sufficient crime. "With such wilful blindness," says Tertullian, † "was it generally hated, that men, when bearing a favourable testimony to a Christian, combined with it a reprobation of the name. 'Caius Sejus', says one, 'is a good man; but he is a Christian.' 'I wonder,' says another, 'that Lucius, who is a man of intelligence, suddenly turned Christian.' " Justin says in like manner, "You sustain the name as evidence against us:"* and again, "We are hated merely for Christ's name's sake." † This, as Eusebius shows at large, ‡ was exactly conformable to our Lord's prediction. n Neither incest, nor parricide, nor sorcery, was judged worthy of severer punishment than the mere name of Christianity; by which, as Tacitus alleges, § they were convicted of no particular crime, but of hatred against the human race. It was not thought sufficient to employ the usual instruments of torture and death, iron-hooks, plates of burning iron, stakes, engines resembling a horse, crosses, melted metals, wild beasts, examples of burning alive. New forms of punishment were industriously contrived to expiate the crime of this name. It seemed too humane, that Christians should be bound with a girdle of branches, and burnt at a stake formed of a plank or pole split into two parts; and that so frequently, that they were thence branded with the designations of the Branch-people, || and the people ignominiously bound. ¶ 65 A severity unknown to the ancients required, that when the light of day failed, they should be burnt for the purpose of giving light by night, being covered all around with torches, paper, and wax, and with a coat bedawbed and interwoven with combustible substances; while a stake was thrust through the middle of their bodies, and made to come forth at the mouth. The

mode and circumstances of this punishment, worthy of Nero its inventor, are exactly depicted by Calvisius.* Besides, who can enumerate all the different kinds of torture and of death, of scourges, pulleys, gibbets, wheels, pressures, gridirons, burning pots, racks, and goblets, which Baronius describes; † and of the engines of torment mentioned by Eusebius; ‡ To justify all this outrageous barbarity, crime enough was implied in the innocent name of Christian, without further evidence or trial; of which Justin, Athenagoras, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Jerome, Augustine, and others, no less justly than freely complained,

X. Notwithstanding the extreme detestation in which the name of Christians was held, the faithful exulted in it so much, that, rather than renounce it, they were willing to undergo a thousand deaths. In reply to questions put to them, or even of their own accord, they not merely acknowledged, but boasted, that they were Christians; and that at a time when such a profession might seem unseasonable and hazardous. When charged with Christianity, they rejoiced; to be accused of it, was their wish; to be punished, their felicity. When branded with it, they gloried; when arraigned, they made no defence; when condemned, they gave thanks. While tormented with hooks, or suspended on crosses, or encompassed with flames, or beheaded with swords, or exposed to wild beasts, they discovered a resolute mind and a cheerful countenance, and gloried that they were Christians. St Lucian, according to Chrysostome's account, when asked, "What is thy native country? answered, I am a Christian.—What is thy occupation?—I am a Christian.—Who were thine ancestors?—In reply to every question, still he said, I am a Christian."

XI. Nor, indeed, is it surprising, that the followers of Jesus put so high a value on this name of Christian; for it comprehends almost every relation in which they stand to Christ, the communication of his mystical unction, and the participation of his offices; and it binds its professors to a contempt of the world, and to more than human

undertakings. Each of these things must now be considered with some attention.

XII. We have seen above, that nothing is more usual than for scholars to receive their denomination from their Teacher. We have also shown elsewhere,* that, in Eastern countries, the names or distinguishing marks of Masters, were imprinted with red hot iron upon the foreheads of their servants. This practice is more than once alluded to in the book of Revelation. The Angel said, "Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads."o The Lord Jesus himself says of his people in like manner, "I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God; and I will write upon him my new name:" That is, I will show by my conduct, and by conferring a most ample reward, that I recognise him as a faithful servant of my Father, as a citizen of the spiritual Church, and as my property, and peculiar treasure.* Further, for a Wife to be named from her Husband, is not only sanctioned by modern custom, but authorised also by a most ancient and primitive appointment: "She shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man."q Such, in fine, is the union between the head and the members, that they are justly included under one name.

The single name of Christians, therefore, happily expresses the dignity and felicity of believers, as standing in all those relations to Christ. It characterises them as the disciples of Christ, their Teacher; the servants of Christ, their Lord;s the bride of Christ, their Bridegroom; and the spouse of Christ, their Husband.u In fine, they are members of that mystical body, of which Christ is the Head; for which reason, the society of believers is called not merely Christian, but also Christ, the members being reckoned with the head: "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ."

XIII. Besides, since the name Christian is derived from Christ, and Christ, the Anointed, from anointing, and since this name can, in no respect, be empty and void of meaning; it must necessarily signify, that believers are partakers of the same anointing with Christ. And truly his name is as ointment poured forth;—poured forth, not upon himself merely, without measure, and most abundantly; but so as to flow down to all the members of his spiritual body, to the remotest extremities of the hands and feet, to the fingers and toes, and so to speak, even to the nails;—just as the precious ointment poured upon Aaron's head, ran down upon the beard, and descended to the skirts of his garments. This is what John affirms, when he says, "Ye have an unction from the Holy One;"^z and again, "The anointing which ye have received of him, abideth in you." Now this unction consists in a participation of the same Spirit; and hence says Paul, "Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts."^b

XIV. We may here observe that believers can attain no privilege, more profitable, or more joyful, or more glorious, than this participation of the unction of Christ.

XV. In ancient times, wrestlers, and others that contended in gymnastic games, endeavoured to make their nerves supple, and their limbs active, by frequent anointing. Anciently, wounds were usually cured by wine and oil; and perhaps more successfully than they are now healed, by the tedious applications of a laborious surgery. In the primitive Church, in fine, many sick persons were healed, when anointed with oil.^d Tertullian affirms,* that, among others, Severus, the father of Antoninus, was recovered in this way from an illness under which he laboured, by Proculus, a Christian. If we may give credit to Jerome,[†] even dead persons were, in some instances, thus restored to life.

So likewise, by the participation of the mystical oil, or the Spirit of Christ, we who are dead are quickened, for he is "the Spirit of life;"^f—

we who are diseased are healed; and the wounds which our sins have inflicted on our consciences, are cured.^h We are girded also with strength, and our feet are made like hinds feet; so that we are enabled to lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, and to make straight paths "for our feet."^j Anointing with the Spirit, and anointing with power, are united in Christ the head; and also, in his believing members. And how can it be otherwise? The Spirit with whom we are anointed, is "the Power of the Highest,"^l and "Power from on high."

XVI. Joy, and the gladness of a soul exulting in the grace of God, spring also from this unction. Oil, by its natural virtue, "makes the face to shine;" and amongst the ancients, anointing with ointment was an indication of mirth.^o Hence Jesus directs his disciples to conceal the severity of a fast, by anointing their head with oil. But nothing possesses so great an exhilarating virtue as the shedding abroad of the love of God in the heart by the Holy Ghost; who, on this account, is called "the oil of gladness."^q The Psalmist cordially congratulates himself on this felicity, saying, "Thou anointest my head with oil." Hence, too, arises so exuberant a joy, that even the valley of the shadow of death can neither strike terror into the mind, nor deprive it of serenity. This is the true reason why Christians have undergone, sustained, and overcome, the most cruel tortures of every sort, not merely with constancy, but with incredible alacrity, leaping and singing for joy. They were refreshed to a degree which can neither be expressed nor conceived, by the delightful odour and powerful fragrance of this anointing, from which they derived that abhorred name, which was the cause of their tortures. To this the Spouse refers, when she sings thus; "Because of the savour of thy good ointments,—therefore do the virgins love thee."

XVII. In fine, distinguished honour and glory arises to believers from the fragrance of this unction, which diffuses itself on every side. It was anciently no inconsiderable part of the magnificence of Kings that wherever they went, they spread around them an extensive and delightful perfume.^u Antiochus Epiphanes discovered great

profuseness in this respect; for when one of the people accosted him in these words, "Happy art thou, O king, who sendest forth so sweet a perfume," he replied; "As to this, truly I shall always gratify, and give you full satisfaction;" and instantly caused a vessel containing about two gallons, full of the most precious ointment, to be poured upon his head; from which so vehement a fragrance arose, that it immediately attracted, and brought together to the spot, a great multitude, from the forum itself, and from the remotest parts of the city.* But Christ, by the communication of his anointing, performs far greater wonders on believers. He causes them to diffuse the fragrance of their odour through the whole world, and, by the sweetness of their conversation and the undissembled probity of their lives, to allure not only to the admiration, but also to the love, the reception, and the profession of Christianity, a countless multitude of men, called forth far and wide from their habitations. Nay, the odour of those garments which they receive from the ivory palaces of Christ, is not merely to men, but even to God himself, "as the smell of a field which the LORD hath blessed."

XVIII. An interesting story, after having pervaded the whole of the East, has lately reached the ears of Europeans. It is reported that in the month of October, in the year 1655, certain Maronite shepherds, whilst they were feeding their flock on the mountains of Nebo and Abarim, frequently observed, that several goats wandered abroad, and kept at a considerable distance from the flock for two or three days, and that, when they returned, their hair had a singularly pleasant smell. The shepherds thought proper to inquire into a circumstance so surprising. Committing themselves, therefore, to the direction of the goats, they came to precipices of an immense depth, within which they found a small but most delightful valley, the descent to which was vary difficult, through rocks that to appearance had been torn up from it by an earthquake. There they discovered an exceedingly sweet-smelling cave, and, in the middle of it, a sepulchre of fresh-looking stone, having several characters inscribed upon it. The astonished shepherds, having retraced their steps, spread wide around them a sweet odour proceeding from their bodies and their

otherwise sordid clothes; and, being struck with the singularity of the matter, related to the Patriarch of the Maronites on mount Lebanon all that they had seen and found. The extraordinary sweetness of the odour seemed to confirm their account. Two priests were, therefore, sent to the spot, who found the monument, on which were inscribed, in Hebrew letters, these words, MOSES THE SERVANT OF THE LORD; and who, with a delusive joy, persuaded themselves that they had found the sepulchre of Moses the Prophet, which God had so carefully concealed.* This story indeed has more the appearance of fables than of truth. But the sweet odour which was rashly believed to proceed from the sepulchre of Moses, is, in reality, exhaled from the sepulchre of Christ. All his sheep are attracted by it; and they find it so abundant, that, when returning from the sepulchre of Christ, that is, when enriched with the merits of his death, they are a sweet savour of Christ, both to men and to God.w

XIX. Further, as Christ was, by his unction, installed into his three offices, the prophetic, the sacerdotal, and the regal; so those who derive the name of Christians from him, are in their measure, prophets, priests, and kings. I say, in their measure; for these offices in Christians, are, doubtless, of a kind and order widely different from the offices of Christ. Since his whole Mediatorial function consists in these offices, they can no more be shared with others than his mediation itself. But these designations, as conferred upon us, bear an analogy to the offices of Christ, which though necessarily slight, is sufficiently close to exalt us to high honour and happiness. That believers are made Prophets we infer from Joel 2:28, 29. "And it shall come to pass afterwards, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy," &c. To this promise Peter refers, when he says, "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." That they are also Priests and Kings, appears from 1 Pet. 2:9. "But ye are ... a royal priesthood;" and from Rev. 1:6.—"And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father."

XX. The Prophetical character of believers, as distinguished from the public and authoritative office of teachers, is either extraordinary, being peculiar to some in the primitive Church; or ordinary, extending to all Christians in all ages.

XXI. The extraordinary prophesying was, that believers in private stations, appointed to no ecclesiastical office, and even young virgins, were endowed with so great a fulness of the Spirit, that, on a sudden, they discoursed on divine subjects to the astonishment of the hearers, spoke languages with which they had formerly no acquaintance, and were enabled to foretel future events. Of this we have many testimonies and examples in Scripture. It pleased God in this manner to confirm the truth of Christianity. But when the Gospel was sufficiently established for convincing the Gentiles and for rendering the Jews inexcusable, and was also clearly and fully exhibited in the sacred books, these unusual operations of the Spirit gradually ceased as well among teachers, as among common believers. At what precise time they were withdrawn, I presume not to determine. The ancients pronounce high encomiums on the prophecies of Melito, of Methodius, and of Gregory of Neocesarea, who is called Thaumaturgus. That those prophecies were either fraudulently contrived by holy men, or of a still blacker origin, not to say diabolical, it is difficult to suppose, and hard to affirm. I cannot, however, approve of the extravagances of Basil,* and Gregory of Nyssa,† who ascribe to Gregory of Neocesarea the same Spirit as to the Prophets and Apostles, and even make him almost equal to Moses. It is manifest, at least, that the Spirit of prophecy has now ceased. As to the prophecies of the Reformation that was to take place in the Church by the instrumentality of Luther and other men of God, a vast number of which Micrælius‡ and John Gerhard§ have collected;—those prophecies were partly pious wishes, and partly probable conjectures; for amidst an extreme degeneracy of manners, men are wont to prognosticate better times; they in part contain an application of the sacred book of the Apocalypse to those times, and in part are entitled to no credit. And with regard to the prophecies which Comenius has, with great zeal, obtruded lately on the Church,

their futility has been demonstrated in a learned dissertation by ARNOLD, our venerable colleague. Whatever the Spirit of God, whom we must not presume to limit, may be pleased to reveal to this or the other individual respecting some particular future events, the inspired volume is to us a sufficient rule. "To the law and to the testimony." See the learned Dissertation of Voet on Prophecy and Prophets.* Some remarkable particulars of the prophecies of Usher are related by Richard Parr, in his Life of that distinguished Prelate, published at London, in the year 1686. To these may be added similar instances in certain Scottish Ministers, narrated by Fleming, a pious and learned man, in an English Treatise, entitled, The Fulfilling of the Scriptures.†67

XXII. Let us now inquire into that which is ordinary, common to all Christians, and extended to all ages. As the office of the ancient Prophets included two things, namely, that they themselves were taught by an immediate illumination from God, and that when thus taught, they instructed others; so these two things are observable in the prophetic character common to believers.

XXIII. All Christians are taught of God,‡ and, as Tertullian expresses it,§ "watered, inundated, with the Divine Spirit." "They have an unction from the Holy One, and they know all things; and need not that any man teach them, as the same anointing teacheth them of all things."a "The God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, gives them the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, the eyes of their understanding being enlightened." Though the external ministry of men is employed, this is ineffectual, unless it be accompanied with the internal and immediate revelation of the Spirit; which is granted, in various degrees, to individual Christians, according to the measure of divine grace; but allotted to all of them in sufficient proportion; for "no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost."d

XXIV. To this revelation of the doctrines of the Gospel with which all believers are favoured, is sometimes added a more special and

familiar manifestation of the Lord Jesus to the soul; when, taking it, so to speak, by the hand, "he brings it into his chambers;" and, having drawn aside the curtain and opened the sanctuary of heaven, he exhibits the glories which are within the veil, the felicities of heaven, and the joys of immortality; that the understanding may contemplate, and the mind by anticipation enjoy, these exalted delights. This is a privilege he has promised to them that love him: "He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him."f

XXV. In some instances, the Spirit of God even pours forth on the imagination of believers, as well when awake as when asleep, very bright images of heavenly things; which they appear not only to perceive with the mind, but also to behold immediately with their eyes, in a manner nearly resembling that in which the prophets anciently saw the objects represented to them in their visions. That this frequently happens to the afflicted and the dying, is evident from the memoirs of the life and death of the godly, and is well known to those who are frequently employed in visiting the sick. We have examples of it in Olympia Fulvia Morata, a learned and celebrated female in her time, concerning whom see the famous Voet;*—in Caspar Olevian, of whom the particulars are detailed by Melchior Adam;—in John Holland, of whom see Bolton and Hoornbeeck;†—in Wenceslaus Budowick, and Caspar Kaplin, two Bohemian noblemen, of whom Lætus gives an account in his History;‡—and in others without number. The visions of several Martyrs in Africa, recorded in an Epistle written from prison by the Confessors, are related by Baronius.§ It cannot admit of a doubt, that, in reference to such internal and immediate revelations, Christians may be accounted Prophets.

XXVI. It pertains also to the prophetic character of Christians, that they teach the truths which they have learned from God. They are enabled to "show forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light." This they do, with their mouth, by their life, and by their death.

XXVII. They do it with their mouth, 1st, By a confession of the name of Christ. 2dly, By pious and holy conferences and communications respecting the common salvation, with their domestics, their acquaintances, and others, as opportunities occur. 3dly, By singing sacred hymns,^j which is spoken of as a species of prophesying. Jerome bears a signal testimony to the Christians of his own age and place, when, in a letter which he wrote to Marcella, inviting her to the country of Bethlehem, he says: "To whatever side you turn, the ploughman sings hallelujahs, whilst holding the plough; the laborious reaper entertains himself with hymns; and the vine-dresser, whilst he dresses the vines with the pruning-hook, sings one of the Psalms of David. In this province these are the songs; these, as it is commonly expressed, the songs of love." Justly, also, do we turn to the honour of our own ancestors what was affirmed by Strada, a reviling Jesuit, in order to expose them to reproach and disgrace. "That translation," says he, "of hymns," namely the translation of Marotus and Beza, "though abandoned and condemned by the Catholics, was zealously and pertinaciously retained by the Heretics; and the custom of singing Psalms in the French language, according to the fashion of the Genevese, in companies, in places of public resort, and in shops, became thenceforth, a peculiar characteristic of the Heretics."* Thus the Papists distinguish Heretics by the same peculiarity by which the ancients distinguished Christians.

XXVIII. But Christians teach also by their life, that is, by the exemplary holiness of their conduct; by which,—the perverseness of a world lying in wickedness is reproved—the beauty of true virtue displayed even before the eyes of men unwilling to behold it—and the wonderful fruits of that Divine Spirit by whom Christians are actuated, appear, to the conviction of others and the glory of God. Tertullian finely says; "Though, owing either to the want of eloquence or to the suggestions of modesty, (for philosophy is content with the silent life,) no voice or sound be heard, the practice utters an audible sound—at my very presence, vice is covered with confusion."*

XXIX. In fine, Christians complete their prophesying by their death; such of them, in particular, as God calls to martyrdom. The truth of the Christian Religion has been asserted with incredible freedom, propriety, copiousness, and resolution, before princes, kings, emperors, and ingenious sophists, by men and women, old men and youths, and even by boys and girls. For the sake of this Religion, they have submitted, with unheard- of magnanimity, to the most terrible deaths, confessing and commending Christ, under the scourge and the sword, on wheels and pullies, in the midst of flames; and in burning goblets—and that even sometimes, when, to render the miracle the more illustrious, their tongues were cut out. All Christians are not called to martyrdom; yet all ought to be prepared to suffer it, when called. It is one thing for a person who has the resolution to suffer martyrdom, to escape it; and another thing, to be void of resolution for martyrdom. The former happens to many Christians; the latter is becoming in no Christian. These words of our Lord are obligatory upon all: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life;" and again, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father and mother ... and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."n

XXX. To the prophetic dignity of Christians is added the Priesthood: "But ye shall be named the Priests of the Lord." Their priesthood, however, does not consist in sacrificing irrational animals to God, as was done by the Old Testament priests; for, Christ having obtained the remission of our sins, "there is no more offering for sin."p Nor doth it consist in daily offering to the Father an unbloody sacrifice, and even Christ himself, under the appearance of bread and wine, for expiating the sins as well of the dead as of the living; as the Popish priests impiously contend. For now once, in the end of the world, hath Christ appeared to put away sin, by the sacrifice of himself;" and by that "one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."r But the priesthood of Christians is entirely spiritual—"to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."

XXXI. Their priesthood consists in this, that they are near to God, and have liberty of familiar access to him. Cohen,* the Hebrew word for priest, properly signifies a servant who is peculiarly near the King, and admitted to his most secret counsels. Thus Ira the Jairite is termed David's Cohen, "a chief ruler about David;" which Kimchi explains thus; "His servant and counsellor, to whom he showed more attention than to the rest."* The sons of David, too, are called Cohanim, "Chief rulers," that is, as it is elsewhere explained, "Chief about the King."v In like manner we read, that "Jehu slew all that remained of the house of Ahab in Jezreel, and all his great men, and his kinsfolks and Cohanaiu," that is, his intimate friends. Now God is the King of heaven, and the Lord of all lords. He, too, has his Cohanim, or Priests, who have the privilege of "coming near to him," and are persons "that come nigh him," or his intimate friends.y All Christians have this dignity; they are the friends and favourites of the King of heaven, and have "boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which he hath consecrated."

XXXII. It is also a part, and indeed the principal part, of the priesthood of Christians, devoutly to offer up to God all kinds of spiritual sacrifices. By the mortification of their "members which are upon the earth," they slay the old man for his honour. They dedicate to Him the gift[†] of alms; the incense of prayer;c the sacrifice[‡] of praise, that is, the fruit of their lips, giving thanks to his name;d and, in fine, the thank-offering of their souls and bodies,—prepared, if circumstances render this necessary, even "to be offered as a drink-offering upon the sacrifice and service of the faith" of their brethren. The character of the Christian, as a priest, is not inelegantly described by Tertullian in the following words: "As his servant, I wait upon him alone; I am slain for the sake of his religion; I offer him a fair and an excellent sacrifice, which himself hath required,—Prayer proceeding from a chaste body, from an upright mind, from the Holy Spirit:—Not one pound of grains of frankincense, nor gum-drops distilled from an Arabian tree, nor two drops of myrrh, nor the blood of a worthless bull desirous of death; nor, in addition to all other

polluted offerings, a defiled conscience." These winds of Tertullian are quoted twice by Eusebius.*

XXXIII. Further, since it belongs to Priests to be occupied "in things pertaining to God," and in "all the work of the place most holy,"^h and consequently to "stand by night in the house of the Lord;" let Christians remember that it pertains to their priesthood, to be "always abounding in the work of the Lord,"^j—frequenting his sanctuary to bear a part in divine worship,—and consecrating the chambers of their own houses, and the innermost recesses of the soul, as an august temple to God, where acts of devotion may be continually performed.

XXXIV. It was the will of God, that, in ancient Israel, the priestly mitre and the royal diadem should not be worn by the same person; whilst he so parted these dignities, that the one was allotted to the tribe of Levi, the other to that of Judah. In the spiritual Israel, however, both are united; for, to the same priesthood of which we have just been speaking, it is said, "Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God."

XXXV. These spiritual Kings are animated by a remarkably generous mind, a "free spirit," "an excellent spirit;"ⁿ for which they are compared not only to "a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots," but even to Jehovah's "goodly horse in the battle."^p This generous spirit disposes them to fix their eyes and their mind upon invisible, celestial, and eternal enjoyments, and to regard those objects which the rest of mankind admire, as toys, as of no value, nay, as "loss and dung;" and to account even the pleasures and the pomp of a royal court contemptible in comparison of "the reproach of Christ."^r A certain holy ambition,* also, stimulates them to strive to excel other men,^s—to surpass them in the riches of sacred wisdom, in the beauty of spiritual grace, in the lustre of Christian virtues, and, in short, in all that is really excellent, as far as kings surpass their subjects in earthly dignity and magnificence. Whilst they who distinguish

themselves by such conduct, are the admiration not only of men, but of angels in heaven, and even of God and Christ; they conscientiously guard against all ostentation and pride: for as Basil of Seleucia finely says, in a discourse on these words of our Lord, "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven:"—The degree of humility is the measure of improvement.* That princely spirit which animates believers, produces in them, also, such a high esteem for their dignity, that they would choose rather to suffer a thousand deaths, than to do any thing disgraceful to their exalted character; of which we have very striking instances in Nehemiah, u—in Daniel's companions,—and in countless myriads of martyrs, as well in the times of the Maccabees, as in subsequent periods.

XXXVI. But what would a King be, without a kingdom and power? Of this, therefore, all Christians are possessed, and that to a great extent, whether, as to their worldly circumstances, they be rich or poor, freemen or slaves. They have power, 1st, Over the whole world; whose long established but corrupt customs, by which as by a strong fetter, though in reality a slender straw, even the noblest of worldly men are, like despicable fools, enslaved and bound,—they magnanimously despise, reject, and trample under foot; not suffering themselves "to be brought under the power of any." "Whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world." x 2dly, Over sin and the lusts of the flesh, of which even kings and dreaded tyrants are the miserable and truly abject slaves. Although this legion of most audacious enemies sometimes makes an assault upon Christians with such impetuosity that they seem almost overthrown, yet even when lying on the ground, they resume their courage, and renew the contest on their knees; and though, to appearance, nearly vanquished in the battle, they prove "more than conquerors" in the war. 3dly, Over Satan himself, whom the God of peace bruises under their feet. A convincing evidence of this was given in primitive times, when, at the command of Christians, devils, with reluctance and rage, departed from the bodies of those whom they had possessed,—according to our Lord's promise; "These signs shall follow them that

believe; in my name shall they cast out devils, &c."b Grotius, in his notes on this passage, has proved, by express testimonies from Justin, Irenæus, Tertullian, and Origen, that in the age when these Fathers flourished, Christians in various countries, exercised this power, to the astonishment of the heathen. Eusebius also says; "Still he continues, as we know by experience, to display the energy of divine power, expelling foul and malignant demons from the souls and bodies of men, through the silent invocation of his name."*

XXXVII. Thus, with Christ their head, they rule in the midst of their enemies. A blessed kingdom of righteousness and peace, is, meanwhile, erected in their souls; where the Spirit of Christ holds the sceptre, love is law, and all their faculties of soul and body voluntarily submit themselves to the Spirit; which produces incredible tranquillity and gladness of heart. This is that kingdom of Christians, which Paul describes in the following words: "The kingdom of God is—righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost."d

XXXVIII. To this power are added royal wealth, and royal majesty. Their wealth is not secular, but heavenly and spiritual. "God hath chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom." The riches of the Christian are, the word of God laid up in the sacred treasury of the mind—the wisdom derived from that word—store of divine grace, the least drop of which is more precious than all the gold of the whole world—and, in fine, the abundance of heavenly bliss that awaits them, of which they enjoy the first-fruits in the present state.h Solacing themselves in these treasures, they are truly and spiritually rich; they equal kings in wealth. Such, then, is the royal opulence they possess.

XXXIX. Their wealth is accompanied with a majesty and dignity which render them venerable and sacred, as well with God as with men. God suffers none to injure them with impunity: "Yea, he reprov'd kings for their sakes, saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm." The following words of God in Isaiah are

truly magnificent: "Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people at thy request." He makes them equally venerable to their friends and their enemies. As to their friends, we have the following testimony, than which nothing of the kind more glorious, could be said: "And kings shall be thy nursing-fathers, and their queens thy nursing-mothers: they shall bow down to thee with their face towards the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I am the LORD: for they shall not be ashamed that wait far me." Of their enemies it is in like manner said: "The sons also of them that afflicted thee, shall come bending unto thee, and all they that despise thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet," &c.l

XL. From the copious illustrations which have now been given, it clearly appears, that the name of CHRISTIANS, if taken, as it ought to be, in the whole extent of its meaning, is highly magnificent. As it is a source of unparalleled consolation to all those whom, not the excessive civility of men, but the mouth of God himself has expressly called by this new name; so let all who glory in this illustrious name, know that they are bound to perform the noblest actions, and to cultivate a holiness remarkably exact and almost similar to the holiness of God; lest their profession, not corresponding with their life, involve them in a condemnation equally certain and dreadful. O how justly does Chrysostome say! "The greater the honour to which God has advanced us, the higher in proportion are the attainments in virtue to which we are obliged to aspire."* Equally elegant are these expressions of Ambrose: "Let us discover what profession we make, rather by our conduct than by our name; that our name may accord with our conduct, and our conduct correspond with our name: LEST OUR NAME BE VAIN, AND OUR GUILT ENORMOUS." We conclude with the excellent words of Augustine: "Let us not satisfy ourselves merely with the appellation of Christians; but let us reflect that we are to be judged in reference to this,—whether we presumptuously arrogate a name to which we have no title."*

DISSERTATION XII: ON JESUS CHRIST, THE ONLY-BEGOTTEN SON OF GOD

I. IT becomes every one who earnestly desires the eternal salvation of his own soul, to exert his best endeavours to attain "all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of GOD, and of the Father, and of Christ; in which* are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."a These words intimate, that there is a GOD, by whom the world exists, of whom, and to whom we all are; and who can prove to his rational creatures, and even to sinful man, what he is to himself, the Fountain of consummate blessedness."c In the Godhead, we must know, there is a FATHER, who is able to restore life to that which was lost, to renew his own image in the sinner, to admit a person who had been alienated from him to the embraces of his fatherly love, and, in fine, to make him an heir of heavenly and eternal blessings. The Father, too, hath a SON, of the same nature and of equal dignity with himself, whom, according to the counsel of peace which takes place between God and the Man whose name is the BRANCH, he could send into the world, clothed with human flesh, and made under the law;—so that, the law having received full satisfaction from him to all its demands, he can exercise his goodness and mercy towards the sinner, in consistency with righteousness, holiness, and wisdom.f To this work the Son was appointed from eternity; and being endowed with the richest gifts of the Spirit,h he is called CHRIST, that is, the Anointed. This is a "mystery," which no man could know, unless it were revealed by God; and which, even when thus revealed, no mortal can fully comprehend.j In this mystery, is "wisdom and knowledge;" for without knowing it, we neither understand the manner of the Divine operations, nor can we conceive any thing that is worthy of God, in the plan of our salvation. Wisdom is an

invaluable "treasure:" but it is "hid" and laid up in this mystery; for when this is not revealed or not known, we cannot fail to remain ignorant of the wisdom of God; and whoever meditates with due attention on this incomprehensible topic, will continually discover new treasures which he had not formerly perceived. To consider this mystery for a little, therefore, and in the exercise of faith to contemplate Christ as the ONLY-BEGOTTEN SON of the Father, and OUR LORD, will be a pious, a becoming, and a profitable employment. Nothing, certainly, can be more repugnant to the mind of Paul, and to the genius of the Christian Religion, than this blasphemy uttered by Ostorodus: "In order to know the will of God towards us so far as is requisite to salvation, it is not at all necessary to know the nature of Christ, but merely his office."*

II. We confess in the Creed, that Jesus Christ is, First, The SON of God. Secondly, BEGOTTEN of God. Thirdly, His ONLY-BEGOTTEN.

III. That he is the SON of God, Christ himself protested in an assembly of those who are termed, but in a far lower sense, "Children of the Most High;"^m—the Father proclaimed by a voice from heaven;—and the Holy Spirit proved by descending upon him.^o The sacred Scriptures, too, represent it as the sum of our confession and faith relative to Christ, to believe and profess that Jesus is the Son of God.

IV. This name, when attributed to Christ, is more excellent than any that is given to Angels; though they also are denominated "Sons of God."^r By the expression more excellent, the Apostle indicates a difference not merely in degree, but also in kind; that this name may be completely and directly distinguished, and as applied to Christ, have a signification totally different. For a difference in degrees is not sufficient to constitute a difference[†] in name. The King of Assyria, for example, or of Persia, was, by many steps of dignity, superior to any King of Cappadocia, or Pontus, or Lacedemon; yet the name of King is not more excellent when ascribed to the Persian or the Assyrian monarch, than when it is applied to the ruler of Cappadocia, Pontus, or Laconia. Nor is it unworthy of notice that the Apostle affirms, that

Christ hath obtained by inheritance* this name. The expression intimates, that, like an inheritance, it is Christ's indisputable and unalienable property; nay more, that he possesses it not as a mere voluntary gift, nor as the recompence of his labour or the consequence of his merit, but as an inheritance to which he has an original right, arising from the intimate relation between the Father and him.⁶⁸ In virtue of that relation he is evidently entitled to this name; nor could he, by any power or means, be precluded from obtaining it, or divested of his right to be acknowledged by God the Father and by men, as what he really is, the Son of God. We indeed are heirs of God, because we are sons; and because we have received Christ, and are, in the manner competent to us, born of God, "power is given to us to become the sons of God;"^t or owing to the divine condescension and liberality, we may dare to consider ourselves as such. But nowhere are we said to have inherited the name of the sons of God.

V. It serves to establish the same point, that the Apostle speaks of Christ as, ὀρισθεντα υἱον Θεου ἐν δυναμει, "declared to be the Son of God with power." Ὅριζειν is to define, to determine, to fix a thing within its bounds and limits, so that one may perceive what it is in itself, and how it differs from other things; or to designate any thing precisely and particularly, to the exclusion of every thing else.* Christ is elsewhere said to be, ὠρισμενος, "ordained," determined, particularly designated, "of God to be the Judge of quick and dead." So here he is "declared, determined, to be the Son of God," that is, placed within such bounds, so separated by those bounds from other persons, and so particularly declared to the exclusion of others, that it is equally unlawful and impossible not to consider him as the Son of God. It is added,—"with power." This may either be connected with the word "declared," and thus it is affirmed that Christ is "declared, determined, with power," that is, demonstrated by the strongest evidence to be, in a peculiar sense, the Son of God; or it may be joined with the expression, "the Son of God," and then the meaning is, that Christ is the Son of God with power. Whether you choose the one or the other, the result is almost the same. According

to the former construction, Christ is "declared," determined, in all the emphasis of the term, conformably to its strongest and most proper signification. According to the latter, he is "the Son of God with power," that is, the power which is absolutely so called, and is peculiar to God, (who is therefore denominated by the Hebrews the Power, †) and in reference to which Christ is called "the mighty God."w Of these two modes of construing the sentence, however, the latter appears the more simple and the more nervous.

VI. Further, Christ as the Son of God, is BEGOTTEN of God; for the Father thus addressed him, "Thou art my Son; this day have I BEGOTTEN thee:" that is, I have caused thee to go forth from myself. The word ילד is commonly applied to mothers, because they bring forth children immediately from themselves. "Ask ye now and see, whether a man doth travail with child." Fathers are usually said הוליד, to beget, to make another bring forth, to be the cause of fruitfulness to another. Here God applies to himself that which is proper to mothers, because the going forth of the Son is immediately from himself. Nor does this passage relate to the formation of the human nature in the womb of Mary, in reference to which, the term הוליד might seem more pertinent, because the power of the Deity was the cause of fruitfulness to the Virgin;—but to the generation of Christ as a Divine person.* This observation which I owe to a very accurate Interpreter, is particularly useful for repelling the impious cavils of the Socinians. You may compare it with the remarks formerly made in the eleventh Section of the seventh Dissertation.

VII. But since mortals find themselves at a loss to explain particularly the generation of even the minutest creature in the world, who among them is able to conceive in his mind, or to declare by his tongue or pen, in what the generation of the Son of God consists? This one thing, however, we may safely affirm, because we learn it from the word of God himself, that the generation in question is such a communication of life that the Son hath "life in himself." It is such a communication of the Divine, living, and life-giving essence, that the Son hath this essence, not as adventitious, recent,

or dependant upon another,—but "in himself," as the Father hath it "in himself;" whilst in the Son it is the foundation of that power of which he as Mediator is possessed, to impart life to dead sinners,—a spiritual and holy life in this world, as well as a blessed and everlasting life in the world to come. See the Dissertation just referred to, Section tenth.

VIII. This generation of the Son of God is from eternity. For thus the Supreme Wisdom speaks of itself, "The LORD possessed," or got "me, in the beginning," or the beginning, "of his way, before his works of old." Wisdom here ascribes to itself a generation, in consequence of which God hath it as a Son; for the term $\eta\gamma\omega$ is applied to one that brings forth, as in these words, "I have gotten a man;" and also to one that begets, as in the following expression, "Is not he thy Father that hath got thee?" She calls that generation, "the beginning of the ways of God," because it is a kind of procession, or going-forth, and there was no procession in the Deity prior to this,—none either possible or conceivable. Or we may so construe the expression, that Wisdom herself may be called "the beginning of the ways of God," because God does nothing but in and by the Son, who, on that account, is denominated "the beginning of the creation of God."e—This possessing by generation, this "beginning of the ways of God," precedes his works;* that is, not merely external works, but every kind of preparations and decrees.f Wisdom proceeded from the Father before the going forth of the Divine decrees, not with respect to time, for the decrees were also eternal, but in the order of nature; for no decree was formed without the Son. Of old[†] denotes eternity; for that which was in some respect prior to the eternal decrees of God, cannot but be eternal. It is added, "When there were no depths, I was brought forth."g But the deep was from the beginning. And to place it beyond a doubt that this discourse relates to the Personal Wisdom, or the Son of God, it follows, "Then I was by him as one brought up with him."i The word in the original properly signifies a nursling,[‡] a son carried in the bosom; as may be gathered from this expression in the book of Numbers: "Carry them in thy bosom, as a nursing-father beareth the sucking child." Now the same

representation is given of Christ in the Gospel of John, when he is called "the only-begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father," that is, most intimately related to the Father, both by nature, and by mutual love.

IX. We must not here omit the following remarkable announcement in the prophecies of Micah: "Out of thee," O Bethlehem, "shall he come forth unto me that is to be Ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, even from everlasting." A certain learned man has made an observation which deserves to be repeated here. He shows from this passage that there is a threefold going forth of Christ. One is external and visible, namely, his going forth out of Bethlehem at his birth, when he assumed our nature. The word $\alpha\upsilon$ "come forth" is frequently used in reference to birth, and even to the birth of Christ himself; as when we read; "their Governor shall proceed," that is, shall be born, "from the midst of them." Of this going forth it is said that it was to be unto God. He shall come forth unto me;* that is, by my power, through my goodness and faithfulness, for the promotion of my glory. Another going forth is internal and everlasting, to wit, that generation of the Messiah, by which he is in reality, and is called the Son of God; and which secures to him this dignity, that in all the emphasis of the term, he is the Ruler of that free people, whose blessed liberty consists in their being subject to God only. This generation according to the Spirit, is here opposed to the other, which is according to the flesh; in exactly the same way as in Rom. 1:3, 4. and chap. 9:5. It took place מקדם "from of old." This word, when applied to duration, sometimes denotes indefinitely time long since past; and sometimes eternity, as in the following passages: "The eternal God, the God of eternity, is thy refuge:" "He that abideth of old, he that inhabiteth eternity:" "Art thou not from everlasting, O LORD." From this last passage it appears not only that קדם signifies eternity, but also מקדם , from eternity. Yet since those "goings forth," which are distinguished from the going forth out of Bethlehem, are mentioned in the plural number, it is right to conceive of a third, which took place from the days of old, besides that which is from eternity, namely, the going

forth of the Messiah in the word of the most ancient promise. The expression "going forth," or proceeding, is applied to speech, as when it is said, "Man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the month of the Lord." And together with the word of promise and of grace, the Messiah himself goes forth in the word, and comes to the relief of the disconsolate sinner. Hence says the Psalmist, "Ride prosperously upon the word of truth." This going forth in the promise took place from the days of old,* from the most ancient times, from the beginning of the world, from the period when the days of time began to run, in paradise itself. The expression designates the remotest period of antiquity.u It ought by all means to be compared with these words of the Apostle: "In hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie promised before the world began."⁷⁰ Nor do I know an instance, in which it denotes an absolute eternity, without beginning.

X. In reference to this generation Christ is called God's OWN proper SON; not his Son metaphorically, nor by adoption, nor in the same sense in which others are his sons, but his natural Son, (just as Simon is called Andrew's own, proper, brother;) and on that account "equal" to the Father.y It was not improperly, or in opposition to the mind of the Lord Jesus, that the Jews inferred from his expressions, that he made himself equal with God. For in that case he would have accused them of calumny, he would have protested that injustice had been done him; and if he be nothing more than a mere man, he would have vindicated himself most effectually from the charge of a blasphemy so horrid, so extremely injurious to God, and so unworthy of his own characteristic humility. He sought not his own glory, but his glory that sent him. And, therefore, because the Father can be honoured only in the Son,a he taught expressly—his whole discourse was adapted to this purpose—all his reasonings were directed to this object, to make it perfectly manifest, that he is so the proper Son of his proper Father, that he possesses the same essence, power, and dignity with him. Nor does John relate what the hearers either properly or improperly concluded from Christ's discourse, but what

Christ himself both said and did. As he truly said that "God was his proper Father," so he truly "made himself equal with God."

XI. For the same reason we are taught that "the name of God is in him." "The name of God" signifies those attributes of God, those perfections and excellencies, by which he makes himself manifest to men in his works, especially in the work of our salvation;—those attributes which God ascribed to himself when he proclaimed his name before Moses;^c and in reference to which, Christ, having not only promulged them by his doctrine, but also shown them forth by his work, protests that he has "manifested the name of God unto men." This name, indeed, involves Deity itself in its import; nor can it be communicated to one who is not God, any more than the glory of Deity, from which it is hardly, if at all to be distinguished.^e

XII. Near akin to this expression is the title of "the angel of God's face." This designation is given him, not merely because he always contemplates the face of God, which indeed he doth in a manner far superior to other angels, insomuch that it is said, "No man knoweth the Father save the Son;"^g but also because the face of God, as reconciled and gracious, is nowhere exhibited to the view of sinful men but in Christ. Now what else is the face of God in this sense than the glory of God as it is displayed in glorifying the elect; or, to use Paul's expression, "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ?"ⁱ Since the face of God is so exhibited in Christ, that "he that hath seen Christ, hath," of course, "seen the Father," it necessarily follows that Christ is possessed of the same glory and godhead which belong to the Father.

XIII. Nay, he is also denominated THE FACE OF GOD. "When God said, Shall MY FACE go before thee to give thee rest? Moses said unto him, If THY FACE go not with me, carry us not up hence." God had formerly promised that the Angel "in whom his name is," to wit, his Son, the Messiah, should go before them in the wilderness, to bring them to the place which he had prepared; but offended by their horrible idolatry in making and worshipping the golden calf, he

proposed to send one of the ordinary angels to expel the nations from the promised land, and threatened that himself would not go with them. Yielding, however, to the importunate supplications of Moses, who solicited the accomplishment of the former promise, he inquires if he cannot rest unless his OWN FACE go with him, that is, the same Angel of whom he had formerly spoken. The same thing, if I am not mistaken, is intended in Malachi, when it is said, "Behold, I will send my messenger," that is, John the Baptist, "and he shall prepare the way לפני FOR MY FACE;" that is Christ, for it follows: "and the LORD whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple." It deserves also to be considered whether we may not refer to Christ that expression of David: "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness, I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with THY LIKENESS." What should hinder us from comparing these words with 1 John 3:2.; for Christ is both the face and the image of God. Nor is it unnatural to understand in the same sense this phrase, "the similitude of the Lord;"^o for it seems to be numbered amongst the peculiar honours by which Moses was distinguished from the rest of the prophets, that the Son of God addressed himself immediately both to his eyes and his ears, while to other prophets he generally disclosed his secrets by the intervention of angels.

XIV. It is, at all events, a very memorable eulogy with which Paul adorns our Lord, when he calls him "the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person." These titles may be given to Christ in reference to his office; but they belong to him primarily and more eminently, in relation to his person. As the Son of God, he is "light of light," and the most illustrious effulgence of the Father's glory. "We beheld his glory," says John, "the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father."^q In the Apocryphal writings, Wisdom is denominated "the brightness of the everlasting light." "He sent forth the Son," says Anastasius, "as beams, as an effulgence upon the earth."^{*} The expression intimates both that the glory of the Son is equally bright with that of the Father, and that the Son's going forth from the Father is natural. Oecumenius, accordingly, makes this remark: "By the term brightness[†] he shows that the going forth of the

Son from the Father is natural, and not by grace or adoption; for brightness proceeds naturally from any luminous body, as the sun or a fire."

XV. He is also "the express image of the person," the hypostasis, of the Father. In expounding the word hypostasis, we sometimes indulge, I doubt not, in excessive refinement. Being treated certainly in too scholastic a manner, it was understood in a variety of different senses, and occasioned numerous disputes and contentions in the Church. See on this subject, among the ancients, Socrates,* Theodoret,† and Rufinus;‡ amongst the moderns, Forbes.§ We, for our part, prefer nothing to simplicity. The words themselves appear to require that hypostasis, and character,|| "the express image," be understood as corresponding exactly to each other. The same form which in the seal may be called hypostasis, is, in the wax, termed character: and here, as Gomar has judiciously remarked, there is an elegant figure. As the character agrees in form with the archetype, or model, so Christ agrees in essence with the Father;—but in a more excellent manner, since he is one with him in essence, not in species but in number. Hence he is described as "being in the form of God." Again, as the character differs from the archetype in its mode of subsisting, the archetype having communicated the form, but the character having received it by the impression; so the Father hath Deity from himself, which he communicated to the Son by eternal generation, while the Son received it from the Father. The Son is, therefore, not the Father, but is spoken of as distinct from the Father. In fine, the character, though it is not the model, yet fully expresses it; and, in like manner, the Son exhibits the Father in himself, and reveals him to us. Theophylact, after Gregory of Nyssa, says very finely: "Neither doth the character excel the hypostasis, because in so far as it might excel, it would have no hypostasis or model; nor is the hypostasis greater than the character, for then it would have something not expressed in the character."

XVI. The acute Bisterfeld,* when vindicating this passage against Crellius, premises, that the Apostle, in his Epistle to the Hebrews,

makes use of such descriptions and such terms as have their foundation in the Old Testament; adding this as a universal maxim, "that, with the exception of terms merely historical, all the phrases and words employed in the New Testament to express any mystery of faith, are taken from the Old." To this last sentiment, I dare not give an unqualified assent; but of what he says in reference to this place in particular, I cordially approve. Let us see then what there is in the Old Testament corresponding to this expression of Paul. Bisterfeld does not give me full satisfaction here. He thinks that "the brightness" † corresponds to the Hebrew word rendered "apparently."‡ But that word signifies rather sight, appearance.§ The phrase "apparently and not in dark speeches," u may be considered as in some degree parallel to the following expression of Paul: "We walk by faith, not by sight." "Faith" may correspond to "dark speeches," and "sight" to "apparently." To me it seems more probable that there is a reference to that "brightness"* of the divine glory which was above the ark, and which, as well as the ark itself, was a shadow, whose truth and body is in Christ:—or to that which shone forth in the face of Moses, or in the Cherubim which appeared to Ezekiel, to which the word "bright"x is applied, an expression very similar to that which Paul employs:—or (what I would prefer to all the rest, if it seem improper to include the whole) to that splendour of the Divine Majesty, which sometimes shone upon the Prophets when they beheld God in a human form. Thus, not to mention others, Ezekiel speaks of "the appearance of the brightness ... the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord." With this compare the following expression of Isaiah, namely,—"the abundance, brightness, of her glory." When Paul, therefore, describes the Messiah in nearly the same magnificent terms, what does he intend to teach, but that he is the same person, who, to give a prelude of his future incarnation, presented himself to the view of the prophets under so august an appearance of Divinity? Bisterfeld comes nearer the truth when he observes that character† is a term parallel to Temuna;‡ for each of these words signifies a certain figure, engraven and impressed according to a certain measure and proportion. But when he adds, "Temuna is derived from Mijן,§ that is, number, and thus signifies a

most accurate impression," his observation, I apprehend, is incorrect; for *Mijn* does not signify the number, but the species or kind of things. *Temuna* is a likeness of that sort which bears the very species and form of an object, by which it is discriminated from all other objects;—just as the character exhibits the whole figure that is in the archetype.

XVII. Possibly, however, it may seem better to compare the Apostle's expression with that passage in Haggai, where it is said to Zerubbabel, that is, according to some interpreters, to Christ, who was the son of Zerubbabel and prefigured by him: "I will make thee as a signet," or a seal-ring. In a signet there is a character. The sense then might be this: 'I will imprint on thee an exact likeness of myself; I will demonstrate that thou art a Son the same with me in substance and equal in glory, and I will make it manifest by every evidence that thou art, in reality, such a Son.' Add to this the following words in Zechariah; "I will engrave the gravings thereof;" that is, 'I will cause to appear in him, all those marks and excellencies, which are the characteristics of the Messiah and my Son.' But whatever be the meaning of these passages, we conclude, that the Son of God, for this precise reason that he is begotten of God, is in all respects like and equal to God the Father who begat him, and is the true God and one with him.

XVIII. It is impossible that more than one should be the Son of God in this sublime sense; and the Scripture, accordingly, represents him as the ONLY-BEGOTTEN Son of the Father. Believers indeed are "begotten of God;" and this generation of believers is the communication of exactly the same essence, or "divine nature," which is communicated to Christ.* Yet that communication of the same divine nature, and consequently that generation from God, which is the privilege of believers, is entirely of a different order and kind from that which is attributed to Christ. The former is improper, metaphorical, gratuitous, importing some resemblance to God, such as is competent to man; but by no means equality, least of all, identity. The latter, on the contrary, is such as may appertain to a

Divine person,—proper, natural, eternal, implying equality, oneness, identity[†] with God the Father. This it clearly taught by John, who, after having affirmed that believers are "born" or "begotten of God," in order to preclude all doubt that the sonship of Christ is widely different from the sonship of believers, testifies more than once, with the same breath, and almost in the same sentence, that Christ is the "Only-begotten Son of God."^f Were it not for this, the inspired writer would certainly have avoided so harsh an appearance of contradiction;[‡] and after having taken notice of many sons that are begotten of God, would have deemed it better to say, that Christ is the most distinguished Son, and more excellent than the rest, than to call him the "Only-begotten."

XIX. Truly impious in a high degree is the cavilling of Socinus on this topic With a view to overthrow the true and eternal sonship of the Son of God, he not only substitutes in the room of an incomprehensible generation, which is the fundamental and only cause of that sonship, those things which are merely manifestations and posterior evidences of it; but also denies, that Christ is called the Only-begotten Son of God because he alone was begotten of God. This is expressly to contradict the Holy Ghost, and indeed himself also; for if others besides Christ are begotten of God by the same kind of generation, Christ is certainly not the Only-begotten.

XX. But what reason does he assign for this designation? For having rejected the true cause of the Scripture's calling Christ the "only-begotten Son" of God, he must needs contrive others foreign to the purpose. He compares Christ with Isaac, whom Moses calls the only Son of Abraham, and Paul his only-begotten Son; while it is evident that at the very time when he is so termed, Abraham had another son, namely, Ishmael, as really begotten by him as Isaac. He pretends that there are chiefly two reasons for that designation. The first is the peculiar love which his Father bore for him; just as Solomon says that he was an "only" Son "in the sight of his mother," although he was not the only son born to David of the same mother.^j The second is, that he alone was to succeed to the whole inheritance.

Socinus vainly alleges that Christ is in like manner termed the only-begotten Son of the Father, because he is peculiarly dear to the Father, and is appointed the sole Heir of all things.

XXI. It is readily admitted, that the comparison which he institutes between Christ and Isaac would be legitimate, had he remembered that in Isaac there was only a faint shadow of those things, which in Christ are found in the highest perfection; and had he not, from the similarity of several terms which, with some note of imperfection, are applied to Isaac, taken occasion to obscure the glory of Christ, to whom "a more excellent name" belongs. As to the rest, the heretic both deceives and is deceived. Isaac is styled an only Son to Abraham, because he alone was born by virtue of the promise, and because it was solely on his account that his Father's name was changed and enlarged. He is called his only-begotten, because he alone was born of Sarah, his lawful wife. These circumstances gave rise to the designations only and only-begotten, and were the reasons of his tender love for him, and of his appointing him heir of all that he had. Abraham's peculiar affection for Isaac, and his making him heir of all his possessions, were not, on the contrary, the reasons of these designations. The love shown him, and the inheritance he received, gave evidence that Isaac was the only-begotten, but did not make him so. And the same thing must be affirmed with regard to Christ. Because Christ is the only-begotten Son of God, God loves him with a tender and peculiar love, and he has declared him Heir of all things.

XXII. The objection from Prov. 4:3. where the expression is, "the only one in the sight of my mother,"* has no weight. For, 1st, The Hebrew word rendered only[†] does not, in its native signification, exhaust the whole meaning of the Greek term which corresponds to only-begotten.* Only is one expression, and only-begotten is another. If only mean dearly beloved when the subject so requires, it does not, for that reason, signify only-begotten. David, too, called Solomon my only Son, chosen of God, dear to me, more excellent than the rest; he did not call him only-begotten. 2dly, Who will assert that what is

here mentioned may not be understood as having at least commenced when Solomon was in reality his mother's only-begotten Son, though several brothers were afterwards added to the number? For it clearly appears, that he was Bathsheba's first born after the child that was conceived in adultery. 3dly, What should hinder us from explaining these words as spoken figuratively by Solomon,—as if an only-begotten Son, not Solomon himself precisely, were represented as expressing himself in this manner?†

XXIII. It is by no means sufficient, however, for the purposes of faith, thus to consider Christ as the ONLY-BEGOTTEN SON OF GOD, unless we contemplate also his relation to us, and our relation to him. And here what first presents itself to view is that unbounded love of God the Father, which prompted him to exalt us who are by nature "the children of wrath," and the offspring "of our father the Devil," to so high a dignity as to become, not indeed equal, yet in our measure similar to his only-begotten Son,— "to be conformed to his image, that he might be the first-born among many brethren."

XXIV. But again, it is an evidence of still greater love, that, in order to our obtaining this dignity, he spared not his only-begotten Son, but gave him to us, and delivered him up for us. Abraham was regarded, and not unjustly, as having done a great thing, when he withheld not from God his son, his only son Isaac, whom he most tenderly loved. But Isaac was nothing more than a man and a sinner; he was due to God, and was given to God; given in purpose rather than in fact; it was not possible for him to die more gloriously than as a consecrated victim which God desired, and which exhibited in his death a type of the Messiah, who was to be offered in sacrifice in due time; nor after all did he die. What is the son of Abraham, besides, compared with the Only-begotten Son of God, who was given to us insignificant men, to be actually sacrificed and slain for our salvation, to be burned and consumed both in soul and body, by the fire of Divine justice, kindled against our sins!

XXV. How amazing also is the kindness of the Lord Jesus Christ towards us, who, notwithstanding his greatness, and our extreme insignificance, "is not ashamed to call us brethren!" Truly infinite is the distance with regard to dignity between Christ and us,—Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, and us, who, considered in the most favourable light, are as persons "born out of due time."s To Saul it appeared highly indecorous in Jonathan, the son of a king, to entertain a brotherly affection for David the son of Jesse. But how much lower doth the Son of God condescend to stoop, in calling us his brethren, and in allowing us to use the same familiarity towards him! And see what an astonishing wonder of love is here! In order to diminish, in some degree, the inequality of condition, the Son of God, "who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, made himself of no reputation, took upon him the form of a servant,"u and, what is by far the lowest step of his debasing assimilation to us, appeared "in the likeness of sinful flesh;"—and hath exalted us at the same time to the greatest height of dignity of which we are capable, by giving us the glory which the Father give him,w and by making us "partakers of the divine nature." These indeed are demonstrations of an almost incredible love.

XXVI. But the generosity of our Brother doth not stop even here; for he admits his chosen to the name and the privileges, not only of the sonship but also of the primogeniture. This is truly wonderful, and far surpasses human reason; for it seems impossible, in the nature of things, that there should be more than one First-born among many brethren. The Son of God has neither sold his birth-right, after the example of the profane Esau; nor, like Reuben, forfeited the primogeniture by any instance of misconduct. That dignity, in fine, which he obtains by the right of his Sonship, is no less unalienable, and no less incommunicable, than his eternal Divinity. Whence then do we receive the name of the primogeniture, and, since the name cannot be nugatory, its privileges also? Truly our holy religion is full of mysteries, that are not to be measured by reason, but embraced by faith. Christ has not resigned his own birth-right, but bringing us by his Spirit into a state of the most intimate union with himself, he has

made us partakers of himself, and of all his benefits, and consequently of his primogeniture. He has not, profanely sold his own, but has generously purchased ours for us, and acquired it by the spotless purity of his meritorious obedience. And as he doth not cease to be the only-begotten Son of God, though we are said to be begotten of God; so neither is it prejudicial to his primogeniture, that we are recognised as the first-born of the same Father; for our primogeniture is quite of a different kind and order from his. We obtain this advantage from it, in the mean time, that we are lords of all our brethren, who are born of the same blood, but not of the same Spirit with us; and that, receiving more than a double portion above them, we are heirs of all our Father's goods, and joint-heirs with Christ.^a

XXVII. It becomes us, however, to attend particularly to our conduct, and to take heed that we do nothing unworthy our relation to so illustrious a Brother. 1st, Since we are now bound by the vow which was made of old by the Spouse, and since Christ has become our "Brother, sucking the breasts of our mother;" it remains that, having found him, we "kiss" him with a kiss of inviolable love. If Joseph in this manner embraced his brethren, and Benjamin more than the rest;^c how much greater cause have we to embrace Christ Jesus our Brother; who comes to us not to take away corn, but to bring us food sufficient to nourish an immortal life! 2dly, As he is not only our Brother, but our First-born Brother, and "the First-born of every creature, in all things having the pre-eminence;"^e we ought also to render him all possible homage, treating him with at least no less respect than Jacob treated his ruthless brother Esau. 3dly, It should be delightful to us to enjoy his familiar fellowship; for it is good and pleasant for brethren to dwell together in unity.^g And in proportion as he is more excellent than any Jonathan, so much the more bitter should be that lamentation which the want of his valued intercourse calls forth. 4thly, Let us take him in all things for our "example,"ⁱ that by bearing as close a resemblance to him as possible, we may be assured of our sonship. 5thly, For his sake let us also love all who are his,—all in whom even a feint resemblance, and consequently some

relation to him, may be discerned; as David resolved to show kindness to all that were of the family of Saul, for the sake of his brother Jonathan. 6thly, Let us never allow ourselves to be ashamed of Christ, of his Gospel, or of his cross; but in distressing as well as in comfortable circumstances, in adversity no less than in prosperity, let us, with alacrity and joy, confess him as our Brother, lest he be ashamed of us in the glorious day of his second coming, when his people will enter on the full possession of the heavenly inheritance.

DISSERTATION XIII: ON JESUS CHRIST, OUR LORD

I. IT is no inconsiderable part of civility and politeness to address every one by his proper titles; and in showing each other this mark of respect, the primitive Christians, as appears from numerous examples of sacred monuments, were by no means deficient. But in proportion as the only-begotten Son of God excels all mankind in glory, with so much the deeper veneration and heart-felt regard doth it become us to do him homage. We ought carefully to guard against every appearance of neglecting any expression of respect to which he is entitled; for it is the will of the Deity, "that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father." That celestial urbanity, however, which is not merely the language of the lips but the effusion of the heart, is taught and learned only in the school of the Spirit. "No man can say that Jesus Christ is LORD, but by the Holy Ghost;" that is,—so as rightly to know, acknowledge and celebrate the lordship of Jesus, with its grounds and consequences, and to have the whole soul suitably affected towards him as Lord. Let us now attempt, therefore, in dependence on the Spirit of Christ, accurately to show what it is to call him LORD, in spirit and in truth.

II. Christ is, in reality, "the LORD;" "the Lord from "heaven."d He requires us to honour him with this compellation; "Ye call me Master and Lord; and ye say well, for so I am." Faith addresses him at once with the heart and the mouth, saying, "My Lord, and my God;"f and indeed every tongue is bound to confess, "that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

III. It is the subject of dispute among the learned, whether the Son of God, to whom the title Κυριος, (Kurios,) is usually ascribed, be also called Δεσπότης, (Despotes;) and what difference there may be betwixt these two words. Some would have us to believe, that Δεσπότης is never used in holy writ but with reference to the Father,

and that He is called Δεσπότης in allusion to servants that are obliged to obey; but that Christ is termed Κύριος, because he has an inheritance as his peculiar property. This distinction of the words is, in their apprehension, deducible from the fourth verse of the Epistle of Jude, where God is called Δεσπότης, Master, because he has power over all; and Christ Κύριος ἡμῶν, our Lord, because he has authority over us, as his property, and a possession which he has purchased for himself. The latter term, they allege, must certainly add something to the former, as otherwise there is a vain repetition of a word entirely synonymous. Ammonius seems to countenance this distinction; for at the word Κύριος, in his book concerning similar and different expressions,* he says: "Κύριος and Δεσπότης differ. A husband is called Κύριος in relation to his wife, and a father is so called in relation to his children; but one is denominated Δεσπότης in reference to those that are bought with his money." He expresses himself almost in the same manner at the word Δεσπότης. And I own that, influenced by the authority of eminent men, I formerly acquiesced in these statements.

IV. But having examined the matter more carefully, and observed the way in which the terms are employed, I saw reason to conclude that this distinction is not well founded. Κύριος is the most general word, and signifies a person having authority and power[†] over any thing, in whatever manner it is acquired; Δεσπότης is used in reference not only to servants, but likewise to all sorts of persons that are subject to one's authority and government. Δεσποτης παντων ανθρωπων, "the Despot of all men," occurs in Æschines.‡ Demosthenes, in like manner, says; Δεσποτες, ηγεμων, κυριος παντων,§ "the Despot, the ruler, the lord of all;" where these terms, it is to be noticed, are used as synonymous. In Plutarch we have the expression, δεσποτην σου και αδελφον,|| "thy Despot and brother." Nay, any one is called the Despot of his peculiar property.¶ Thus Lucian has του δακτυλιου δεσποτης, "the owner of the ring;" and Theophylact uses the phrase, δεσποτης χρηματιου,* "the proprietor of the goods." The Greek Interpreters of the Old Testament, also render the Hebrew word מֶלֶךְ, Adon, by Κύριος and Δεσποτης indiscriminately; though indeed by

the former term more frequently than the latter. There is no example, besides, to prove that in the style of the New Testament these words are distinguished from each other in the manner alleged; for we will show immediately that the passage produced from the Epistle of Jude, is explained better as relating to Christ. Nor does the accumulation of equivalent words, make an unbecoming tautology; it rather expresses the sense the more emphatically, and is often made use of for this purpose, both by sacred and profane writers. We have just seen an instance of this in Demosthenes; and with that example you may compare the following; "the Blessed and the only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords." If any distinction at all is admissible, what consideration should induce us to choose that which the learned men are pleased to prefer? "If there is any difference," says Erasmus, † "Δεσπότης is a term denoting private right; Κυριος is a name of honour and authority; for mothers are required οικοδεσποτειν, to guide the house; not κυριευειν, to rule with sovereign authority."

V. Nor is there any reason why we should hesitate to call Christ Despotes, or to affirm that he is so called in Scripture. Since, as God, he has all things in common with the Father, he is unquestionably Despotes in the same sense with the Father. In that passage, too, in the second Epistle of Peter, where this word occurs, it is far more natural to explain it as relating to Christ than to the Father; for the expression bought leads us to this interpretation, and false prophets have more generally directed their attacks immediately against Christ than against the Father. Nor is it necessary to insert a point between the words in Jude, in order that God the Father alone may be called Despotes, and Jesus Christ Κυριος ἡμων, "our Lord." That this is not allowed by the article, which, being common to all the epithets, shows that the subject is one and the same,—Beza contends against Erasmus, and Bisterfeld maintains in opposition to the objections of Crellius.* Add to this, that in several manuscripts the words are these; "the only Lord and our Lord Jesus Christ" † —the word "God" being omitted. The Complutensian edition obviates all doubt, giving the words thus: "the only God and Lord, our Lord

Jesus."‡ The Syriac, the Ethiopic, and both the Arabic versions, take the expression in the same sense. May we not also refer to Christ the cry of the slain martyrs? "How long, O Lord holy and true, &c." It is certain that Ecclesiastical writers often give this name to Christ.§ Isidorus of Pelusium says, "Our Lord and Master Christ."|| "Herod," says Photius, "missed the Lord, but murdered a great number of infants."¶ And, according to the testimony of Eusebius,** the descendants of our Lord's family, were denominated Δεσποσσοι, persons related to the Despotes. Let us then desist from building important propositions upon a distinction by no means solid. Neither the authority of Christ, nor the credit of our religion, depend upon the niceties of words.

VI. Further, this title of honour is, in all reason, due to Christ; for he is JEHOVAH, and possesses in himself the whole excellence of Deity, which is the root and foundation of Divine dominion. He is expressly called Jehovah in Isaiah; "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of JEHOVAH," that is, Christ; for this is the language of John his harbinger. And again, "Surely shall one say, In JEHOVAH have I righteousness and strength; even to him shall men come." That these expressions relate to Christ, is not only evident from the scope of the passage itself, but also confirmed by the authority of Paul, who applies to Christ the verse immediately preceding.m Now Christ being JEHOVAH, he is for this very reason LORD,—having the same authority and power with the Father over all things that are without himself, and that are indebted to him for whatever they possess. "All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made;" and upon that account he has dominion over all. The Apostle says emphatically, "There is one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him."o In this respect Christ has a lordship purely Divine, in reference to which all creatures, and in particular all rational creatures, angels as well as men, are his servants, being dependant upon him, and bound to take his law for the rule and standard of their actions. The winds and the sea obey him; and whilst the good angels willingly and cheerfully

recognise his authority, it is acknowledged, although with reluctance, even by the bad.

VII. But besides that lordship which he possesses over all as God, on account of the unbounded excellence of his nature; he has another lordship as Mediator, which is given him by the Father, and exercised in a special manner over the elect, who are his property and inheritance, and as Peter says, "a peculiar people."

VIII. Christ's authority over the elect as his peculiar property is consummated by three different steps. 1st, The original foundation of it is in the eternal decree of the Father, by which they were given to him, that he might acquire and redeem them for himself. Accordingly he renders thanks to the Father, saying, "Thine they were," as all creatures are thine; "and thou gavest them me," by a special decree thou didst exempt them from the common condition of others, thou didst commit them to me to be redeemed and called by me in due time. In the same sense he denominates the elect of the Gentiles, when neither actually redeemed nor called, my sheep; because by the Father's appointment he was already their Lord.

IX. 2dly, This authority, however, was more fully acquired by actual purchase, when he delivered up himself in our stead, that we, being bought with a price, might be no longer our own. As when the price is paid, the right to the thing purchased is transferred to the purchaser; so from the time when Christ gave his own blood for them as the real price of their redemption, he was constituted the sovereign Lord of all the elect The Father then said to him, "Ask of me," according to thy right (in conformity to the covenant, of which we read, Isaiah 53:10.) "and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."

X. 3dly, By virtue of this right he now watches over the elect as his property, sustains them in life, affords them the means of salvation, preserves them from the sin against the Holy Ghost, and does many things towards them, by which, as by a sort of preparatory measures,

he begins to claim for himself his own. But at last he comes to take actual possession of them, when, by his Spirit, he effectually calls, regenerates, and blesses them with faith. Although, in point of right, they were long before the property of Christ, yet, in point of fact, they continue under the power of the devil, sin, and their own corruptions, until being freed from every other dominion by the powerful operations of the Spirit of Christ, they are completely vindicated and appropriated to him alone. Then they renounce Satan, sin, and themselves, and acknowledge Christ their Redeemer as their lawful and only Lord. In this manner he "delivers them from this present evil world," "brings them" to himself, and purifies them unto himself a peculiar people.

XI. This lordship of Christ was recognised by ancient believers before his incarnation, for David in spirit calls him his Lord;—and also by those who conversed with him on earth, whilst his majesty was yet concealed. It was, however, graced and aggrandised by splendid accessions, when he was advanced to the right hand of God the Father, and solemnly proclaimed King and Lord of his Church. Of this Peter speaks in the following words; "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified, both LORD and Christ."

XII. But he also powerfully asserted his dominion, and gave a striking demonstration of it in the sight of the whole world, when he punished the refractory nation of the Jews with a dreadful overthrow, destroyed their polity, burned their temple, and abolished the whole assemblage of those carnal ceremonies by which the glory of his spiritual kingdom was not a little obscured. He asserted it too, when, after the numerous and bloody contests in which his Church was involved, he enabled her to triumph over the barbarous tyrants both of the East and West, established her liberty under Constantine the Great, and either made the rulers of the earth affectionate nursing-fathers to the Church, or compelled them to render him a pretended subjection. In fine, he exhibited a remarkable proof of his sovereign dominion, when, in the days of our fathers, he greatly

reduced the tyrannical power of Antichrist, who usurps his throne, and caused the everlasting Gospel, in which he is preached as the only Lord of the Church, to be published through the whole world.

XIII. There are also displays of his authority which are yet to take place. He will demonstrate that he is Lord, when he shall convert the Israelites to himself, overturn the profane throne of Antichrist, and destroy the destroyers of the earth,—and when the dominion and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall, in consequence, be given to him and to the people of the saints of the Most High,—when all the kingdoms of the world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and the Church shall, under his pacific reign, be enriched with the most abundant gifts of the Spirit. In what surprisingly magnificent language the Scriptures both of the Old and New Testament, describe those happy times, we shall elsewhere have a more convenient opportunity of showing at large. That blessed period will at length be succeeded by the last act of the lordship of Christ, when, having judged men and devils, and having trampled all his enemies under his feet, he shall bring the whole assembly of his people home to himself in heaven,—being glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe. Such then is the dominion of Christ; nor is it merely such, but far surpasses all that it is possible for us to express or conceive.

XIV. To give evidence that we rightly acknowledge and truly believe the lordship of Christ, it behoves us to be affected towards him in a manner worthy of those who remember that they are his, and not their own. They who call Christ Lord, not only with the mouth and from custom, but from the secret teaching and influence of the Spirit, behold in him, in reality, such Divine excellence, such a height of Divine perfection, so rich an abundance of grace, in short, such a venerable majesty resulting from the glories of his character, and diffusing its lustre on every side, that whatever once seemed bright and magnificent in the world, and whatever seems illustrious and splendid in the choirs of the Seraphim and Cherubim, appears, in comparison with Him, as smoke, or the shadow of a shadow. Such

did the Spouse represent him to herself, when she described him as "white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousands," surpassing all those eulogies in which she so copiously and so affectionately celebrates his excellence. Such did Peter, with his companions, behold him on the holy mount.^c Such did John see him more than once; and in preceding times, Isaiah,^e and Ezekiel, and Daniel.^g Such do all his servants believe him to be, though they may have never seen him but with the eye of faith, as he is represented in the spiritual glass of the Gospel, or as, without any visible splendour, he shines on their hearts by the beams of his majesty. No one, doubtless, rightly venerates the sovereign authority of Christ, who does not deliberately consider him as infinitely more excellent than all creatures, and does not regard him as a person of so transcendent worth that it becomes all orders of angels in heaven, and all the princes, kings, and emperors on earth, to unite with himself in worshipping, praising, and adoring him with the profoundest reverence, casting their crowns at his feet,—and who is not, in fine, so transported with admiration for his unparalleled glory, that to be wholly devoted to it, is his earnest desire and his unspeakable delight. "He is thy Lord," says the Psalmist, "and worship thou him."

XV. Further, it is necessary for every one who acknowledges Christ as his Lord, to renounce Satan, the world, sin, and even himself, that he may belong to none but Christ. It is absolutely impossible to serve at the same time two masters that are so contrary to one another, and the one of whom, at least, justly demands the submission of the whole man. Whoever belongs to Christ, doth not belong to Satan; he is rescued from his tyranny.^j "In time past," but only in time past, he "walked according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." He doth not belong to the world; he is "delivered from this present evil world,"^l and he has learned that "the friendship of "the world is enmity with God." He doth not belong to sin; he is dead to sin, through the death of Christ.ⁿ Formerly indeed he was its servant; but being now made free from sin, he has become the servant of righteousness. He doth not belong to himself, that he should desire to be the master of his

own actions, or the disposer of his own lot, his own foolish concupiscence giving him law. But his affections being reduced to order, the desires of the flesh being subdued, and the remains of his own will gradually vanishing away,—Christ alone begins to live and to reign within him.p It is certainly the characteristic of all the servants of Christ, that they hate, dread, and detest the cruel dominion of those lords, or rather tyrants, whom they formerly served, and whatever they know to be conducive to their interest

XVI. The dominion of those tyrants was solemnly renounced by believers in ancient times, when they gave their name to Christ in baptism. It was a truly pathetic address which, according to the custom then observed, the Patriarch, on the sixth day of Easter-week, delivered from his chair to those that were about to be baptized. We shall here exhibit a part of that address, adapted to our present purpose.* "You intend this day to show the hand-writing of your faith to Christ. Your conscience will be the pen, ink, and paper; your tongue, the form. Attend then to the manner in which you subscribe this profession. Beware of committing a mistake, lest, peradventure, you should be deceived. Men that are about to die make a testament, and appoint another to inherit their possessions. To-morrow night you, too, are going to die to sin; and now your renunciation is a testament; you make the devil the heir of your sins, and you leave them to him as an inheritance. If any of you then retains in his mind any thing which belongs to the devil, let him renounce it as one that is about to die, who is no longer master of his own possessions. Let none amongst you, therefore, retain in his heart any thing that pertains to the devil Cast in the devil's face all the remainders of filthiness and wickedness, and be joined with Christ. See that none of you be negligent, or high-minded; stand with trembling. The whole transaction in which you are now engaged is awful and tremendous. All the powers of heaven are present in this place; all the angels and archangels, though invisible, are recording your words; the Cherubim and Seraphim are bending from heaven in order to receive your engagements and promises, and represent them to the Lord. Take heed, therefore, how you resist the devil, and adhere to the

Creator of the universe." A little after, he thus addresses them: "What I say, say you also in like manner: I renounce Satan, and all his works, and all his service, and all his angels, and all his pomp." He says these words thrice, and they all respond. Then he interrogates them, saying; "Have you renounced Satan?" to which they reply, "We have renounced him." Immediately he rejoins, "Stand with trembling. What I say, do you also say: And I am joined with Christ," &c. He says these words also thrice, while they all respond. He next asks them this question thrice: "Are you joined with Christ?" And when they have replied, "We are joined," he makes a short prayer, and then subjoins the following admonition: "Behold you have renounced the devil, and are joined with Christ. The records are completed, and Christ confirms them in heaven. Be faithful to your engagements. Preserve these records for yourselves, for they are to be publicly produced hi the day of judgment," &c.*

How pious, solemn, and devout this ancient observance! Would to God that we never forgot the day in which we were devoted to the service of Christ, whilst his name was invocated over us! Would that we never forgot that sacred obligation which is sealed by baptism! It is useful, however, by some affecting form of speech, to press these things again and again upon the minds of those who have been initiated into Christ, and have called him Lord. And for that purpose we now make use of this form in conversing with our young people.

XVII. Further, it behoves the man who makes an honest profession of Christ as his Lord, to submit to his will with the greatest alacrity. Without contradiction, and without murmuring, he must acquiesce alike in his commanding and disposing will; that he may cheerfully perform the duties required, and patiently suffer the evils inflicted. It is reasonable that the will of the servant be in all things conformed to the will of his Lord, and, so to speak, absorbed in it, so that from the heart he may say, "Not my will, but thine be done." Even the heathen, that knew not Christ Jesus, the Lord that bought us, saw from the dim light of nature, that this is a debt which they owe to

God. Epictetus divinely says; "Will thou nothing but what God wills."*

XVIII. Let us speak first of his COMMANDING will. As many as call Christ Lord, and do not at the same time obey his precepts because they are his, make, without doubt, a false and hypocritical profession. "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" If the authority of a centurion over his soldiers and his servant is such, that they go and come at his pleasure, and promptly obey his orders, how much greater the authority over his people, which belongs to Jesus, our supreme Commander and Lord! "The life of every man," said Epictetus,† "is a military service,—both long and diversified. Thou must act the part of a soldier, and perform without reserve whatever thy Commander may require, even anticipating, if possible, his will." But Epictetus was ignorant of Christ, the Commander in the Christian warfare. Thou knowest him, and therefore it becomes thee to say with Paul; "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"—waiting only the intimation of his will, and obeying with alacrity and promptitude all and each of his commands, how ungrateful soever they may appear to the flesh, and how different soever from the dictates of disordered reason—although he should command thee to go even to inevitable death. If the heroes of David, on hearing the king express his ardent wish that one would give him water to drink from the well of Bethlehem which was before the gate, broke through the host of the Philistines, drew water out of that well, and brought it to David, what service that we know to be well pleasing to our Lord, should appear to us arduous! A Socrates could say to God; "Whatever place or rank thou mayest assign me, I would die a thousand deaths rather than abandon it."* And shall not we say with Paul; "None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear to myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus?"u

XIX. Nor is it enough to do those things which Christ hath commanded us, unless we do them, also, because he hath commanded them. The formal nature of obedience consists in this,

that we recognise and submit to the authority of Christ. In all Christ's precepts, indeed, there is the highest equity, pleasantness, and utility, which we are bound to consider and admire, and which ought to make those precepts themselves amiable in our esteem. But his sovereign lordship over us will only appear, when the mere will of Him who commands, stands in the place of every reason; even though, as often happens, owing to the blindness of our minds, we should discern nothing in the command, either equitable, or pleasant, or useful. Hence such expressions as the following are frequently annexed to the precepts of Scripture: "I am the LORD;" "Have not I commanded thee?"^w "In order to obviate our difficulties," says Tertullian, with his usual energy, "we inculcate this one thing, that what God commands is good, and the best that can be done. I esteem it daring presumption to question the excellence of a Divine command; for we ought to obey it, not merely because it is good, but because it is the command of God. The majesty of the Divine authority should operate as the chief inducement to obedience. The authority of Him who commands deserves consideration, prior to the advantage of him that serves."* This reasoning of Tertullian is strongly confirmed by Chrysostome in the following words; "When God commands, it is not our part to inquire curiously into the nature of the things prescribed, but merely to obey." And again, "God hath commanded; make no farther inquiry."[†] In the passage whence these words are quoted, you will find a copious illustration of this topic; and the whole deserves a perusal.

XX. It is incumbent on every one who duly acknowledges the lordship of Christ, to submit himself also in the same spirit to his DISPOSING will. If he is Lord, and if we are his property, who can hinder him from doing what he will with his own? "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay?" We have noble examples of this submission in Aaron,^z in Eli, in David,^b in Hezekiah. It becomes all to discover the same temper. To contend with the providence of God, is equally vain and criminal. It is vain, for he leads the willing, and

drags the refractory. "I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from, thee,"—none of thy thoughts can be frustrated; or, no thought is too hard for thee,—there is no thought which thou canst not overcome, or which does not strive with thee in vain. It is criminal; for reason says, that it becomes thee to yield to the Lord, and not the Lord to thee; and that it is better thou shouldst be involved in total ruin than that even the least part of his most holy will should fail to be accomplished. Our Lord is at once righteous, "excellent in judgment, and in plenty of justice, so that he will not afflict;"^f—and wise, knowing infinitely better than we ourselves what is conducive to our interest;—and good, attending more carefully than we to the preservation, the honour, and the improvement of his property, and overruling all events for the benefit of his people, not excepting those which are apparently the most destructive. The man who is not firmly persuaded, that it will be better for him that things proceed according to the will of the Lord Jesus, than according to his own inclination, throws a most unjust aspersion upon the government of Christ.

XXI. It is truly base and disgraceful, if faith does not teach us that submission towards Christ, which nature taught the heathen towards God. Even these saw that "it is the part of a good man to yield himself to fate,"^{*} and "without murmuring to follow God, by whose appointment all things take place."[†] They knew that nothing is more reasonable than to refer our will to the will of God, or rather to give it up without reserve to be absorbed by that supreme will. Hence says Epictetus, in language surpassing that of a philosopher: "I have surrendered my inclination to God. Is it his will that I should be sick of a fever? it is my will also. Is it his will that I should direct my attention to any thing? it is my will too. Is it his will that I should earnestly desire any thing? it is likewise my will. Is it his will that I should obtain the possession of any thing? I also am so inclined. Is it not his will that I should obtain it? Neither is it mine."[‡] Seneca says to the same effect: "Let man be pleased with whatever has pleased God."[§] They taught that the man who contends with the Divine will,

wearies himself in vain; which is the scope of the following elegant distich:||

Whate'er the course fate thee assign,

Submit with pleasure, ne'er repine:

Although you fret, and vex your soul,

Unyielding fate you can't control.

They regarded it as an established maxim, that what God wills is better for us than our own choice. "I always acquiesce," says Epictetus, "in that which comes to pass; for I deem that which God wills, better than what I will. To him I adhere, as his servant and follower; my wishes and desires are in unison with his appointments; whatever he wills, I will."* Nay, they went so far as to argue, that all things should be received from God not only with patience, but also with joy and thanksgiving; nor did they merely argue thus. The same Epictetus, (from whom I am at present often quoting, having lately read his writings, and being unable to withhold from my hearers these very beautiful quotations,)—Epictetus, I say, has the following expressions: "To a good man nothing is evil, either living or dying. What then shall I think, when God doth not afford me the means of subsistence? What else, but that as a good Commander he sounds a retreat for me? I submit, I follow, commending my Leader, and praising his works. I came when it seemed good to him, and now I retire when he pleases; and while I lived, this was my employment, to praise God, whether alone or with others, whether with one or with many."† And again; "Rendering thanks to God for all things, blaming nothing whatever that is done by him."‡ From all this they inferred, that nothing is more worthy of a virtuous man, or more conducive to his happiness, than to follow God whithersoever he calls him,—charging men to keep always in remembrance the lines of Cleanthes, which may be thus translated:*

Father of all! great Ruler of the sky!

Thy power I own, thy wisdom still desery.

Whate'er the paths through which thou'rt pleas'd to lead,

With joy I follow, and obey with speed.

Were I to fret, and act a wayward part,

Follow I must, though with an aching heart.

Fate leads the willing, drags th' unwilling soul;

Tranquil, the good; the bad, compell'd to howl.

These are choice and invaluable sentiments, which it becomes us to wrest from Heathen moralists as unlawful possessors, to transcribe into our own philosophy, and in our practice itself to transfer to Christ; if whilst we call him Lord, we are anxious to guard against falsehood and hypocrisy.

XXII. Besides, who can doubt that it is a source of the greatest consolation to the pious, that, delivered from the cruel dominion of the most dreadful tyrants, they no longer belong to the devil, or to sin, or to themselves, but to Christ Jesus, the Lord. It is truly honourable to serve a Lord so wise, so just, so mighty, so blessed, and so glorious in every respect. It is truly pleasant also to be subject to him, whose "sceptre is a sceptre of righteousness:"—whose "statutes are right, rejoicing the heart, and more to be desired than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey, and the honeycomb:"—who has rescued us not only from the yoke of sin and Satan, to which all mankind were subject, but also from the yoke of the ancient ceremonies which lay grievous on the necks of the fathers; and has put upon us his own yoke, which is light and easy, consisting merely in the delightful offices of charity and love:—who, in a word, requires nothing from his disciples of which he has not previously exhibited an example in his own conduct:j—whose goodness and clemency surpass the kindness of all mortals, as far as

the heaven is higher than the earth:—who regards his disciples not as "servants, but friends," and, as we have lately seen, even honours them as "brethren." It is truly advantageous, in fine, to have Him for our Lord, who is most wise, to provide for the interests of his people, —most powerful, to protect them alike against the violence and the fraud of their enemies,—most opulent also, and most liberal, to enrich them with abundance of good things, temporal as well as spiritual and heavenly, and at last to make them possessors and partakers of all that glory which belongs to himself. It were easy to illustrate these ideas at length, and they furnish ample matter for pious meditations. But we hasten to consider the economy of our Saviour's incarnation.

DISSERTATION XIV: ON JESUS CHRIST, CONCEIVED OF THE HOLY GHOST, AND BORN OF THE VIRGIN MARY

I. AMONGST the precious promises with which the God of heaven was graciously pleased to favour the people of Israel, that in which he assured them that he should "walk in the midst of them," is entitled to hold a distinguished place. The Lord made good this promise in various ways, and by several steps. 1st, He caused the tabernacle of the congregation to be erected, and the ark of the testimony and covenant to be made, and gave them to Israel as symbols of his special presence. With regard to the tabernacle he said: "This shall be a continual burnt-offering throughout your generations, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, before the LORD; where I will meet with you to speak there unto thee. And there I will meet with the children of Israel, and the tabernacle shall be sanctified by my glory.—And I will dwell amongst the children of Israel, and will be

their God." And Jehovah himself marched in the ark, in the sight of the people, to search out a resting-place for them.^c 2dly, Besides that symbolical presence, he showed that he was near them, by his special favour and liberality, and by his readiness to succour them in every time of need; of which we read in the following passages: "Is not the Lord in Zion? Is not her King in her?" "God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved."^e "Thy paths drop fatness."³dly, The above promise, however, was most signally accomplished, when, he prepared for himself a human body, and graciously visited his people, walking among them through the land of Israel. In reference to this visit it is said; "Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion, for, lo! I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord."^g Zacharias also says with respect to it; "The day-spring from on high hath visited us;" and John,— "The word was made flesh, and dwelt among us."ⁱ The meaning of the Greek expression is, he conversed among us in the flesh, as in his own habitation or tabernacle, just as the Divine Shechinah dwelt of old in the temple. This mystery was called by the Fathers, his coming in the flesh.* And since it is the foundation of our hope, and the source of all our joy, it becomes us to consider it with close attention.

II. Long before the incarnation took place, various preludes of it were exhibited to the ancient Church. There were symbols, amongst which the most remarkable was the ark of the covenant; of which the gold signified the eternity, glory, and dignity of the Divine nature of Christ, and the wood prefigured the meanness of the human nature, in reference to which he is called "the fruit of the earth." There were also extatic visions, such as those with which Ezekiel, and Daniel,^l were honoured; in which God presented himself to view in a human, but an uncommonly splendid form; not to give occasion of sinning to Anthropomorphites,* and Iconoplasts,[†] but to exhibit in a prophetic figure the mystery of the wonderful incarnation. It was adumbrated, in particular, by those appearances of God to Abraham and others, in which, having assumed the form of the human nature, he was seen by them face to face, hospitably received, and entertained at their table. To this the following words of our Lord may be applied: "Your

father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad." "The day of the Lord," is his coming in the flesh.ⁿ Abraham, having received a promise of that day, earnestly desired to see it: and this desire he, in some respects, obtained. He not only contemplated the incarnate Jehovah, and made him in a manner present, by the eye of faith; but also beheld him at hand, eating, drinking, and conversing familiarly with him, in that human form which he condescended to assume. The Messiah appeared in like manner to Jacob in the similitude of a man wrestling with him; to Joshua in the form of an armed man;^p to Gideon under an oak in Ophrah; and to Manoah and his wife.^r These appearances paved the way for the prophecy: "Thy watchmen lift up the voice, with the voice together do they sing; for they behold before their eyes; that is, they behold him that speaks, saying, Behold it is I."^t

III. We, however, to whom the matter is related as a fact which has actually taken place, are bound to examine it more distinctly. We may refer what concerns it to four heads. I. The SUBJECT of the incarnation. II. Its MODE. III. Its CAUSE. IV. The FRUIT and benefit arising from it.

IV. The SUBJECT of the incarnation, or he who became man, is not the Father, nor the Holy Spirit, but the Son alone. "The Word was made flesh." "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman."^v Jesus Christ is come in the flesh." Although the essence and operation of the three persons in the godhead are the same, the flesh was not assumed by the divine essence; but by a certain person. It was at least assumed by the divine essence, only as it is characterised, and, so to speak, restricted, in the person of the Son. Neither the Father, nor the Holy Spirit, indeed, was unconcerned in the incarnation of the Son. The glory of the whole adorable Trinity is displayed in the human nature of Christ. But though the Father is in the Son, he is not therefore incarnate with the Son; he is only in his incarnate Son. A body was formed to be the future residence of the Deity, by that will which is common to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. But whilst it was determined by the will of the Father and the Holy Spirit

that that body should belong to the Son, the Son, by the same will, determined that it should be his own; and thus by the united consent of all the Three, it could be the body of none but the Son.z

V. As to the question, Why the Son, and not the Father or the Spirit, assumed the human nature, it cannot be answered in a more satisfactory manner than by resolving it into the good pleasure of the Divine counsel, which is always distinguished by the most consummate wisdom. Yet, in consequence of the manifestation of that counsel to us in the Gospel, faith observes without difficulty, that it is most suitable to the Divine perfections, and most worthy of them. It is proper, in particular, 1st, That man should be regenerated and created anew, by the same person by whom he was created at first.b 2dly, That he who is the personal Word of God, should publish to us those words of God in which he promised to address us in the last days, and which none but the Lord could speak.d 3dly, That he who is the Son of God by nature, should make us the sons of God by grace. 4thly, That the glorious image of God should be restored within us by him who is "the image" of the Father, and "the express image of his person."f In fine, the unbounded love of the Father could not be more brightly demonstrated, than by giving his only-begotten Son to us, and for us.

VI. With respect to the MODE of the incarnation, let us, in the first place, attend to its truth. The Son of God did not become man merely in appearance, but in reality. He had all the essential parts of a man,—a soul,i and a body, which is expressly opposed to a phantom and spectre;k—and the faculties and affections of each,—in body, extension and palpability, and increase of staturem—in soul, a finite and limited understanding, and a will distinct from the Divine will.o He had also experience of hunger, of thirst,q and of sorrow, which expressed itself by tears.s In short, the Son of man came eating and drinking, and was found in fashion as a man.u

VII. Further, the incarnation of the Son of God was effected, 1st, Not by a change of the Divinity into humanity, for it is altogether

incapable of change. Most absurdly have some inconsiderate men restricted this perfection to the Deity of the Father: for the Divine nature is one only; immutability is clearly ascribed to God the Son; and even after becoming man, he continued God. 2dly, Not by the confounding of both natures into one; for in Christ each nature remains distinct, and has its own distinct properties. 3dly, Not by the creation of a human nature out of nothing, or by its descending from heaven; for then he would indeed have been man, but not the son of man, nor our kinsman, nor one of the brethren; which, as we shall show immediately, it was necessary for him to become. 4thly, Nor, in fine, by a shortlived form and representation* in a body not personally united to himself; such as that in which, as we have just mentioned, he appeared of old; and that in which the pious ancients supposed, and not without reason, that the Father and the Holy Spirit also appeared.z

VIII. But the incarnation of the Son of God was accomplished, by the assumption of the human nature into the individual unity of the Divine person. The Holy Spirit himself makes use of the term assumption, Philip. 2:7. "He assumed the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men." † "The form of a servant" does not indeed signify precisely human nature as such; for although, after his resurrection, he laid aside the form of a servant, and although, no longer concealing his majesty, he now manifests himself as equal to God, he still retains the human nature. But "the form of a servant" denotes the debased condition of humanity, or human nature in a servile state. This humble form was assumed by our Lord, when he emptied himself, and began to exist in the likeness of men; still remaining what he was from eternity, "being in the form of God," that is, truly God, and manifested, known, and acknowledged as such. The word form denotes the real thing itself, and that made manifest.

IX. The same truth is intimated Heb. 2:14. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers* of flesh and blood, he also himself, likewise, took part of the same." † Christ has the same flesh and blood which

the children have, but not in the same way with them. They are partakers of it; they possess the human nature in common, and have no other nature. But Christ took part of it; after he began to have flesh and blood like them, he possessed their nature in union with another nature which he had from eternity. He existed prior to that nature into the participation of which he then came; for he was "in the beginning, when the foundation of the earth was laid."

X. Nor did the Apostle intend any thing else, when he said, 1 Tim. 3:16. "God was manifest in the flesh." That is, he who is God, and could not cease to be what he was, was seen and heard, and handled in the flesh, in a human body actuated by a rational soul, which, as Athanasius expresses it, "he appropriated to himself as an instrument personally united to him,"[‡] with whose eyes he might see, with whose ears he might hear, with whose hands he might act, with whose feet he might walk among his people, and in which he might both suffer and be glorified, both die and revive: So that, on account of the very intimate union of that human nature with God the Son, the actions performed by it might be no less the actions of God than the creation or government of the universe, and it might be justly said of him when exhibited to view; "Lo! this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us; this is JEHOVAH, we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation." This expression of the Apostle corresponds with the language of the Prophet, "And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed."^c To this prophecy John also alludes, when he says; "We beheld his glory."

XI. John 1:14. is to the same effect. "And the Word," which was from the beginning, which was with God, and was God, "was made flesh,"* began to be man: Not by a transmutation of the Divinity into humanity, but by so close a union of human flesh with himself, that that person who hitherto was nothing else than God, now also became man. A similar phrase occurs in the account of the creation of the first man;—"And man became a living soul:"^e which the Apostle renders thus, "The first man Adam was made a living soul." Man had previously been a piece of dust; but after God had breathed

into him the breath of life, "he was made a living soul," not casting off the nature and qualities of dust, but receiving a soul. After the same manner, if we may compare human with Divine things, the Word was made flesh; not ceasing to be what he was, but receiving a human nature which he had not formerly possessed. The force of this expression did not escape the notice of the ancient Doctors. Tertullian observes that, "in particular, the very preface of John the Evangelist shows what he, who was pleased to be made flesh, had formerly been."†

XII. Socinus urges that the expression should be translated, "And the Word was flesh." This clause was added, he contends, lest any should infer from the metaphorical language John had employed when describing the dignity of the Word, that the Word was an incorporeal substance, or a divine and eternal nature. He alleges that the Evangelist plainly confesses he was flesh, a weak, despised, and sorrowful man, in order to obviate every doubt that might arise in the minds of his readers. And that none might think it strange that ἐγένετο, was made, is explained by ἦν, was, he adduces the expression, ὃς ἐγένετο ἄνηρ προφητης, which he renders, "who was a prophet."

XIII. But here, reason entirely abandons the heretic. John had not described Christ as a metaphorical divinity, but as "the true God," and on that account distinct from all "that are called Gods."i Nor was it necessary for him to correct his expressions in any degree, to prevent us from forming too exalted sentiments of Christ; for all human thoughts, and all human language, fall far short of the dignity of Him, "who is over all, God blessed for ever." Had he entertained any such intention, too, as that which Socinus ascribes to him, he would not have made use of a term which, without question, generally and properly signifies was made, or began to be, and which therefore supports that doctrine which the heretic brands as an error; but would have said in clear language, ὁ λογος ἦν σαρξ, the Word was flesh. Besides, although perhaps γινεσθαι, to be made, sometimes occurs in Greek writers instead of εἶναι, to be, yet, as a

laborious Interpreter has observed from Moschopulus, that sense of the word is rather uncommon, poetical, and improper. Nor can an instance of that signification be easily produced from the sacred volume. The passage mentioned by Socinus, is not in point. The term γινεσθαι, indeed, is often employed to signify, to show one's self such, to conduct one's self as such, to be found such: and this is the sense in the passage referred to. The meaning is, he was found to be a Prophet, and showed himself such before God and all the people. And the words may be explained by the following expression of Peter:—"A man approved of God among you by miracles, and wonders, and signs."

XIV. Let us now proceed, as we promised, in the third place, to inquire into the CAUSES of the incarnation. Here we must, first of all, give glory to God himself, the principal Author of so wonderful a thing. "The LORD hath created a new thing in the earth, A woman shall compass a man." A certain woman, in whom nothing but her sex comes to be considered here, shall compass, not by embracing, but by conceiving in her womb, a man, that is, a man-child. And this compassing of a man by a woman, is the work of God alone,—not the consequence of her having associated with a husband, or any man. The Lord performs or "creates it,"*—effects it by the mere command of his will,—as "a new thing," to which nothing equal or similar was ever seen. It is now seen, however, "in the earth," or in the land, namely, the land of Israel, to which God repeatedly promised that he would come, to dwell in the midst of his people. This explication is plain, consonant to the analogy of faith and to the proper sense of the words, and also very well adapted to the scope of the Prophet's discourse. He is here recalling the virgin of Israel, a backsliding daughter, to that right and sure way which her believing fathers had trodden. Now, it is certain, that the great and capital error of backsliding Israel is this, that she does not acknowledge the Messiah, whom God has given her. He had in the preceding chapter foretold his birth, saying,—"Their Governor shall proceed from the midst of them." In this same chapter, he had related particularly one of its concomitant circumstances, namely, the slaughter of the infants of

Bethlehem. q He now adds another sign, the creation of a new thing in the earth, a birth from a virgin;—expostulating with Israel in these words, "How long wilt thou go about" in devious paths, which lead thee away from thy God, from happiness, and from the ways of the ancient fathers,— "O thou backsliding daughter," carried about with divers errors; listen to what I am about to say; an extraordinary thing has taken place in the earth, which has not been heard of from the beginning, which yet the fathers expected, "A woman shall compass a man." Believe me, the reparation of thy loss, the refreshing of thy wearied soul, and the replenishing of thy sorrowful soul, depend on this mystery, and on the acknowledgment of it.

XV. The whole adorable Trinity concur in this work; and hence it is ascribed to each of the persons; to the Father,—to the Son, s—and to the Holy Ghost. It is said, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee;" also, "She was found with child of the Holy Ghost;" u and again,— "That which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost." It is much more natural to refer these expressions to the third person of the Godhead, than to the Son according to the Divine nature. But with regard to the manner of the Spirit's operation on the Blessed Virgin, it is far more consistent with prudence and chastity, to covet it, after the example of God himself, with a veil of sacred silence, than to determine with audacious mind, or to presume to explain it with the tongue or the pen. Let it suffice to know, that the work of the Holy Spirit was distinguished by a double miracle, 1st, The fructifying of the virgin's womb; 2dly, The sanctification of the fruit of the womb, which the virgin conceived and brought forth.

XVI. This conception, however, although attributed in a special manner to the Holy Ghost, doth not make him the Father of Christ; for there is an obvious difference betwixt forming any thing of matter derived from another quarter, and generating from one's own substance. We do not deny, that God is metaphorically called the Parent of all men, because he creates and preserves them; and that, in a similar sense, the Holy Spirit might be termed in some respect

the Father of the human nature of Christ. Yet since generation does not properly terminate on a nature but on a person, since the person of Christ is not begotten by the Holy Spirit, and since the Holy Spirit is nowhere called the Father of Christ in sacred writ, we, too, ought scrupulously to avoid that expression.

XVII. This event took place according to an agreement between the Father and the Son, or, as it is expressed by Zechariah, according to "the counsel of peace," which was between "the LORD of Hosts," the Father, and "the man," the Son, who was to become man, "whose name is the BRANCH," being raised up by God, and being the new root of a new family, or of the sons of God according to the Spirit. This Branch "shall grow up out of his place;* that is, as Aben Ezra understands it, of himself, † by his own proper power, without sowing, without human agency; since he was to be born of a virgin. "And he shall build the temple of the LORD, even he shall build the temple of the LORD." Here the repetition of the same words directs our thoughts to more than one temple. He builds the temple of his natural body, "in which dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."z This he built, in the first instance, when by his own will he became man, and, afterwards, when he rose again from the dead; and by means of both he became "a Sanctuary" to his people. He builds also the temple of his mystical body, that is, the Church.b

XVIII. But whilst we are considering the Causes of the incarnation, MARY must not be entirely overlooked. Three things chiefly respecting her, are worthy of notice. 1st, Her pedigree, being of the seed of Abraham, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Judah, of the house of David. 2dly, Her condition, as in a state of spotless virginity. 3dly, Her relation to Christ, as his true mother.

XIX. It was necessary, according to the prophecies, that the Messiah should be "the seed of Abraham;"—of the posterity of Israel, who is represented as the heir of the promise made to his grandfather;d—of the tribe of Judah, to which the same inheritance was restricted;—and of the house of David,f from whom indeed he was to spring when

the posterity of Jesse were to be as a decayed trunk,* without blossom, leaf, branch, or ornament.⁴ All these circumstances were united in Mary. She was of the tribe of Judah, for "it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah;"—and of the house of David; for the expression "of the house of David," in the gospel of Luke,^h must be referred to Mary no less than to Joseph. And in how depressed and degraded a state that family then was, appears from the circumstance, that in Joseph, to whom Mary was betrothed, it was reduced to the axe and the hatchet of the carpenter. It is accordingly affirmed in ecclesiastical history, that Domitian derided the near relations of Christ for their poverty, and for having hands brawny with labour.

XX. It is not inconsistent with this genealogy, that Elizabeth is said to have been "the cousin" of Mary, and at the same time one of the daughters of Aaron.^j There is nothing to hinder Mary's mother from having been of the tribe of Levi, and of the family of Aaron; and some of the ancients affirm, that she was sister to Elizabeth. It was also possible for the mother or grandmother of Elizabeth to have been of the tribe of Judah, and thus very nearly related by blood to the father of Mary, while her father or grandfather was of the tribe of Levi. But according to the rule of genealogy most commonly observed amongst the Jews a family is reckoned, not from the mother, but from the father. The objection brought forward by some, that it was unlawful for the Israelites to take a wife, or to marry, without the limits of their own particular tribe, is assumed gratuitously. Such marriages were, at least, not universally unlawful. In the sacred records, we find no prohibition, but, on the contrary, several examples, of such connexions. Aaron, a Levite, married Elisheba, daughter of Amminadab, sister of Naashon, who was "prince of the children of Judah."^l If it is objected that that marriage took place before the law, behold another example after the giving of the law. Jehoiada, a priest, consequently a Levite, and a descendant of Aaron, took to wife a daughter of king Jehoram, of the tribe of Judah, of the house of David. If you insist, that greater liberty was allowed the priests and Levites than other tribes, I shall not at present demand evidence, as I

justly might of their possessing this privilege. I only remark, that the instance now produced is sufficient for removing the difficulty under our consideration; for according to your own hypothesis, it was possible for the father of Elizabeth, being a descendant of Aaron, to take to himself a wife of the family of David, and thus related by her parents to Mary. But we see the same liberty taken by other tribes. David, at least, who belonged to the tribe of Judah, had a daughter of Saul, a Benjamitess, for his wife. Nor do we find any law to the contrary; for in Numbers 36:6. we have the determination of a special case relating to young women that are heiresses,* on whom the whole inheritance devolves, all the male issue being dead, whose marriages were limited to men, not merely of their own tribe, but also of their own family. A special determination of that sort, however, serves rather to confirm, than to destroy, the liberty which was generally enjoyed. Besides, it is really not improbable that Mary was one of those young women to whom that determination referred, and therefore espoused to Joseph, as her nearest kinsman. It is not our intention to involve ourselves at present in other genealogical difficulties, which are sufficiently perplexing. Learned men have given very satisfactory replies to the cavils of impious mockers of the Scriptures.

XXI. That the Messiah should be born of a VIRGIN, was foretold in Isaiah 7:14. On this passage the blind and infatuated Jews contend to no purpose about the signification of the word עלמה, than which none stronger is furnished by the Hebrew language, to denote a female of unspotted virginity. Mary professes before the Angel, that she was a female of this description; nor does the Angel accuse her of falsehood. Joseph, too, was informed by an Angel, that the woman whom he had espoused, was found with child, not from the knowledge of a man, but from the power of the Holy Ghost. And who would now presume to question that a virgin conceived, that a virgin brought forth; since even the most inveterate enemies of Christ, amidst the numerous reproaches which they cast upon him, never ventured to upbraid him with the least disgrace attached to his mother's bed; since nothing would have been easier, had she been

guilty of adultery, than to convict and punish her, the law requiring this, and her husband not objecting; and since they might have been able, at a single stroke, to ruin the whole glory of the Son, by the ignominious punishment of the mother? How, too, could it have come into the mind of any woman not entirely lost to modesty, to pretend that when a Virgin she had brought forth a child? How could she believe such a thing of herself? How could she expect or require, that others should give her credit? How, in particular, could a woman of low rank and in indigent circumstances, hope to obtain credit to a story, which would not have been believed from the lips of a Queen in her kingdom, or palace? Truly unless the testimony of her conscience, the invincible force of truth, the miracle of the overshadowing Spirit, and the assurances of Angels, had obliged her to profess her virginity, what effrontery is sufficiently bold and shameless to induce her to make pretensions so utterly incredible?⁵

XXII. With these particulars relating to the blessed Virgin, derived from the sacred records of the Gospels, we rest satisfied, exploding the tales which inconsiderate writers of fables have added about her extraordinary birth and education in the temple, or even in the Holy of Holies, and her tow of perpetual virginity, and the examination of her chastity by the priest and by a female named Salome, and other impertinent stories of the same kind, taken from the spurious Gospel of James,^{*6} from Nicephorus, and from other injudicious authors. Baronius, amidst all the light of this literary age, has not been ashamed to repeat, and, in a great measure, to countenance those ridiculous fables. Xavier the Jesuit, too, more impudent than he, has detailed them in the History of Christ which he has composed in the Persian language, and obtruded them on the nations of the East, as if they were of the same certainty with the divine and infallible records of the Gospel; for which he has been justly chastised by Ludovicus de Dieu. The curious will find a specimen of the Gospel of James in Boxhorn's Universal History.[†]

XXIII. Let us now go on to show that Mary was, in reality, the Mother of Christ. It is certain that she is often called his Mother. But

she could not have been so, unless Christ had taken his human nature from her substance.‡ Accordingly it is said that he was "made of a woman,"—that he was "the fruit of Mary's womb,"—and "the seed of the woman."†

XXIV. These expressions overthrow the opinion of certain Anabaptists, who assert that Christ brought down his human nature from heaven, that it was formed of the essence of the Father or the Holy Ghost, or of the dew of the eternal godhead, or of celestial, starry, or elementary matter; which, however, passed through Mary, as water through a pipe, or as the beams of the sun through glass. Such sentiments are truly impertinent and absurd, since the Scripture affirms, that, by the power of the Holy Ghost, Mary conceived Christ, that she bore him in her womb, and that, like other mothers, she brought him forth at the stated time; all which assertions are directly contrary to those bold unauthorised similitudes.

XXV. That we often read in the Scriptures that Christ "descended from heaven," we do not deny. But this expression is not to be understood precisely of the human nature, but of the person of the Son of God; who is said to have descended from heaven, because he showed himself present among men in a singular manner, appearing in human flesh personally united to himself. Nor is there greater weight in the argument drawn from the following words: "I am the living bread, which came down from heaven;—and the bread that I will give, is my flesh." For these expressions teach us, that the Son of God, in order to become the Author of a true life to sinful men, manifested himself in the flesh which he assumed; and that, not by the labour or care of men, but by a Divine and heavenly appointment and agency, that flesh was prepared to be spiritual food, the cause of a true and blessed life.

XXVI. This controversy ought not to be deemed of small moment, as if it concerns us nothing to know whence Christ hath his flesh, provided it be evident that he has real flesh. It was necessary that the

Messiah should not only be man, but also our Kinsman and our Brother, the seed of Abraham, and the fruit of David's loins. They who give us any other representation of the Messiah, feign one different from him who was promised by the prophets, and expected by the fathers.

XXVII. Let it not be thought that the Apostle sets aside or derogates from the necessity of this knowledge, when he says,—“Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more;” that is, according to the flesh. In that passage, the expression “according to the flesh” is not connected with Christ, as in some other places, but with our knowledge; in reference to which a distinction is made between the knowledge which is according to the flesh, or carnal, and the knowledge which is according to the Spirit, or spiritual. Knowledge according to the flesh, consisted either in the sight of the bodily eye, on account of which some who had seen or touched Christ in the flesh, and particularly after his resurrection, pronounced themselves happy, or were pronounced happy by others;—or in consanguinity, for which the Jews, as the natural branches, were esteemed more happy than the Gentiles. The Apostle renounces such boasting as carnal and frivolous; as the celebrated Cloppenburg, who once adorned the University of Friesland, has learnedly remarked.*

XXVIII. Let us now inquire, in the last place, what FRUIT accrues to us from all these things. We may consider distinctly, what advantage we receive, 1st, From Christ's being Man. 2dly, From his being taken from among men. 3dly, From his being born of a Virgin.

XXIX. The Son of God having become Man, he is also our Mediator, thoroughly adapted for the whole work. Paul, therefore, intending to set forth the Mediator, mentions expressly that he is man.—“There is one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” He might have called him God; he might at least have omitted calling him man, as he omitted calling him God. But he employed the most effectual means to afford us suitable relief and encouragement under

our weakness, by familiarly exhibiting the Son of God as one of us. It was requisite that for our sake the Son of God should become Immanuel, God with us. It was even necessary that, by a mutual conjunction, his divinity and humanity should be closely united; otherwise the relation would not have been sufficiently near, nor the tie sufficiently strong, to inspire us with the cheering persuasion, that God dwelleth with us.

XXX. But another reason must also be stated. It was incumbent on our Surety to perform what the law demanded from us, that its righteousness might be fulfilled, and that we might be saved in consistency with the old covenant. Now the law which was given to men, could not be satisfied but by a man—either with regard to its commands, which require the spirit, soul, and body, to be kept pure and devoted to God;—or with regard to its threatenings, by which the death it requires, is denounced both against soul and body. Hence it was necessary that our Surety should be truly man, that he might "fulfil all righteousness" in soul and body; and that by suffering death in both, he might deliver his people from death.^b

XXXI. Hence the Apostle couples these two inseparably together,—"made of a woman, and made under the law;" intimating that the immediate design of Christ's incarnation, was that he might be subjected, in his human nature, to that law which was first given to man.

XXXII. The same truth is figuratively suggested by our Lord in the Psalms of David, when he says, "Mine ears hast thou opened;" which the Apostle thus explains, "A body hast thou prepared me."^e The expression carries an allusion to Exodus 21:2–6. Although the Hebrew servant was otherwise of the same origin and dignity with his master, yet, if from love to his master, and from love to his wife, though a servant, and to his children, though born in a state of servitude, he voluntarily chose to continue in the service of his master beyond the space of seven years,—his ear, according to the injunction of the law, was to be bored through with an awl at the

door, or one of the door-posts of his master. Christ transfers this to himself. Being in other respects equal to God his Father, "he took upon him the form of a servant," and from love to God the Father, to his spouse,^g and to children born under the servitude of the law, he came under engagements to a voluntary and lasting service. This was signified by the boring not of one ear only, but of both ears:^{*} which, as done to the Messiah, points out his great alacrity and promptitude in serving, expressed by himself in the fortieth Psalm;—and, as the action of the Father, represents the Father's peculiar satisfaction in the voluntary subjection of the Son. Both the one and the other were openly declared, when, according to the will of the Father and the Son, a body was prepared for Christ, in which he might accomplish that voluntary service. Hence we read, "And now saith the LORD that formed me from the womb to be his servant."

XXXIII. It was requisite, farther, that our Mediator should be from among men,—"the Son of man;" that he might be our Kinsman and Brother, and thus our GOEL,[†] or our Redeemer by the right of propinquity. It was becoming,—it was worthy of God, that "he who sanctifieth and they who are sanctified, should be all of one,"—of one blood, that they might call each other brethren; for it was necessary that the Mediator should be subject to the law of love to our neighbour and our brethren. "Wherefore it behoved him in all things to be made like unto his brethren." "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels, he undertook not the redemption of angels,[‡] but he took on him the seed of Abraham."

XXXIV. The Hebrew word GOEL, as attributed to Christ, is of rich and extensive import; and deserves, therefore, to be here explained a little more particularly. In the Goel of the ancient Hebrews, three things chiefly fall to be considered: 1st, His Person; 2dly, His duties; 3dly, The manner of performing those duties. As to the Person of the Goel or Redeemer, it behoved him to be the nearest relation, or failing him, some kinsman. To such a one, in virtue of his relationship, a fourfold right belonged; or if you please, a fourfold duty was incumbent upon him. 1. That of redeeming possessions of

his brother or kinsman, which had been sold or alienated, as a house or land.ⁿ 2. That of obtaining his freedom, if he were a captive or a servant. 3. That of avenging him, if murdered; hence he was called "the avenger of blood."^p 4. That of marrying the wife of a deceased brother or kinsman, to raise up seed to him; as a pledge of which, he spread over her the skirt of his garment;^r for, amongst the Jews, this was a symbol of conjugal duty, love, and protection.

With regard to the manner of performing these offices, three things are observable. 1. That sometimes a price was to be paid, as in the redemption of property that had been sold. 2. That on some occasions power and force were to be employed, as in the avenging of blood. 3. That sometimes kindness was to be shown to a widow, as in the case of marrying a deceased brother's wife. These, when taken together, include almost every thing relative to the Goel, of which we are informed by the Mosaic law.

XXXV. Christ was called Goel before the institution and beyond the sphere of the Mosaic polity; and perhaps some rights pertaining to the Goel prevailed in the families of the patriarchs; among whom, some traces at least, of the right of a husband's brother, occur. But the prophets that flourished after Moses, Sometimes distinguish our Saviour by the same name.^v And all things which the law required in the Goel art found united in Christ.

XXXVI. With respect to the person,—Christ, by assuming our nature, became our Brother and Kinsman, that being already possessed of the right of propriety, as God, he might obtain the right of propinquity, as our Relative. Indeed he is in a peculiar manner related to the Jews, as from them he sprung.^x On this account he is said to have taken on him the seed of Abraham, and from this Paul gathers that the Jews shall one day be restored.^z But in a more general view, Christ is also the brother of other men, without distinction of nations;—not indeed of all mankind and of every individual, but of those that belong to "the seed of the woman," who are so called according to the promise, and opposed to "the seed of

the serpent." The Israelites, then, are related to the Messiah at once by paternal and maternal extraction,—by their descent as well from mother Eve as from father Abraham; for to him also a promise of the blessed seed was made. The Gentiles are related to the Messiah, at least, by maternal descent. On both sides we ought to consider not the mere carnal alliance, but the divine promise, which is the source of a true and beneficial relation.

XXXVII. By virtue of this right of propinquity, Christ has claimed us to himself; of which we have a form in the following words: "But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel; Fear not, for I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine." Christ too has omitted none of those duties that could be expected from a GOEL; far, 1st, By his meritorious righteousness he has recovered our lost possessions, and that heavenly inheritance which we had forfeited by our demerit;—"having obtained eternal redemption."d 2dly, He hath delivered us who were captives, and in a state of bondage to the devil. 3dly, He has taken vengeance on our enemies, who had murdered our souls.f 4thly, He has dissolved our connexion with our former husband, to wit, the law and covenant of works, and joined us to himself in an everlasting and indissoluble marriage, according to the covenant of grace. For the confirmation of this union, too, he has spread over us the garment of his most perfect righteousness;h which is shadowed forth in Ezekiel, by a naked and polluted female, over whom it pleased God, having entered into a marriage-covenant with her, to spread his skirt.*

XXXVIII. Nothing is omitted even as to the manner of performing these offices; for, 1st, He has redeemed us by paying a most ample price. 2dly, He has rescued us from the slavery of the devil by the most signal exertions of might and power.k 3dly, He has displayed incredible love in betrothing and purchasing the church to himself. See copious illustrations of these points by James Alting.*

XXXIX. With respect to our Lord's being born of a Virgin, this is an evidence of a holy and immaculate conception and birth: For these two consequences follow from his mother's virginity. 1st, That our Surety was not represented in Adam's covenant, since he was not born according to the law of nature, and consequently was not liable to the imputation of Adam's sin. 2dly, That he could not be considered as existing in Adam, when Adam sinned; for he was not born by virtue of that blessing which God pronounced on marriage before the fall, and which was annexed to the old covenant, "Be fruitful and multiply;"—but by virtue of a new promise subsequent to the fall, in which he is denominated "the seed of the woman," and appointed the second Adam, the root and head of the new creation.

XL. This immaculate holiness of the conception and nativity of Christ, or, which is the same thing, this original purity of our Lord's human nature, tends without doubt to our advantage. It is a counterpart to that impurity and depravity of our nature in which we were conceived and born, and is intended to cover it. In other words, it forms a part of that perfect righteousness of Christ, by which, in the capacity of Surety, he satisfied all the demands of the law in our place, and which is ours in all its extent. The law declares that no man is worthy of eternal life, but one that is holy in nature as well as in conduct. Since sin consists wholly in contrariety to the law, that corruption of nature which is born with us will not be sin, unless it be contrary to the law. But it will not be contrary to the law, unless the law, by a precept opposed to it, require holiness of nature in every rational creature as soon as born. Besides, Christ, as our Surety, performed every thing that the law of righteousness demanded on our account. For our sake, therefore, it behoved him to be born righteous and holy, according to the demand of the law; that he might cover our original sin with his original righteousness, and supply our want of original righteousness.

XLI. This assertion is not, as some have imagined, a novel opinion, or an error springing from our ignorance and temerity. The most eminent men in the Church, have formerly, according to holy writ,

taught the same doctrine. We read in the Palatine Catechism, Quest. xxxvi. "What benefit do you derive from the holy conception and birth of Christ? Ans. That he is our Mediator, and that, by his innocence and perfect holiness, he covers my sins in which I was conceived, that they may not appear in the sight of God." Gomar says;—"Of whose righteousness, namely that of Christ, there are two parts, a habitual and original righteousness of nature, and an actual and perpetual righteousness of life. The former of these is opposed to our original, and the latter to our actual unrighteousness; and covers it in its own way, not by removing guilt, which is done by his sufferings, but by supplying the want of an unblemished righteousness, which both the perfect justice of God and the condition of obtaining eternal life require from us; as our Catechism rightly teaches in the answer to the thirty-sixth Question."* I do not dissemble, that the accurate Gomar distinctly ascribes the removal of the guilt of original sin to our Lord's sufferings. Yet to cover sin, which Gomar, after the Catechism, refers to the original righteousness of Christ, is to forgive it. To forgive, is to remove guilt. In popular language, too, that which supplies the want of original righteousness, removes, at the same time, the guilt of original sin. If we are truly willing, in fine, with the celebrated Gomar, to speak correctly, we shall say, that the immaculate nativity of Christ did not take place without an emptying of himself, in which suffering is involved. Cloppenburg also contends for the same opinion in the following words: "We have said, too, that this holiness of the human nature, which was perfect from its conception, and exactly holy according to the divine law, interposes, by its merit, betwixt an offended and infinitely holy God, and a sinful man, alienated from the life of God. For it appears that it is not without respect to this inherent holiness of Christ's conception and birth, which is the primary part, and the foundation, of his whole righteousness, that the Scripture pronounces the following propositions: that he is 'made of God to us righteousness;' and that 'we have put on Christ;' o "so that we are 'one in him,' that is, one new man." And after exhibiting the words of the Catechism at the thirty-sixth Question, he adds the following remark: This answer is either not adapted to the Question,

or it speaks of the holiness of the conception and birth of Christ. The latter supposition is most conformable to truth,"*

XLII. These sentiments in no degree preclude the necessity of the death of Christ in order to the expiation of sin, as well original as actual; which the Catechism elsewhere inculcates, and which we also devoutly maintain. We by no means intend, that this holy conception and nativity of Christ can suffice to cover the impurity of our nature, separately from the other parts of his obedience and righteousness. But we consider it as the first part of the entire righteousness of Christ; the efficacy of which, (if all the parts of the righteousness of Christ may be contrasted with the different parts of our misery,) ought to be referred immediately to our original sin, and to the supply of our want of original righteousness.

XLIII. Without doubt, we should intermeddle preposterously with these sacred mysteries of Christian philosophy, were we not by pious and holy meditations to turn them to our own benefit, and to the glory of God in Christ. And, in the first place, we hence learn in general the divinity of our holy religion, which alone shows us that Mediator between God and sinners, in whom the conscience oppressed with the weight of its iniquities, and exhausted by the vain pursuit of remedies in other quarters, may acquiesce with security and pleasure. What human or angelical sagacity could have been able to discover things so hidden, so sublime, and so far surpassing the grasp of all creatures;—that the eternal Son of God should be born in time and become man, that he might be in condition to fulfil the law which was given to men, and, as their Surety, to undergo the punishment due to the offences of men;—that he should even become one of mankind, that he might love and redeem them as his brethren and kinsmen;—yet born of a virgin, who knew no man, that he might contract nothing of that filth of human depravity, which is communicated by ordinary generation to posterity! How adorable do the wisdom, the holiness, the truth, the goodness, and the philanthropy of God appear, in devising, admitting, providing, and perfecting this method of our recovery! How do these mysteries

satisfy the soul, thirsting after salvation, yet justly despairing of relief from all that could be done by itself, or by any other amongst men or angels! Here, here, at last, it perceives, what is to be found no where else in heaven or in earth, a way of reconciliation worthy of the perfections of the Deity, and safe for man. These; these are the tremendous mysteries of Christianity, which "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, and which have not entered into the heart of man;" which were kept secret since the world began, but now are made manifest, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, "made known to all nations for the obedience of faith."^r

XLIV. In the second place, we ought to be dissolved in this unbounded love of Christ towards us. Who doubts that the excellence of the human race, even when the comparison is most favourably made, must yield to the dignity of celestial spirits. But, behold, angels sinned, and man, in like manner, sinned. Yet God, whilst he leaves angels to suffer the punishment due to their transgression, and consigns them to eternal misery, has compassion upon men, and that he may show them his compassion, becomes a partaker of the same nature with them. For he took not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham. How great the height of love in this humiliation of Christ! The ill-advised inhabitants of Lystra of old, indulged in a tumultuous joy, when they beheld the miracles of Paul and Barnabas. "The Gods," said they, "are come down to us in the likeness of men." What they rashly presumed, we may truly affirm,—that God has made a visit to us from heaven in the form of a man, praising him in these words, "What is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man, that thou visitest him?"^t Is it not the most incredible of all miracles, that the eternal Son of God, the Lord of glory, veiling the rays of his majesty, became a creature;—and among creatures, not one of the seraphim or cherubim, but a man (and how little is man to be accounted of!) and among men, not a king or a monarch, but "a servant of rulers." Truly he was pleased to converse familiarly with us, and to live in a condition which might obtain for us the name of brethren.^v "In all things" he was "made like unto us,

that he might be a merciful and faithful High-priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." "For we have not an High-priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." In short, he submitted to the lowest degree of our vileness, that he might exalt us above the rank of men, and make us partakers of his own, that is, of "a divine nature."y O compassion! O almost incredible vehemence of love! O how far doth this love exceed the tenderness of a brother's or a father's affection! With what emotions of gratitude wilt thou be acknowledged! With what returns of love wilt thou be recompensed! What heart is so cold and frozen as not to be dissolved, warmed, and kindled into flames, by the ardours of so boundless a love!

XLV. It must, however, be observed, further, that if we wish to have a solid foundation for our joy in the incarnation of Christ, it is necessary that the same person who was once fashioned in the womb of the Virgin after the likeness of a man, be formed also in our hearts, that he live there, that he be nourished there, that he grow up there "unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."a Since he was conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, it is not for us to pretend to be his brethren, unless we give evidence by a holy course of life, that we are renewed by the same Spirit after the image of God. And as he would not be conceived by any but a virgin, we too must embrace him with a pure and chaste mind, which detests every appearance of a whorish attachment to the world, and is animated with a virgin love to God alone.

XLVI. In fine, as at his birth, choirs of heavenly Angels praised the incarnate Son of God in joyful strains, it is incumbent upon us to celebrate that great mystery of godliness, and God the author of it, with devout and unceasing praises. The blessed Angels begin the song; let us follow them with the voice and the heart. "Glory to God in the highest," who has exhibited a brighter display of his admirable perfections in this illustrious work, than he did of old in the creation of the whole universe! Glory to the Father, who has raised up,

admitted, and given us such a Surety! Glory to the Son, who clothed himself with human flesh, and so cheerfully accomplished his surety-undertaking on our behalf! Glory to the Holy Spirit, the revealer and witness of so deep, so momentous, so precious a truth; and the earnest of so invaluable and longed-for a salvation! Hosanna, blessed Jesus, thou true and eternal God, thou true and holy man! In the unity of thy person, we recognise both natures, each possessing its own distinct properties. Thee we acknowledge. Thee we worship. From thy hand alone we expect salvation. May the whole world of thine elect unite with us in knowing, acknowledging, and adoring thee, and thus be saved through thy blessed name! Amen.

DISSERTATION XV: ON CHRIST'S SUFFERING UNDER PONTIUS PILATE

I. NOTHING can be imagined more elegant, instructive, and impressive, than the emblems made use of in sacred writ; and that which occurs in Zech. 3:9. has always appeared to me particularly beautiful. Our Saviour is there represented as a **STONE** laid by the hand of God before Joshua the High-priest, to which one Stone seven eyes are directed, and the engravings of which the Lord of hosts engraved, whilst by means of it he purposed to remove the iniquity of the earth in one day. The Stone signifies Christ, who is "the rock of our salvation," and "the corner-stone, in whom the whole building of the church fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord."b He is called "one Stone;" "for other foundation can no man lay." God hath laid the Stone, namely, "God, who so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son." He laid it, too, before Joshua, that he and the rest of the priests, and all the teachers of the mysteries of Divine revelation, might attend to it, might point it out to the people as the foundation of the whole system of revealed truth,

—and on it might build themselves, and the people committed to their charge. This was accordingly done with great diligence, in particular, by the Apostles Peter and Paul. Upon this Stone are seven eyes;—to wit, the eyes of God, who beholds it with complacency, and protects it with care; and also the eyes of the church, which regards it with cordial and entire confidence, agreeably to the following invitation; "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth."g But that this Stone might be distinguished from all other stones, it was necessary that it should be divinely engraved with "the engravings thereof,"—its own peculiar engravings. By this we understand "the name of God" impressed upon him as with a seal,—that is, the splendour of the Divine Majesty shining forth in him and his works;i and also those dreadful sufferings by which it became God to make perfect the Captain of our salvation. It was by means of those sufferings that the iniquity of the whole earth was taken away, and the world reconciled to God in one day, namely, the day on which his sacrifice was completed, and, so to speak, the last farthing of his satisfaction paid. Let us then take an accurate survey of this Stone with the engravings thereof, to wit, Christ and his sufferings. We shall speak, first, of the sufferings themselves, and then of the chief Judge in Judea, under whom the principal part of them befell him.

II. In discoursing aright on the SUFFERINGS of Christ,—an expression, including amongst others, those which are afterwards expressly mentioned in the Creed,—five points fall to be explained. 1st, WHO suffered. 2dly, WHAT—3dly, WHEN—4thly, FOR WHAT END—5thly, FOR WHOM—he suffered.

III. WHO suffered?—Christ the Mediator, God-man, made satisfaction by suffering, in his whole person; each nature contributing its own share. In strict propriety of speech, Christ suffered only in the human nature; since the adorable Divinity is equally incapable of the least increase or diminution of its glorious blessedness, and finds most amply in itself alone, and in the possession, knowledge, and enjoyment of its own perfections, all the

treasures of that felicity which is worthy of the Supreme Being. "If thou sinnest, what dost thou against him? or if thy transgressions be multiplied, what dost thou unto him? If thou be righteous, what givest thou him, or what receiveth he of thine hand?" But that it is far from being true, that the Divinity contributed nothing at all towards this object, will appear from what is immediately to be said.

IV. As the whole man, both in soul and body, owed obedience to God; and as the whole man, soul and body, sinned and thus became obnoxious to eternal punishment; so it was necessary that Christ should suffer at once in soul and body, that he might glorify God in both parts of human nature, expiate human guilt, and sustain the punishment due to sin. The whole history of the Gospel speaks at great length, of the sufferings of his body; of those of his soul, he himself complained in the garden, saying; "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." That his sorrow was extremely vehement was sufficiently manifest, when "his sweat was, at it were, great drops of blood, falling down to the ground."n These expressions must not be so jejune explained, as if the body were properly the subject of his suffering, and the soul suffered only by sympathy; for hitherto the body did not suffer, and the sufferings of the body constituted by far the least part of that punishment which it behoved the Surety of mankind to undergo.

V. The Divinity itself indeed suffered nothing; but it afforded strength to the suffering humanity, that it might be able to sustain the pressure of divine vengeance when afflicting it with the whole weight of its anger—not sinking under the load, but nobly overcoming it, and happily lifting up its glorious head. So great is the vehemence of the divine indignation when poured forth against sin in all its fierceness, that unless support is administered by more than human or any created strength, man must inevitably sink under it, and be everlastingly crushed by its power. Hence it follows that none but "the mighty God," strong and valiant, was able to grapple at once with the infernal hosts, and with God himself avenging iniquity.

VI. But the Divinity of Christ was of importance in another respect. It was owing to the Divinity, that the person suffering was GOD-MAN, "in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the godhead bodily;"—not mystically, as in believers—not symbolically, as in the sacraments—not typically and figuratively, as in the temple and the ark—but "bodily," that is, really or personally; as the body is either opposed to the shadow, or designates a person. To the Divinity, in consequence, it was owing, that the suffering of one so great, namely, a Divine and infinite Person, could not fail to be regarded as possessing infinite worth; so that the sufferings of Christ, though of short duration, were equivalent to the eternal sufferings of the damned; and the sufferings of a single person sufficed for the redemption of the many myriads of the elect. Hence the Scripture so often recalls our attention to the Divine dignity of Him who suffered, that we may recognise the boundless value of the satisfaction of Christ. It affirms, that "God hath purchased the church with his own blood"—that "the Lord of glory was crucified"—that "Christ through the eternal Spirit offered up himself unto God"—that "the blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, cleanseth us from all sin."

VII. To impart this infinite worth to his sufferings, it was not necessary that the Divine nature itself, or that Christ as God should suffer. It was sufficient that he who is God, should suffer. All the actions and sufferings are the actions and sufferings of the person, and receive their value and denomination from the dignity of the person, as from the principium quod, although with respect to their condition, they are to be attributed to the nature from which they take their rise, as the principium quo.

VIII. In vain, too, doth Socinus argue, that the dignity of the person contributes nothing towards the infinitude of the punishment, because "there is no respect of persons with God;" and that if this holds even when there is room for the exercise of his mercy, much more, when the infliction of punishment according to justice, or rather according to the dictates of the strictest severity, is in question. In reply to this cavil, we observe, 1st, That "the respect of

persons" which God disclaims, is quite a different matter from the consideration of the worth of the person, in estimating his sufferings. The Greek term προσωπον does not signify a man himself, whom we call a person; but the outward condition or quality of a person or thing, which is unconnected with the cause, and has no concern in its merits. But here the dignity of the person suffering is not an outward quality unconnected with the matter, but more than any thing else contributes essentially to the weight and merits of the cause; for the worth of the person who takes something on himself, is a consideration of great moment. In short, it is one thing to accept the face,*—which is contrary to justice, and is with great propriety represented as impossible with God; and it is a widely different thing to respect the person † properly so called,—which is just, and is rightly attributed to God. 2dly, The condition of a Surety must be distinguished from that of a sinner. Personal dignity might perhaps be of no avail to the guilty individual himself, when suffering the punishment of his own sins; because he possessed when sinning the same dignity which he possesses when suffering; and if it might be pleaded as a reason for diminution when viewed simply in relation to the punishment, it is, however, to be considered as an aggravation when viewed in relation to the offence. But personal dignity is available in a Surety, who makes satisfaction, not for his own transgressions, but for the transgressions of others.

IX. But WHAT hath Christ suffered? In one word, he has suffered the wrath of God, which was kindled against the sins of the whole human race; for "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men". That wrath signifies a most holy detestation of sin, together with the just punishment of it; and accordingly "wrath and the revelation of the righteous judgment of God," are joined together by the Apostle.x

X. God, who is holy, cannot but hate sin, and the sinner. "Thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness—thou hatest all workers of iniquity." Now the natural consequence of this hatred is punishment; for the hatred is most just, and is essential to him who

has the right and the power to punish. Hence the Psalmist deduces the following conclusions: "Evil shall not dwell with thee; the foolish shall not stand in thy sight; thou shalt destroy them that speak lessing."z

XI. There is in sin a wanton indignity and disparagement to the Divine majesty and glory; for whoever sins, acts as if there were no God whom he is bound to revere, or as if he were a God to himself, and the supreme governor of his own actions.^b And what is this but wantonly to insult the majesty and glory of God? But the glory of God is justly dear to himself; and he can no more suffer an indignity done to it to pass wholly unpunished, than he can become "altogether such a one as the sinner;" for so himself hath taught us to reason.

XII. To this concern for his own glory, violated by the sinner, God has given a very significant appellation, namely, jealousy;* which alludes to an honourable husband, who is greatly enraged at the least approaches to the violation of conjugal fidelity. "Jealousy is the rage of a man."^d Now the necessary consequence of that jealousy, by which God secures the vindication of his own glory, than which nothing is dearer to him, is the punishment of sin. Hence the following expressions—"a jealous God, visiting iniquity"; "He is a holy God, he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions, nor your sins."^f

XIII. Nay, further, even when he "forgives iniquity, transgression, and sin, he will by no means clear the guilty." But in that eminent act of his mercy, he demands also some demonstration of his justice. It is deserving of notice, that this sentiment is repeatedly inculcated in those passages, where the great clemency of God towards sinners is celebrated either by himself, or by his servants.^h Thus believers are apprized, that they must not expect, or even desire, the pardon of their sins, without some manifestation of the Divine severity against them. Now God gives a twofold display of his severity. 1st, By chastising sin in believers themselves, at the same time that he forgives them. Of this we read in Jeremiah,^j "I will correct thee in

measure; yet will I not leave thee wholly unpunished." 2dly, He displays it chiefly by punishing in the Surety, the sin which he forgives to believers; for he neither forgives, nor can forgive, but in a manner consistent with righteousness.

XIV. "It therefore BECAME him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." It was required by the το πρεπον, that is, by what is proper and becoming on the part of the Deity, that whilst he forgives sins, he should one day manifest his justice in demanding the blood of the Surety. The same truth is again clearly taught by the Apostle in the following passage: "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness—that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." And truly never was God's holy indignation against the sins of mankind more brightly demonstrated, than when it pleased him, whilst he forgives them to us, to punish them so severely in his beloved Son. Thus it appears that Christ sustained the wrath of God kindled against the sins of men.

XV. WHEN did Christ suffer? He suffered from the beginning of his life, and principally towards the end of it. Sin rendered man obnoxious to misery through the whole course of his life, and made him worthy to experience, without intermission, the bitterness of his own transgression, and the galling scourge of the Supreme Judge; in conformity to the sentence pronounced upon man immediately after the commission of his crime: "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life". Christ, therefore, by becoming our Surety, voluntarily subjected himself to a whole life of abasement and sorrow, always bearing "the form of a servant," and appearing "in the likeness of sinful flesh." And since all those sufferings proceeded from the curse of God against sin, and were undergone by our Lord in virtue of his surety-undertaking for sin, it follows that they all jointly concurred, and were collected, so to speak, into one sum, to make up a perfect satisfaction.

XVI. Christ may be considered as undergoing his sufferings, at four periods. 1st, At the commencement of his life; where we find his emptying of himself by assuming the form of a servant, the meanness of his birth, and his circumcision on the eighth day;—in which we are to consider not only the pain with which that rite was attended, but also the obligation arising from it to fulfil the whole law, and the prelude it exhibited of Christ's being at last cut off out of the land of the living for the salvation of his mystical body,—as in circumcision a small part of the skin was cut off for the preservation of the whole man. To these add, the persecution of Herod, the flight into Egypt, the murder of the infants of Bethlehem, and the consequent lamentation of so many sorrowful mothers. 2dly, In his private life; which he spent with his relations in obscurity, being regarded as a carpenter, and the son of a carpenter. 3dly, In his public life, from the thirtieth year of his age, during which he had to maintain a perpetual conflict with poverty, envy, malevolence, reproaches, calumnies, snares, persecutions, particularly those of the scribes and Pharisees, and rulers of the people. 4thly, At the end of his life, and on the last day of it, when tremendous sufferings of all sorts assailed him with incredible vehemence.

Here again we may distinctly consider, 1. What he suffered in the garden of Gethsemane, after eating the last passover, and also the supper, with his disciples, in which an affecting picture of his approaching sufferings was seen,—in the garden, I say, where he was afflicted with an extreme anguish and sorrow of spirit, sold and betrayed by Judas, apprehended by his enemies, and forsaken by his disciples. 2. What he suffered before the tribunal of the Jews, where he was falsely accused, unjustly condemned, cruelly derided, and, mean time, thrice denied by Peter, that highly favoured disciple. 3. What he suffered in the houses of Pilate and Herod, where, after new accusations were brought against him, Barabbas the robber was preferred before him by all the people—where he was torn with cruel scourges at the command of Pilate, obstinately demanded for the cross by his countrymen, and at last condemned by the judge, in

defiance of the remonstrances of conscience. 4. In fine, what he suffered after his condemnation by Pilate till his death.

XVII. For WHAT END did our Lord endure these sufferings? That he might reconcile elect sinners unto God, and restore them to the divine favour, in which life and happiness consist. Two things indeed may be considered in his sufferings;—the sorrow to which he submitted, when bearing the penalties due to our sins, in order to expiate their guilt;—and the noble ardour of love to his Father in heaven and to his brethren on earth, from which he exhibited a pattern of the most submissive obedience, in order to obtain for us the favour of the Father.

XVIII. This reconciliation, effected by the sufferings of Christ, is expressly and frequently mentioned in Scripture; as in the following passages. "When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son." "All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ." "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." "It pleased the Father,—having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things to himself." The Scriptures contain many other testimonies to the same effect.

XIX. It must be remarked, however, that this reconciliation is attributed, but attributed in different respects, to God the Father, to Christ the Mediator, and sometimes to believers themselves. God the Father is said to reconcile us, as from eternity he decreed to restore to a state of favour some of mankind fallen by sin; and being himself reconcileable from his own philanthropy, and determining to be reconciled in a manner becoming his character, made all that preparation which was necessary for repairing the breach betwixt himself and sinners. Christ the Mediator reconciles us to the Father by his satisfaction and merit, which he exhibits to God, and upon beholding which all his anger is turned away; for he satisfied all the demands of the law, that God might be just in justifying the sinner. By his own blood, too, he purges the consciences of the elect from

dead works, that they may not thenceforth fall into those offences, which would break the bond of reconciliation, but "serve the true and living God." Believers, in fine, are said to reconcile themselves to God, as they embrace by an unfeigned faith the benefit appointed for them by God the Father, obtained for them by Christ the Mediator, and exhibited to them in the Gospel,—laying aside likewise all enmity on their part, and returning love to a God of love.

XX. To obviate every doubt, that the sufferings of Christ are the meritorious cause of this reconciliation, the Scripture calls Christ "the propitiation," and "the propitiation, the propitiatory, in his blood." These expressions carry an allusion partly to the expiatory sacrifices of the Old Testament, where the ram which was offered in sacrifice is called "the ram of the atonement," and the day on which an atonement used to be made for the sins of the people is denominated "the day of atonement:"—and partly to the lid or covering of the ark, which the Hebrews call כַּפֹּרֶת and Paul ἰλαστήριον, "the mercy-seat." The covering of the ark of the covenant was called the propitiatory, "the mercy-seat," for several reasons. 1st, Because it covered the law, which was shut up in the ark, that it might not subject believers to condemnation for the crimes committed against itself and the covenant. 2dly, Because there, God was pleased to be pacified, and to become propitious to his people, through the sprinkling of the blood of victims, which was done towards this covering. 3dly, Because, in consequence, he there exhibited himself to his people, propitious and reconciled, and sitting on the throne of grace, which was between the cherubim.

Now the Apostle, with great propriety, applies the name of the figure and shadow to the substance, and calls Christ "the mercy-seat;" for, 1st, It is he that covers our sins with his own perfect righteousness, that they may never come into God's sight. He interposes himself as the medium between God and us; as the covering of the ark was a medium between the law laid up in it, and the majesty of God dwelling between the cherubim. 2dly, It is he that, by the sprinkling of his own blood, which Paul calls "the blood of sprinkling," made

full expiation to God for us. 3dly, It is he, finally, in whom God hath erected a throne of grace, to which we are commanded to come, and in whom we receive gracious answers to our prayers.

XXI. Further, FOR WHOM hath Christ made satisfaction by his sufferings? We do not deny that the sufferings of Christ, considered in themselves, and viewed in connexion with the character of the person that suffered, who, as we have frequently noticed already, is one of infinite dignity, are of so great value that they could suffice for the redemption even of the whole human race, and of many more myriads of mankind, on supposition their numbers were increased to that extent, if it had pleased God, and Christ, that he should become Surety for them all. Nor are we unwilling to admit, that Christ, as man, being subject to the law of charity, had a holy love to all mankind as his neighbours, heartily wished them well, and seriously lamented the ruin of those that perish; whilst yet, as God, he knew them to be reprobate, and, as Mediator, he had not undertaken for them:—the human affection, however, being in subjection to the divine appointment. We do not deny, besides, that, owing to the sufferings and satisfaction of Christ, many good things fall to the share of the reprobate. To the sufferings of Christ they stand indebted for the reformation of the world from its gross idolatry, and monstrous ferocity, by the preaching of the Gospel; also for many valuable though not saving gifts of the Holy Spirit; for their "escaping the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ;" and for other similar advantages. They obtain these blessings, too, not accidentally, without the intention of God and Christ, but according to the determinate counsel of the Deity and the Saviour. At the same time we maintain, in conformity to holy writ, that, according to the will of God the Father and his own purpose, Christ did not become Surety or make satisfaction, and consequently did not suffer, for any but those whom the Father gave him, and who are actually saved. "I came down from heaven," says Christ, "not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." And this is the Father's will who hath sent me, that of all whom he hath given me I should lose nothing.

XXII. This doctrine derives support from those passages of Scripture in which the sufferings of Christ are restricted to his "sheep," to his "church," to his "people," and even "a peculiar people to himself." All those passages tend to illustrate the distinguishing love of Christ towards his sheep for whom he laid down his life, towards the church which he purchased for himself with his own blood, and towards his people for whom he gave himself. But if the "sheep," "the church," "the people" of Christ have no peculiar interest and privilege in this matter, by which they are distinguished from all other men, is it possible to specify any probable reason why that unbounded love of Christ in laying down his life, shedding his blood, and giving himself, should be ascribed peculiarly to them? This subject, however, we have treated more largely elsewhere.*

XXIII. The compilers of the Creed have thought proper also to make mention of PONTIUS PILATE, as under his government our Lord completed his passion. They have done this, however, not to intimate that those sufferings only were meritorious which befell him after sentence was passed upon him by Pilate; for nothing can be more absurd, nothing more opposite to the whole tenour of the Christian doctrine than that notion. The name of the Roman Governor is mentioned, partly to facilitate the comparing of the epoch of Christ's suffering with the Roman histories, as Luke mentions the enrolling for taxation which took place according to the command of Augustus at the epoch of Christ's birth;—partly for other weighty reasons, which are to be explained immediately.

XXIV. It is proper to take notice of three things respecting Pilate. 1st, The temper and disposition of the man; of which Philo has given a lively description.* He says, that "he was a man of an inflexible and severe disposition;" and a little after he charges him with "accepting bribes, with acts of injustice, rapacity, and violence, with oppressions, with frequent murders of persons uncondemned, and in fine, with the most insatiable and savage cruelty." And truly it required a man of such a temper to resolve, in spite of the remonstrances of his own mind and conscience, to allow himself to

act so barbarous a part towards the most innocent person, and the most perfect pattern of every virtue. But he also suffered the punishment due to his crimes; for he was first reprimanded, then deposed by Vitellius the Governor of Syria, and at last sent by him to Rome to plead his cause before Cæsar, and refute the charges preferred against him; and proving unable to do this, "he was condemned to perpetual exile at Vienne" in Gaul, "and there, by appointment of Caius, he was subjected to so severe restraints and distresses, that he laid violent hands on himself, thus seeking in death a speedy release from a train of protracted calamities." These are the words of Ado, Bishop of the same city, in his Chronicle.

XXV. 2dly, We must advert to the supreme power which he then possessed in Judea in the name of the Roman Emperor and people, and which Christ himself did not disdain to acknowledge as "given him from above." It was proper that Christ should suffer under such a judge as had authority and power to take cognizance of the cause, and, after judicially examining its merits, to pronounce sentence. 1st, That the prophecy might be fulfilled: "He was taken from prison and from judgment:" 2dly, That we might be fully certified of the innocence of Christ, which, although attacked by the basest arts, was, after a strict investigation of the cause and a regular discussion of the question, firmly recognised, and five times declared by the judge. Now the whole concern of our salvation turns upon this hinge; for what hopes could we entertain from Christ, unless it were manifest that he was condemned, not for his own, but for our crimes? 3dly, That being himself unjustly condemned by the chief judge in that land, he might deliver us from the righteous judgment of God, to which we were obnoxious. Pilate indeed acted unjustly in condemning, in compliance with the clamours of the people, a person whom himself had acquitted. But God, to whom the judgment belongeth, by the mouth of Pilate, rightly and lawfully condemned Christ, as loaded with our crimes, and bound to suffer in our stead, and thus by condemning our Surety, absolved us. "The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed."1

XXVI. 3dly, It must not be omitted that the power to which the Jews were then subject, was foreign and heathen. In his own name and that of the Roman people, Tiberius the Emperor of the Romans had intrusted Pilate with the government of Judea, and in the same name Vitellius the Governor of Syria dismissed him from his office; from which it appears that Judea was now a Roman province, and annexed to Syria. This circumstance is of no small moment to the whole cause of Christianity, as well as to the present subject. For, 1st, Hence it appears, that the appointed time of the Messiah's advent had now expired; the sceptre having entirely departed from Judah, and the Prefect of Syria exercising authority over the Governor of Judea; which, as appears from sacred predictions, could not have happened previously to the coming of the Messiah. "The head of Syria is Damascus;" not the head of Judea, which will not depend upon Damascus or Syria, until a Virgin shall have conceived and brought forth a Son.ⁿ The Jews themselves bore witness to their own degradation, when they said to Pilate, "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death;" and when they exclaimed, "We have no king but Cæsar."^p Whether they had been deprived of the power of life and death by the Romans, as is generally thought, or had lost it through the negligence of the Sanhedrim itself, as Lightfoot contends at great length,* it is not material to determine. 2dly, It was proper that the Redeemer of all, both Jews and Gentiles, whilst he suffered for all, should also suffer from all. "For of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together." 3dly, It behoved him to suffer under a Gentile, that, according to the Roman custom, he might be nailed to the cross, which was a form of punishment unusual amongst the Jews. John himself makes the following observation: "The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death, that the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die." For had he been put to death according to the laws of the Jews, it is more probable that he would have been stoned than crucified.

XXVII. Let us now attend to the IMPROVEMENT of this article. Whatever is necessary to our instruction, our humiliation, our consolation, and, in a word, our salvation,—is to be seen in a SUFFERING CHRIST, provided we contemplate him in the exercise of faith. The sum of saving wisdom, as appears from our catechetical summaries, is comprised in these three heads,—the knowledge of our MISERY, of our DELIVERANCE, and of the GRATITUDE we owe;—which Paul also joins together in Romans 7:24, 25. But we can attain from no other source a more clear or a more affecting knowledge of any of these points, than from the sufferings of Christ.

XXVIII. Our misery appears both from the evil nature of sin, and from its dreadful demerit. Take a view of each, O sinner, in the sufferings of Christ. Consider the hatred, the envy, the reproaches, the deliberate artifice and insidious designs, the cruelty, and, in fine, the diabolical fury, prompting them even to dreadful imprecations upon themselves and their posterity, with which both Jews and Gentiles pertinaciously pursued the most innocent and venerable person, and virtue herself invested with a human form; which had for a considerable period confirmed her celestial origin, by her admirable doctrine and her stupendous works and wonders, performed in the presence and proclaimed by the tongues of the people themselves, and which had laid the whole Jewish nation under singular obligations to herself by curing so great a multitude of the lame, the blind, the lunatic, and persons possessed with demons, and by raising up such a number of the dead;—consider these things, I say, and it will be strange if, in this glass, you do not clearly perceive the extreme depravity of a world altogether lying in wickedness. The same perverseness is natural to our own minds. Left to ourselves, we should have acted a similar part. Were Christ to make another visit to our world, it is likely that he would not meet with a more favourable reception. As bulls are said to be enraged at the sight of purple, so the natural man is exasperated at the sight of the most beautiful and splendid virtue. The more brightly it reflects the rays of the divine image, the more doth our corruption exert its rage against it, perceiving in such virtue its own condemnation, and

regarding all the favours which it confers as nothing but an upbraiding of its own ingratitude.

Learn also how abominable the stain of sin is, and how deeply it is fixed in our souls, since it could be washed away, only by the dreadful sufferings, and the blood, of the Son of God.

XXIX. But besides, contemplate here, O sinner, the punishment due to thy crimes, namely, the wrath of God; who makes use of all creatures, and employs at once friends and enemies, in the execution of his vengeance. The severity of God may indeed be learned, in some degree, from the dreadful threatenings, with which he has fenced the law. It may be known, also, by the judgments which he has executed on some abandoned individuals, or on whole cities and nations, or even upon a whole world of ungodly men. Doubtless, too, it would appear to us still more terrible, were we permitted to approach the iron gates of hell; and to see the torments, and hear the howlings, of damned spirits. But never, at any time, or in any place, did the severity of God discover itself by a more striking and awful proof, than when he avenged the sins of mankind on his well-beloved and only-begotten Son. Here, here truly, we behold both what our crimes have deserved, and how fearfully God will visit them upon all those, for whom Christ has not made satisfaction. For "if these things be done in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" Come near, O daring sinner, do you not see Jesus, after having suffered inconceivable agonies of soul, betrayed by one of his attendants, apprehended and loaded with chains by his enemies, deserted by his friends, accused of numerous crimes, condemned, delivered up to death by the peremptory sentence of a judge,—his body torn with lashes, his mind with reproaches and scoffs,—and in all these sufferings bearing the curse of God, than which nothing is more bitter and intolerable! Imagine yourself in this situation, and know that the time shall one day arrive, when your awakened conscience will lash you with merciless severity, and your associates in crime will not only abandon but also betray you; and yourself, bound with the cords of your iniquities, will be summoned, perhaps from the bed

of sickness, to the tribunal of God, to be sharply accused by men whom you have injured, by the Devil, by your own conscience, by Moses the lawgiver,—to be justly condemned by God,—to be bound with chains of darkness,—to be exposed to the derision of men and devils,—and thus to be reserved in a dark and delectful prison unto the judgment of the great day, till the Judge of the universe, sitting not in Gabbatha or the Pavement, but in the clouds of heaven, by a decisive sentence consign you to everlasting torments. Behold in the suffering Redeemer, a representation, and not merely a representation, but also the seal and confirmation of all these awful realities. Behold, and tremble.

XXX. But come thou, too, O believing soul, oppressed with the burden of thy sins, and behold, in a suffering Christ, thy deliverance infallibly secured. 1st, Admire that love, a greater than which cannot even be conceived. "Greater love," as our Lord once observed, "hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." As this holds true amongst men, so our Lord himself has displayed a still greater love than that which he extolled as the greatest. For he "commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners," not friends, but altogether "enemies," "he died for us." 2dly, Consider that Christ, by undergoing these sufferings, has cancelled thy debts; has not merely mitigated, but even taken away, the wrath of God against thee, nay, turned it into love; has stopped the mouth of all thine accusers; has secured thee from suffering those evils which himself hath suffered;—or if any of them befall thee, in order that then mayest be conformed to his image, has entirely removed from them the curse of God, so that they are not the punishments of an angry Judge, but fatherly chastisements, exercises of faith and patience, trials of thy graces, and, in fine, sacred bitters, by which your soul may be healed, by which you may learn from experience how much you are indebted to Christ, and by tasting the bitterness of which beforehand, the consolations of the Spirit may prove the sweeter, and the joys of heaven the more delightful. As good faith does not permit the same debt to be demanded twice, Divine justice cannot allow that debt, which was paid by thy Surety, to be placed to

thy account. 3dly, Consider also that these sufferings of Christ have opened for thee the fountain of the Divine favour and beneficence, from which alone proceeds whatever you receive in this, or a future life, that is good and desirable. If you have an habitation in which you dwell joyfully with a beloved partner and pleasant children; if you are clothed with decent apparel; if you are supplied with wholesome and delicious food; if when sick, neither the attention of domestics or friends, nor pleasant cordials furnished by our own country or by foreign lands, are wanting; if when fatigued in body, or perplexed in mind, you can recline upon a soft couch; and if you enjoy all these comforts not in the same way with the men of this world, but as the fruits of the love of God;—for this you are entirely indebted to a suffering Christ; who for your sake wandered as a poor man without a home, was suspended naked on the cross, received vinegar and gall to drink, and hung on the accursed tree, destitute of every comfort, and enduring the most excruciating pains, his hands and his feet being pierced with iron nails. If you are soothed with the consolations of the Holy Spirit, if you exult in afflictions, if you have free and abundant access to the throne of grace, if you have a tranquil conscience, if you venture to hope for heaven itself and life everlasting,—all this, too, is owing to no other cause than the sufferings of Christ; who for your sake was himself deprived, amidst his anguish, of the cheering manifestations of his Father's love, complained of the sorrows of his soul, lamented that his prayers were not heard, and was girded and bound with the chains of death and hell. 4thly, Hence too you may form an estimate of the magnitude of that salvation and happiness, which the Son of God himself, to whom the value of every thing is well known, did not hesitate to purchase for his people with the inestimable price of his own sufferings.

XXXI. But what testimonies of Gratitude shall we render, in any measure corresponding to this unbounded love? 1st, Let all the hatred, indignation, and revenge of which our minds are capable, be turned wholly against sin, which was the sole cause of all the sorrows of Christ. Neither Judas, nor the scribes, or chief priests and rulers of the people, nor the Jewish populace, nor Herod or Pontius Pilate,

could have done any thing against him; neither scourges, nor thorns, nor nails, would have been prepared to torment him; nor would the prince of darkness have attacked him with all his forces—unless he had taken upon himself our sins, which could not be expiated in any other way. Shall we not then deplore, with tears of the bitterest sorrow, the sins, which in time past (and Oh that I could say in time past!) we have committed? Shall we roll ourselves in that dirt and dung from which nothing but the blood of the Son of God was able to cleanse us? Shall we return to the service of former crimes, and to the vain conversation received by tradition from the fathers, from which we could not be redeemed but at so vast an expense? Shall we suffer the old man, the murderer of Christ, our Lord, Brother, and Husband, to live, to flourish, to maintain the ascendant in our souls? Far, very far, be an infatuation so base, from every generous breast. O our sins, O ye daughters of Babylon, devoted to destruction, happy may he be that rewardeth you, that taketh and dasheth your little ones against the rock of our salvation. 2dly, Whatever, on the contrary, we know to be acceptable to our Lord, let us perform it with alacrity and diligence. Let us value him, who was sold by Judas for thirty pieces of silver, as infinitely more precious than all the treasures of the world. Let us closely and stedfastly follow him, who was forsaken by the disciples, whithersoever he may be pleased to lead us. With undaunted resolution, let us confess him, who was denied by Peter. Let us cheerfully accompany him, who was cast out of the city by the rulers, bearing his reproach; and let us receive him, with his word and Spirit, into the gates of our cities, into the doors of our houses, into the innermost recesses of our hearts, there to live and to reign for ever. When we find him still naked, or hungry, or thirsty in his poor members, let us supply him with clothing, meat and drink; instead of vinegar and gall, let us "cause him to drink of spiced wine, of the juice of the pomegranate."a In fine, let nothing in his worship and service seem too arduous, to be cheerfully done for his sake, who sustained far harder labours, and far more bitter sufferings, on our account

DISSERTATION XVI: ON THE CRUCIFIXION AND DEATH OF CHRIST

I. THE CROSS of Christ is the foundation of foundations, and the pillar of sacred wisdom; without which it is impossible to understand the mysteries of our Religion, to attain genuine holiness, or to inherit eternal life. It was, accordingly, the determination of Paul, that forgetting, in a manner, all other things which he had learned, he would "know nothing among the Corinthians, save JESUS CHRIST, and him CRUCIFIED." This topic, then, is peculiarly entitled to the careful attention and pious inquiry of the Theologian, and indeed of every Christian. In treating it at present, we shall, in the first place, explain the history of the crucifixion of Christ, as it is related by the Evangelists, collecting from Roman antiquity, but briefly and sparingly, what may tend to illustrate the subject; and we shall then pass on to the more profound mysteries of Christianity, in the faith and practice of which the marrow of true godliness consists.

II. Before examining the mode of crucifixion, it seems proper to make a few preliminary remarks on the terms by which this punishment is expressed, and on the form of the cross. The terms most frequently employed, are, Patibulum, Furca, Crux; which, in their more general signification, are sometimes employed indiscriminately, even by the most correct writers in the Latin tongue. Yet Crux, the CROSS, strictly and properly so called, is distinguished from the Patibulum strictly understood. The Patibulum was either the OLD or the NEW one. The OLD was a beam divided into two parts above, that is, one piece of timber rising upwards with separate branches, according to the figure of the letter Y. It was called Patibulum, not from the word patendum, (suffering,) as many after Isidorus have thought; but from those two patentes (spreading) branches or horns: as latibulum, a den, from latendum, lurking. On account of the resemblance it bore to a certain instrument of husbandry, it was also frequently named Furca, a fork;

which is entirely the same with the old Patibulum. The NEW Patibulum was introduced by Constantine; who, being unwilling that the sign of salvation should be used for the purpose of destruction, and exposed to contempt by the manner in which condemned malefactors were punished, "first set aside the former and very ancient punishment by the patibulum," as Victor says in his life of Constantine; or, as it is expressed by Cassiodorus,* "prohibited by law the punishment of the Cross, which was anciently in use amongst the Romans." He introduced in its place another Patibulum, and one which is used in our own days, according to the form of the Greek letter II; on which malefactors, instead of being fastened with nails, are strangled with a halter. Crux, the Cross, the form of which we shall soon show, was distinct both from the old and the new Patibulum. On these words you may consult Casaubon,* Salmasius,† and Vossius,‡ who have learnedly corrected the mistakes of Lipsius.

III. The form of the cross was either the more rare, or more common. "The more rare form," according to Jerome,§ "was divided equally in the midst in the shape of the letter X, which is the figure of the cross:" and Isidorus|| says no less perspicuously, The letter X is at once the figure of the cross, and the sign of the number ten." It is a common and a considerably ancient, but an uncertain tradition, that Andrew's cross was of this sort. The form more frequently made use of, resembled the letter T, the erect beam, however, rising a little above the cross one.

IV. To the erect beam of the cross, there was usually fastened a piece of wood in the middle, which jutted out and was prominent betwixt the thighs of the crucified person, for the purpose of his resting on it; lest, if his hands only were fixed to the transverse beam, these should break off, and the body fall down from the cross. Tertullian calls this the projection (or bracket) of the seat.¶ It is often taken notice of by the ancients who flourished before Constantine, when the cross was still in use; and one can scarcely refer to any thing else, the well known lines of Mecænas,*

Whate'er th' events that may betide,

Don't fail for me this to provide;

Even though I share the dreadful lot,

On the sharp cross to sit, and rot.

Some writers speak also of a footstool, on which the feet of the sufferer rested, or to which they were fixed. But there is hardly sufficient evidence of this from antiquity.

V. The size of the cross was not always the same. Sometimes, in order to render the example more striking and impressive, or even to increase the severity of the pain, on account of the atrocity of the crime, or from hatred of the person, or for the purpose of stamping greater infamy on the man to be crucified, higher crosses than usual were erected. Hence the mockery, to which, according to Suetonius,[†] Galba had recourse; who, when one cried out, appealing to the laws for relief, and protesting that he was a Roman citizen, commanded, as if with an intention to mitigate the punishment by granting a kind of solace and honour, that the cross should be changed, and that another much higher than the rest, and also whitened, should be set up. But that ordinary crosses were not very high, appears from the circumstance, that generally, after the crosses were erected, the sufferers were fastened to them without the use of ladders; and from this, that their entrails were devoured by wolves and dogs. It is manifest, also, from the infamous and horrible baseness of Nero, who having bound men and women to the stake, or, as Xiphlinus affirms, "having bound young men and girls naked to crosses," wrapt himself in the skin of a wild beast, and coming forth from a cave, rushed into the midst of them with great fury.* Such occurrences could not have happened, unless the feet of the crucified persons had been only at a little distance, three or perhaps four feet, from the ground.

VI. Whether the cross of Christ differed in any respect from those that were commonly used; or, if it did, in what the difference consisted,—no man can now say with certainty. The Evangelists having made no mention of its having any thing peculiar, most probably it was adjusted every way in the usual manner. Some light might perhaps have been thrown upon this subject by the story of our Lord's cross having been happily found, not without an impulse of the Holy Spirit and stupendous miracles, by HELENA the Empress, mother of Constantine the Great; provided the truth of that story were sufficiently confirmed. But distinguished men, and those who possess the most profound knowledge of antiquity, regard it, I find, as not only suspicious, but entirely fabulous. The question has certainly attracted so much notice, that it is worth our while briefly to examine it, and to weigh the arguments on each side.

VII. The history of this affair is related thus. The Empress HELENA, now advanced in years, having from pious motives taken a journey to the East, visited the places which had been trodden by our Lord's sacred feet; and at the expense of her son, decorated a number of them with monuments of stupendous workmanship. In the meantime, "the Spirit suggested to her that she should search for the wood of the cross. She approached Golgotha, and said, Behold the place of the contest, where is the victory? I seek the sign of salvation, and I find it not. Am I surrounded, she adds, with royal splendour, and is the cross of my Lord in the dust? How can I think myself redeemed, if the redemption itself is not beheld?" Ambrose introduces her as using these expressions.* According to Paulinus, † she sent, in consequence, for persons of the greatest intelligence, both among Christians and Jews, "and assembled them at Jerusalem. Confirmed by their unanimous declaration in favour of one particular spot, she straightway gave orders, urged no doubt by the impulse of that revelation with which she was honoured, that they should proceed to the operation of digging in that very spot. Nor did much time intervene, before the hidden cross made its appearance. But three crosses being found together as they had anciently stood prepared for our Lord and the two malefactors,

congratulations on account of their success began to be mingled with anxious perplexity arising from the apprehensions which the pious entertained, lest perhaps they should choose the cross of a malefactor, instead of the cross of Christ." Hence it may be gathered, that all the three crosses were of the same form.

VIII. But what served at the last as a mark of distinction? If we give credit to Ambrose, no extraordinary Divine interposition was necessary; for Helen found the title affixed to the front of the cross, JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. Thus the real state of the matter was ascertained; the cross was distinguished by the title. And such perhaps was the prevailing belief at that time. But Rufinus was dissatisfied with this account, and imagined that an affair of so high importance could not be effected without a miracle. "A woman half-dead," says he, "was brought, who, after having derived no benefit from the touch of the first and second cross, no sooner felt the third applied than, suddenly opening her eyes, she revived, recovered full vigour, and began to run up and down through the whole house with much greater agility than when she had been well, and to magnify the power of God."* If this is not sufficient to determine the point, learn from Paulinus, with whom Sulpitius Severus concurs, that another and a greater miracle was performed. "A dead body was introduced. After it was laid down, first one of "the crosses was applied to it, then another, but death poured contempt on both. At last the resurrection of the body discovered our Lord's cross; and death being overcome by the touch of the life-giving wood, the funeral clothes were shaken off, and the body stood erect." Nicephorus joins both these miracles together.†

IX. The Empress having thus succeeded to her wish, and being confirmed by miracles so remarkable, erected, with royal munificence, a most splendid church in the very place where she had found the cross. Sazomen and Theodoret affirm, however, that after the cross was discovered, one part of it was left at Jerusalem, and another part removed to Constantinople. Constantine, as Socrates relates, having received the latter, inclosed it in his own statue, which

stood in the forum of Constantinople; assuring himself that a city in which so sacred a relic was preserved, would certainly be safe and sound. Such is the history of the transaction; which, being confirmed by witnesses so numerous, and of so great credit and authority, and being so uniformly believed alike in the East and the West, seems to be placed beyond all hazard of being called in question; and that so much the more, because St Cyril Bishop of Jerusalem, who flourished in those times, and might have been present at the finding of the cross, wrote to Constantius, the son of Constantine, respecting the discovery of the life-giving tree of the cross.*

X. Learned men are not incapable, however, of adducing powerful arguments on the opposite side of the question. They warn us, in the first place, not to permit our eyes to be dazzled by any story, because it has obtained an extensive circulation, and been credited by many, and even by some not altogether destitute of caution and prudence. Human nature is prone to fiction; and men easily receive stories fabricated by others, when they are calculated to exhibit to advantage any thing to which they are warmly attached. Instances of the truth of this remark might be produced in abundance. What was more celebrated for many ages than the leprosy of Constantine, and his receiving baptism at Rome from Sylvester, the Bishop of the city? What more commonly talked of than the dreadful sufferings of Catharine, the royal virgin, at Alexandria; or the gigantic stature of Christophorus? What more noted than the holy Ursula with her band of eleven thousand virgins, and their martyrdom? What more famous than the vial of Rheims, brought down from heaven to anoint Clovis? How well known and how ancient the story concerning the condemnation of Charles Martel to hell? Yet the more judicious of the Romanists are now ashamed of all those stories. So also these particulars about the invention of the cross were very possibly first fabricated by some person several years after the death of Helena, and found a ready reception, because they seemed greatly to favour that veneration for relics which began to prevail towards the conclusion of the fourth century. The Chronicle of Cologne, we know, which was written in the year 1499, before the light of the

Reformation arose, considers this story of the finding of the cross as equally uncertain and doubtful with the story of the eleven thousand virgins.

XI. We have no accounts of this affair, it must also be observed, but from persons who flourished a little after Constantine and Helena. This proves indeed that it was reported and believed at an early period—not many years after Helena's demise, but doth not establish its truth. The first who mentions it is Cyril of Jerusalem, if Cyril was, in reality, the writer of the letter on this subject ascribed to him. Baronius affirms, that "he might have been present" at the finding of the cross; he was ashamed to say that he was actually present. But it is justly questioned by eminent men, whether the epistle to Constantius be a genuine epistle of the true Cyril. Jerome, though a zealous defender of relics, says nothing of that epistle in a passage where, including Cyril amongst the celebrated writers of that age, he gives an account of his transactions and writings.* The epistle itself, too, contains passages unworthy of the true Cyril; for after premising that he writes no letters replete with the language of flattery, he proceeds immediately to style Constantius "the most pious of all Emperors, who surpassed his parents by his superior piety towards God;"—and afterwards says, "I announce this important intelligence to thee, who art most noble, and most pious, and a fellow-worshipper with us of Jesus Christ, the Only-begotten Son of God, and our Saviour." It is not probable, that an orthodox Bishop wrote in those terms to an Emperor, who was at once an Arian, and stained by numerous crimes. See Baronius, who inserts the letter; and who, displeased with such extravagant encomiums on Constantius, has himself made this annotation in the margin, "Excessive commendation."*

XII. The testimony of Ambrose is about eighty years posterior to the transaction, if such a transaction ever took place: For Theodosius, in whose funeral oration Ambrose speaks of it, died in the year of Christ 394; but the finding of the cross is referred to the year 326. Add to this, that Ambrose, though otherwise grave and respectable, was a

great abettor of relics; and that, therefore, it is not surprising he should have readily given credit to the prevailing rumour about the discovery of the cross. It is natural for all men, without due investigation, to give instant and easy credit to reports which they ardently wish to be true; and promptly to make use of them, to serve a hypothesis.

XIII. Besides, if the invention of the cross was of so great importance that, according to Ambrose, Helena should have said, "How can I consider myself redeemed, if the redemption itself is not to be seen?" what apology can be devised for the primitive Christians, for their not having exerted themselves with more activity to get possession of the cross? Neither the Jews, nor Pilate, who granted the dead body of Christ to Joseph of Arimathea, would have refused, I think, to indulge the disciples with the cross on which their Master expired. Suppose that they had refused, why did not at least the disciples of the Apostles, when the Jewish polity was destroyed and the city demolished by fire and sword, speedily return from the adjacent town to which they had fled,* in order to search among the ruins for the cross,—so essential a part of their religion, the inexhaustible treasury of blessings and miracles, the wealth, the hope, and the bulwark of the Church;—particularly since the derision of persecutors was no longer to be dreaded, but all was solitude and silence? Certainly they believed, What is really the truth, that the Church could now receive no further advantage from the material cross. In their estimation, the faith, the love, and the service of Him who was crucified, were sufficient; together with the devout study of the Gospels, in which we have ample information respecting the sufferings of our Lord.

XIV. The other Authors give such contradictory accounts, that they rather destroy than support the credit of the story. See, as is customary in fabulous narrations, from what small beginnings this story has gradually increased. Cyril, it is said, in the first instance, affirmed in the simplest terms, that the saving wood of the cross was found in the days of Constantine. Here he stopped. Ambrose

embellished this plain story, or received it embellished from others; brought forward HELENA as the principal person concerned in the seeking and finding of the cross; represented our Lord's cross as ascertained from the title which it bore, and made a considerable addition respecting the nails. It appeared proper to others to enliven this dull narration of Ambrose by the glory of a miracle. Rufinus, therefore, a writer somewhat later than Ambrose, produced a sick woman instantaneously cured by the touch of the Lord's cross. But as even this was not equal to the majesty of so important an affair, it occurred to Paulinus, a poet and an orator of no small repute, that the miracle would be more illustrious, if life were restored to the dead, than merely health to the afflicted. Hence the corpse of a dead man was brought into contact with the cross, who immediately revived, and rose to his feet. A difference so material between the account of Rufinus, and that of Paulinus, was calculated to excite perplexity in scrupulous minds. But, behold, Nicephorus, with much ingenuity and a truly Grecian artifice, solves every difficulty by the admission of both miracles. Thus a story was gradually made up, which one most industriously delivered down to another, each always adding fresh improvements, till Pope Gelasius thought proper, by an express prohibition, to restrain this unbridled inclination to embellish.

XV. But no argument is more satisfactory than that which is derived from the silence of Eusebius. Since he was Bishop of Cæsarea, a city situated in the vicinity of Jerusalem, flourished at that very time, and was admitted to great familiarity with Constantine and Helena, he could not have remained ignorant of so notable a matter, had it really taken place. If it had come to his knowledge, if even the gentlest whisper respecting it had reached his ear, he ought not to have passed it over in silence. Nay, he could not have done so, since he has detailed so minutely whatever was done by Constantine and Helena in the holy land, in the places of the nativity, the passion, and the burial of Christ,—at no time sparing in his commendations of the Empress. This affair was without doubt particularly deserving of notice, and by no means to be omitted by so accurate a writer as

Eusebius. This single argument, taken from the silence of Eusebius on a subject so notorious and so extraordinary, where there was so convenient an opportunity and so urgent a necessity for relating it, is abundantly sufficient to discredit the whole story of the discovery of the cross.

XVI. To this argument Bellarmine found nothing to oppose, but one objection, which has no weight. This affair, he says, is mentioned in the Chronicle, though not in the Histories of Eusebius; and he quotes the following words from that work, on the sixteenth year of Constantine: "Helena, the mother of Constantine, warned by divine visions, found the blessed wood of the cross, on which the salvation of the world depended, at Jerusalem." But this is either a direct fraud, or an instance of supine negligence, on the part of Bellarmine; for none of these words is to be found either in the Greek text of the Chronicle of Eusebius, or, according to the testimony of Scaliger and the admission of Spondanus, in any of the Latin Manuscripts. Baronius himself, too, confesses that the Chronicle of Eusebius has been greatly corrupted by transcribers. Besides, the matter in question speaks aloud for itself. The discovery of the cross, if it was discovered, must be referred not to the sixteenth, but to the twenty-first year of Constantine, which is the three hundred and twenty-sixth year of Christ. This is therefore an interpolation, done by a modern hand. For these reasons we concur with Chamier,* Salmasius, † Daillé, ‡ and others, in esteeming the story of the invention of the cross a mere invention and a fable.

XVII. But to return from this digression.—Let us now examine the MODE OF CRUCIFIXION, and consider in order, the circumstances which preceded, accompanied, and followed the fixing of the person to the cross. Three things were customary before the fixing to the cross, to wit, Beating, Imposition of the cross on the condemned that he might bear it to the place of crucifixion, and Stripping him of his clothes.

XVIII. The Romans were accustomed first to beat all that were condemned to capital punishment. Hence those ancient forms: "Go, sergeant, bind the hands, beat, muffle up the head, suspend on the ignominious tree;"§ and, "Sergeant, take away, strip, beat, execute the law, chastise."|| This castigation was expressly appointed to precede crucifixion. "Others being scourged," says Livy, "were fastened to the cross.¶ And at the destruction of Jerusalem, the Jews, according to Josephus, were, in the first place, whipped, and tortured with all sorts of stripes, and then crucified."** Similar examples occur very often in history. A great number are collected by Casaubon on the first book of Polybius, where he treats of the authors of the Rhegian crime. This beating was sometimes performed with rods, which was considered the milder and less disgraceful form; but more frequently with whips, which was at once more dishonourable and more severe,—particularly when the whips were sharpened with birds' claws and small bones. "Owing to the cruelty of the servants employed to inflict the punishment, many," according to Ulpianus, "perished under scourges of that sort."* It must likewise be observed, that the scourge was not always administered in the same place or at the same time; for it was sometimes done in the Prætorium, before the sufferer was led away, and sometimes, on the road, whilst he was led forth to the cross. The last appears to have been the more ancient practice.

XIX. The Lord of glory, it is evident, suffered scourging before he was nailed to the cross. But it deserves examination, whether this was done in conformity to the Roman custom, or for a different reason. Matthew seems to intimate the former: "And when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified." Mark's expression is of the same import.^c But it is clear from John, that scourging was employed by Pilate for the purpose of pacifying, if possible, the enraged minds of the Jews, that they might desist from requiring the death of Christ; to which the words of Pilate in Luke have also a reference; "I will therefore chastise him, and let him go."^e We cannot embrace the opinion of those who maintain, that Christ underwent two scourgings in so short a space, the one previous to the passing of the

sentence according to the private intention and appointment of Pilate, of which John gives an account; the other posterior to the pronouncing of the sentence, according to the public custom of the Romans, which is mentioned by Matthew and Mark. To us the matter appears to have stood thus. Pilate saw the unrelenting hatred of the rulers and the people against our Lord, since, in spite of all his exertions to the contrary, they obstinately demanded the crucifixion of Jesus. Knowing, too, that if this extreme punishment were ultimately to be resorted to, it could not be inflicted till he were previously tortured with the scourge, he judged it proper to begin with this, hoping meanwhile that the Jews, melted by the sight, would no longer urge crucifixion. Thus Pilate, in scourging Christ, had two objects in view; first to incline, by so sad a spectacle, the exasperated minds of the Jews to pity; or if this did not succeed, and he were absolutely compelled to deliver up Christ to the cross, to secure in this respect the observance of the Roman custom. Matthew and Mark point out the latter, and the other Evangelists the former part of the design.

XX. That our Lord was scourged in a manner truly severe and unmerciful, may easily be inferred from the end which Pilate expected to attain. He knew the obdurate spirits of the Jews, and was aware that it would have been vain and absurd to endeavour to soften them into sentiments of compassion by any other than a most miserable spectacle. Probably also, Christ was not beaten with rods, but with scourges; not merely because the latter were more common and more conducive to the purpose Pilate had in view than the other; but also because it is favoured by the very words of the Evangelists, φραγελλωσις and μαστιγωσις. The first of these terms is a corruption of the Latin word flagellum, a whip; and the last is derived from μαστιξ, a scourge, a switch. Many of the ancients were of opinion that Christ was bound to a pillar while he endured the scourge; nor is this foreign to the Roman usage. But it requires great credulity to believe, that that pillar still remained in the days of Jerome, and, stained with our Lord's blood, supported the portico of a church. The additions made to the gospel-history by modern discoveries

respecting the sharp-pointed scourges and the number of the stripes, and other circumstances, are the bold inventions of men who delight in fables. To contrive or propagate falsehoods, is to render truly preposterous returns to Christ for his compassion to us. Nor are we to imagine that we fail to put their proper value on his sufferings, unless we exaggerate them by our own idle fabrications.

XXI. Further, his own cross was laid upon the unhappy person condemned to crucifixion, that he might bear it to the place of punishment. Artemidorus says; "The man who is about to be nailed to the cross, in the first place carries it."* This circumstance formed part of the shame and disgrace; and it afforded a salutary lesson, which Plutarch has elegantly illustrated in his discourse "on the slowness of the divine vengeance."† As every malefactor carries forth his cross upon his body, so every one by his wickedness is the author of his own calamities, and produces his sorrows out of his own bowels.

XXII. In the same manner Christ also bore his cross, until being exhausted, an assistant and follower was granted to him, or rather substituted in his place. That relief, however, was doubtless given by those who conducted him to Calvary, not from mercy, but from cruelty; for they were afraid lest he should faint by the way, while they wished rather to see him breathing and expiring on the cross.

XXIII. In fine, crucifixion was preceded by stripping the malefactors of their clothes. They hung on the cross naked as when they came forth from their mother's womb. Artemidorus says; "They are crucified naked."* We read in Arrian; "In the bath you were divested of your garments, and stretched yourself forth, as those that are crucified."† In the Acts of Pionius the martyr, who was a presbyter of Smyrna, it is also said; "When, therefore, animated by a stedfast faith, he had come with alacrity to the place of execution, of his own accord he stripped himself of his clothes. Then turning his thoughts to the honour and chastity of his body, he was filled with inexpressible joy, and looking upwards to heaven, and rendering

thanks to God who had thus preserved him, he stretched himself on the tree, and delivered his body to the soldier to fasten it with nails."‡ From these testimonies we may collect, it should seem, that even those parts which nature requires to be covered, were exposed to the view of all.

XXIV. And since this was usually done to crucified persons, why should we contend, in opposition to the sentiments of many of the Fathers, that Christ was treated in a different manner? It is written, that he was stripped of his garments, whilst we read nothing of his having been covered with a veil or with breeches. It is urged by some, that the sufferings of Christ were voluntary, that he determined to suffer nothing unbecoming, and that he must therefore have avoided whatever was opposite to decency, such as the circumstance of being seen quite naked by his mother and the rest of the women. But Vossius judiciously replies,* that it belonged to the severity of his sufferings that his death should be ignominious to the last degree, and that if he had nothing to cover him, the ignominy was so much the greater. And with regard to his being seen by the holy women, we may attend to the language of Livia Augusta, a heathen female, when she was met in a narrow path by several criminals that were dragged stark naked to punishment. The sight of them she remarked, moved her no more than the sight of naked statues. And surely the love which those good women bore for Christ, was too ardent and pure, or rather too heavenly and divine, to permit any indignity done by his enemies to his sacred body to induce them to turn away from so dear an object.

XXV. We come now to the CRUCIFIXION itself; which was not always performed in the same manner, whether we attend to the time, or the instruments, or the position of the crucified. With respect to the time, it was most usual, as Lipsius proves at large, that the cross was fixed in the ground, before the criminal was fastened to it. Hence the following forms of expression; "to ascend the cross," "to mount the cross," "one that climbs the cross," "to be lifted up on the cross;"* that is, upon the middle pole, which the unfortunate,

assisted by the executioner, mounted, that he might sit on it like a rider on his horse. But almost all who treat this subject have gathered from the Acts of Pionius, whom we have quoted above, that in some instances they were put upon the cross in a laying posture and stretched flat upon the back, the cross being afterwards erected. For in those Acts it is said; "When therefore he was fastened to the beam, they lifted him up."

XXVI. The instruments used in fastening men to the cross, were nails or cords, but for the most part the former; which the term crucifixion itself imports. We read of cords in Ammianus; † "Dracontius and Diodotus, having their legs bound with cords, were put to death." The nails were first thrust into their hands, beginning with the right hand; not always perhaps in the midst of the palm, but a little higher, about the wrist; for Plautus says, that "the arms were nailed to the cross." The executioner then proceeded to the feet; which were sometimes both transfixed with one nail, and sometimes each with a distinct nail.

XXVII. The position or posture of persons condemned to the cross, was also diversified; for cruelty is ingenious in devising methods of torture. The most common position was, that the sufferer had his hands stretched out on the upper transverse beam, and sat on the middle pole, his feet hanging down towards the ground. More rarely the posture was inverted. Seneca says; "Others were suspended, with the head turned towards the earth."* See pictures representing these positions in Lipsius. † Peter, it is said, was crucified in this posture at his own request, that he might not suffer in the same manner with our Lord.

XXVIII. In the crucifixion of Christ every thing was done, there is no cause to doubt, according to the custom more commonly observed. We apprehend, therefore, that he was not lifted up with the cross, having been previously fastened, but lifted up on the cross, to be fastened to it;—that he was not bound to the cross with cords, but fastened with nails,—whether three or four, does not appear;—

finally, that he was suspended in such a posture that his face was erect, and exposed to the eyes of all.

XXIX. The things chiefly worthy of notice after the fastening of the body to the cross, are the revilings of those that insulted the unfortunates, the guarding of them, and death. They were guarded both when living and when dead, that none might carry off their bodies for interment. Their death, always grievous and full of pain, was owing to various causes. Sometimes it was occasioned by the loss of blood which gradually flowed from the wounds that were made by the scourge and the nails; sometimes by hunger and thirst. When their wretched life was prolonged to the third or fourth day or more, they were in some instances devoured by ravenous birds, or wild beasts; and at other times, killed with spears, or burned with fire. The Evangelists tell us of the breaking of the legs of the robbers that were crucified with Christ. But whether this was done from regard to the Roman custom, or for the sake of the Jews—that there might be no violation of their law, which required that those who were suspended on a tree should be taken down at the setting of the sun,—to me appears in some degree uncertain.

XXX. Let us return to the cross of Christ; who suffered the most bitter revilings and taunts from Jews and Gentiles, from the rulers and the populace. Nor did they confine themselves to words. When he complained of thirst, they gave him vinegar to suck from a sponge. I cannot acquiesce in the opinion of Vossius, that "this was not done as an insult, but from some kind of humanity;" for Luke, in terms sufficiently clear, refers it to mockery: "And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar." Nor was the customary guard of soldiers wanting. "Sitting down," says Matthew, "they watched him there." In fine, when all things were accomplished, which it was requisite for him to do and to suffer in this life, he expired, sooner than was usual, on the cross.

XXXI. No one surely can now doubt that the punishment of the cross is, with good reason, considered and denominated by lawyers and

historians the highest or the chief punishment, and the last and severest penalty. Here incredible ignominy, and incredible pain, seem to vie with each other. Ignominy—for this punishment was anciently assigned to none but the meanest, and the most abandoned of mortals. Slaves, robbers, assassins, and other such monsters in human shape, were the candidates for the detested cross. Freeman, and Roman citizens, could not be subjected to this punishment, unless they were first punished with the loss of liberty, and degraded by servile stripes. Pain—which could not fail to be very grievous in a body lately torn with thongs, and now transfixed with nails in those parts where the feeling is peculiarly acute; the wounds being opened and distended by the weight of the body, and the expansion of the members. Pain, too, which the longer it continued, became the more excruciating.

All this ignominy and pain took place according to the Roman custom, and the nature of the punishment. But a third thing was added according to the Hebrew law, namely, a curse; of which we must now give an accurate account.

XXXII. In the book of Deuteronomy, God appoints that if a criminal be adjudged to death, and after death hanged on a tree, he should be taken away and buried before the setting of the sun; and the following reason is assigned, "for he that is hanged is accursed, a curse, of God." Paul, somewhat varying the words, quotes the same sentence, and transfers it to Christ.^j Here two questions are commonly proposed. It is inquired, in the first place, why God was pleased to brand this sort of punishment above all others with special infamy, that it might not only appear to men, what it really is, dreadful and horrible, but that also the person suspended might be considered an execration of God himself. It is not my intention to disparage, in any respect, the prolix discussions of men of learning on this point; but I shall state what seems to me the simplest and most obvious interpretation. The ruinous sin committed by our first parents had a relation to a tree. Hence the first beginning of evil. Hence the wrath and curse of God resting on the whole human race,

nay, on the earth itself. God therefore wisely ordained that suspension upon the fatal tree, which might remind every spectator of the first origin of the divine anger, should be a symbol of the curse; whilst he was pleased also to appoint, that the first sin, and other sins proceeding from it, should be expiated, only by a Surety for mankind, who would condescend to be hanged on a tree. It was not the purpose of the Lawgiver to intimate that all without distinction that were hanged should be excluded from the participation of his favour. But it was his design that in the very hanging of the person on the tree, whether guilty or innocent, whether penitent or impenitent, there should be a memorial of the curse, which having originated from a crime that had a respect to a tree, was to rest on the world, until it should be abolished by the sufferings of the Messiah on the accursed tree.

XXXIII. But it is also very properly asked, On what ground does the Apostle transfer these expressions to the punishment of the cross? Whatever Baronius and Lipsius urge to the contrary, the cross was unused and unknown amongst the ancient Hebrews; it was, as it is termed by Sozomenus, "a punishment enacted by the Romans." Casaubon has proved this by incontestable arguments.* We find, indeed, the following sentence in the Chaldee paraphrase on Ruth:k "There are four modes of inflicting capital punishment on malefactors; namely, stoning, burning, slaying with the sword, and hanging on the cross." But the modern Paraphrast was either unacquainted with the ancient customs of his nation, and ignorantly confounded strangling, though done in a very different manner, with suspension upon the cross; or he chose to speak of a punishment antiquated in his own age, in terms that properly denoted another which was analogous to it, and then in use; or, in fine, he inaccurately numbered amongst the kinds of death, that which was done to criminals after death. There is a wide difference betwixt these two questions, whether any one, after having already suffered capital punishment, was suspended by ropes,—which was indeed done by the Hebrews; and whether a man, yet living, was nailed to a tree, there to undergo a lingering and dreadful death,—which was the

practice amongst the Romans.* Every genus, nevertheless, comprizes all its species; and it is with great justice and propriety, that Paul particularly applies to crucifixion, what is affirmed in general with regard to hanging on a tree.

XXXIV. While suspended on the tree as the execration of God, exposed to the greatest ignominy, and suffering the most extreme agonies in soul and body, our blessed Lord poured out his soul unto death. His death was, 1st, Seasonable, the work which the Father had committed to him being completed; all things which the sacred oracles had foretold being accomplished; and every thing, from the greatest to the least, which it behoved him to perform in this life, being finished. He was, for good reasons, persuaded, that previously to this he ought by no means to desert his post. 2dly, Voluntary, which was evinced by the strong cry which he uttered a little before his death, manifesting that he still possessed a great degree of vigour. It appeared also from his spontaneous and deliberate bowing of the head. q "The contrary," says Theophylact, "takes place with us; for we first expire, and then bow down the head. But he first bowed, and then expired; from which it was evident he was the Lord of death, and did all according to his pleasure." 3dly, Pious; for he died offering up prayers and supplications. 4thly, Tranquil; his conscience bore him witness that he had faithfully accomplished the whole work incumbent upon him in this life; and he was certain that God, as a most affectionate Father, would receive his spirit, defend it from the devil, and restore it to himself at his resurrection. This is implied in the words, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." It appears also from the following specimen of Christ's prayers, which is exhibited in the twenty-second Psalm, verses 20, 21. "Deliver my soul from the sword;" cause me to expire in peace, and thus to frustrate the force of the spear which is shortly to pierce my side. "Deliver my darling," that is, my dearly beloved, "from the power of the dog," the licentious soldier, the Roman executioner. Let me escape by a speedy death that breaking of my bones, of which I am in danger. "Save me from the mouth of the lion," the Devil, who has hitherto had the power of death; and make it evident by my blessed resurrection, that

I am his conqueror. "For thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns;" thou hast heard the cries which I lifted up unto thee, whilst I was yet exposed to the rage of the princes of this world; and now thou assurest me that no man shall henceforth be permitted to treat me with cruelty and violence. These are the words of Christ when preparing himself for death, which may be compared with the event, and which discover his alacrity and fortitude.

XXXV. Christ's alacrity and confidence, however, ought not to hinder us from believing that unto death, and even in death, he bore the curse of God. Hanging on a tree was a symbol of the curse, and no vain symbol truly to Christ. The necessity of his submitting to death, arose from the curse of God due to the sin of the first Adam, for which it was requisite that satisfaction should be made by the second Adam. Christ too, when he died, "made his soul an offering for sin;" nay, was "made sin;"s and "bare our sins in his own body on the tree," till he suffered "death for the redemption of transgression,"u and "reconciled us in the body of his flesh through death." Now, it is inconceivable how Christ can be said to bear our sins, or to bear the guilt of them even unto death, or to take them away by nothing less than death, reconciliation having been then only completely effected, —unless he sustained the curse of God both unto death, and in death. Nor is it unworthy of notice, that St Peter speaks of "the pains of Christ's death;"w and that Isaiah foretels that he should be "cut off out of the land of the living," and, through means of death, at last "taken from prison and from judgment." In fine, how can we at all rest assured that we ourselves shall be delivered from a cursed death, unless Christ has undergone such a death in our room?

XXXVI. Thus far we have seen the HISTORY of our Lord's crucifixion. But it indicates an earthly and grovelling mind, to remain satisfied with the mere outward letter. Tremendous mysteries lie hid within, which ought to be studied with a kind of sacred amazement and astonishment of mind, contemplated with every pious affection, and deeply impressed upon the heart. "The gross eye-ball of the flesh perceives what is gross;"* but it becomes us to ascend in our

meditations to the incredible wisdom of the secret counsels of God, who wonderfully overruled for accomplishing the salvation of mankind, the extreme depravity and impious cruelty of the infatuated Jews, and the mad rage of the Devil who accelerated his own ruin by his opposition to Christ. It was on our account that all these things befel the Anointed of the Lord. We ought, therefore, to consider them in a far different manner than if they had happened to a stranger, or to one with whom we have no connexion. Christ is at once our Friend, Kinsman, Brother, and Husband, our Lord and God; who, having become our Surety, underwent the curse of God, not only for our benefit, but in our stead; erected on the cross a ladder to paradise; and, in fine, became by his own death, the Author of life and immortality to us. Let us, then, review in our meditations all that has been said, for the following purposes. First, To show that all things relating to the crucifixion of Christ were FORETOLD AND PREFIGURED of old. Secondly, To show how GRIEVOUS they were to Christ, and hard to endure. Lastly, To illustrate their powerful influence to STRENGTHEN OUR MINDS with the vigour of the spiritual life, and confirm them in the hope of a blessed immortality.

XXXVII. In the history of the crucifixion, we have examined distinctly the things which preceded, accompanied, and followed it. We have seen that it was preceded by SCOURGING, the BEARING OF THE CROSS, and the STRIPPING of the clothes. The first was predicted by Isaiah: "I gave my back to the smiters," or as the Septuagint has it,— "to the scourges." And again: "The chastisement of our peace," the signal punishment which brings peace to us, "was upon him;" "and with his stripes," the wounds inflicted by the scourge, "we are healed." The perverse Jews falsely supposed that these were justly assigned to him on account of his own crimes. "They esteemed him stricken of God," or, "of the Gods," a by the just judgment of those who are called Gods, and are a kind of vicegerents of the Supreme God;—"smitten and afflicted," or beaten with the scourge, which is the usual punishment of slaves: whilst, however, he was not compelled by the force of another, but of his own accord submitted to suffering. The Second circumstance was prefigured by

all the victims on which the sins of the offerer were laid with his hands; and especially by the goat of sin-offering, which, having the sins of the whole people of Israel laid on it by the Highpriest, carried them "into a land not inhabited."c But it was most signally adumbrated by Isaac bearing the wood on which he was to be offered to God to one of the mountains in the land of Moriah. That mountain was probably the same with Calvary; for, as Munster observes,* the mountainous country of Moriah had many hills, or little mountains, amongst which were the hill of the city of David, and of the temple, and Mount Calvary itself. The last circumstance was predicted by David in the following words: "They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture."

XXXVIII. David has a remarkable prophecy of the CRUCIFIXION itself in the same Psalm: "Dogs have compassed me," that is, the Roman soldiers prepared to crucify me; "the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me," to wit, the rebellious people of the Jews gathered from their habitations to behold the spectacle of my cross; "they pierced† my hands and my feet," transfixing them with nails; which was done by the soldiers in compliance with the demand of the Jews, and thus by the Jews themselves through their instrumentality. "I may tell," or I number, I expose to be numbered by spectators, "all my bones:" to such a degree is my body racked and distended on the tree.

XXXIX. The word כְּאֵרֶךְ in this passage presents the cross to the view of the reader.‡

XL. I refer also to the crucifixion the following words in Zechariah: "And they shall look upon me whom they have pierced." This expression includes not merely what was done by the soldier's spear, to which John applies it;§ but also that which was done by the nails, or instruments of the crucifixion, which is attributed to the people at large, in other passages as well as this. The accomplishment of the prophecy directs us to this interpretation. When Peter, after the effusion of the Spirit of grace, had reproved the Jews in these terms;

"Him," that is, Jesus, "have ye taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain;"—"they were pricked in their hearts, and said,—Men and brethren, What shall we do?"—and, according to the exhortation immediately addressed to them, "they looked" unto Him whom they had crucified. They turned, by faith, from every vain hope, to the true Rock of salvation, acquiescing in Him alone.

XLI. The BRAZEN SERPENT which Moses, at the command of God, erected on a pole, that the Israelites, wounded by the envenomed bite of the serpents, might by looking upon it be healed, was an eminent type of the crucifixion of Christ, which our Lord expressly applies to himself. The Serpent, we may remark, was a figure of Christ, who, although entirely without sin, yet came "in the likeness of sinful flesh;" and, in consequence of his voluntary undertaking, stood in the place of those, who, in common with others, were "a generation of vipers." The lifting up of the serpent on the pole, Jesus himself being Interpreter, signified the lifting up of Christ,—not his glorious exaltation to heaven, but his being ignominiously lifted up on the cross. It was the will of God, also, that the serpent should be lifted up in the wilderness by Moses, because Christ was nailed to the cross by virtue of the curse denounced by the law which was given by Moses. But on this topic we recollect, we have elsewhere spoken at large.

XLII. The whole burnt-offerings, also, which were called עֹלוֹת, elevations, because they used to be raised up, and ascended entire on the altar, intimated that Christ, when offering himself for our sins, should ascend and be lifted up on the cross.

XLIII. Nor is it altogether without reason, that learned men have observed, from the Commentaries of the Jews, that the Paschal lamb was wont to be hung by iron nails fixed in a wall or pillar, that thus it might be flayed;—that it was also transfixed with a wooden spit, and, fire being put under it, was suspended to roast in the midst of an oven. This might have a reference to Christ's hanging on the cross; particularly if the statement be correct which Justin makes in his Dialogue with Trypho the Jew. One spit, he says, was thrust from the

lowest parts up to the head, and another again at the place betwixt the shoulders, to which the hinder feet of the lamb were hung—which somewhat exactly represents the figure of the cross. Yet, since this ceremony was not of divine appointment, but merely a part of Jewish order, it is wrong to seek in it a divine type.

XLIV. The crucifixion was immediately succeeded, 1st, By the GUARDING, which appears also to be comprehended in the words quoted above from the sixteenth verse of the twenty-second Psalm: "For dogs have compassed me; the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me;" they have surrounded me, as if by forming a circle, that I might find no way of escape. 2dly, By REVILINGS; which were expressly predicted, together with the ignominious draught of vinegar. 3dly, By DEATH, of which we find very frequent and explicit predictions, as the following: "Thou hast brought me into the dust of death;" "He was cut off out of the land of the living."s Deaths in the plural number are ascribed to him, because his corporeal death was accompanied with the pains of spiritual and of eternal death: Yet exempt from sin and from despair, and also from the eternal duration which attend the death of the damned:—from the former, on account of the holiness of the person suffering—from the latter, on account of his dignity. We read further in Isaiah, "Thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin;"u "He hath poured out his soul unto deaths." The Prophet Daniel had a revelation not merely of the death of the Messiah, but of the time of his death, and even the very hour of the day in which he died: "And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off."w It is to be observed that this communication was made to Daniel by Gabriel "about the time of the evening oblation;" at which time Christ expired.y Paul, therefore, justly affirmed, "that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures."

XLV. To predictions types were added. The ancient HIGH-PRIESTS, whose death gave liberty to refugees to return to the homes which they had deserted. SAMPSON, who effected a greater destruction of his enemies at his death, than in the whole course of his heroical life.

The SACRIFICES, whose death and blood "sanctified the unclean to the purifying of the flesh;" and which were offered in the morning, at the hour at which Christ was nailed to the cross, and in the evening, at the hour at which he died. In particular, the PASSOVER.

XLVI. From all that has now been stated, it is clear, that the whole of these sufferings befel Christ according to "the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God;" and that nothing was done to him by his enemies but what "God's hand and counsel determined before to be done."f They thus acted the part of guilty instruments in accomplishing the holy and wise purpose of God;—who fulfilled by means of them, notwithstanding their ignorance and wickedness, "those things which he had shewed before by the mouth of all his prophets that Christ should suffer."

XLVII. Let us now see how GRIEVOUS those sufferings were which befel Christ, and how hard and dreadful to endure. SCOURGING often presented itself to the sorrowful mind of Jesus as an important part of his wo. "They shall deliver him," said he, "to the Gentiles ... to scourge him;" and again, "they shall scourge him, and put him to death."i Nor was it without cause that he viewed it thus; for scourging was a punishment at once ignominious and extremely painful. It was contrary to all law, to beat Roman citizens, or freemen. The vilest of slaves were denominated the fellows that were whipped and scourged.* Yet he who is not a citizen of the earthly Rome but of the heavenly Jerusalem, not a citizen merely but the Prince, not the son of a great king but of the Most High God,—had this indignity to undergo. The Jews were required by a divine command, in beating malefactors, not to exceed forty stripes, "lest their brother should seem vile to them." But that moderation was unknown to the Romans, who were not restricted to any particular number of blows. They often fastened also sharp-pointed needles and small iron hooks to their scourges, by which the wretched sufferers were lacerated even to the ribs and bones. Yet, as Scripture is silent on the point, we dare not affirm that Christ was beaten with scourges of that description. Some idea, however, of the inhumanity

with which he was treated, may be gathered from the circumstance, that Pilate, after he had been scourged, brought him forth from the Prætorium, and presented him to the view of the people, with this memorable exclamation, BEHOLD THE MAN! That is, "Are you not touched with pity for a most miserable man, so dreadfully tortured and torn? Is all this insufficient to satisfy your ferocious cruelty and inveterate hatred?"

XLVIII. But the most grievous matter to Christ was, that whilst his innocent back and breast were mangled with lashes, he experienced also in his soul the dreadful strokes of the rod of God, due to our sins, which he had taken upon himself. The stings of a tremendous curse were thus added to the stripes; for "he was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."

XLIX. How bitter to Christ, too, was his EXPULSION from the city to the place of punishment, bearing his cross; which was predicted by Moses and Elias on the holy mount,¹⁵ and prefigured by those animals, whose blood was brought by the Highpriest into the sanctuary as a sin-offering, and whose bodies were burnt without the camp. By this unjust expulsion he was not only declared unworthy to enjoy any longer the intercourse of reputable citizens; but there was here a deeper mystery, still more distressing to his mind. Jerusalem is called "the holy city,"^o "the city of the great King," "the city of God,"^q "where Jehovah hath his fire and his furnace;" and on that account it was a type of heaven.^s Christ, therefore, when he was ignominiously ejected, as offscourings, from the earthly Jerusalem, saw in this figure, that he was to be deprived for a time of delightful fellowship with angels and with his heavenly Father, and as an exile from heaven, to be consigned, in a manner, to hell.

L. But the pain and the shame were mightily increased by the ignominious BEARING OF THE CROSS. His body, feeble, exhausted by so many watchings and so many injuries, and recently wounded by so many stripes, proved unequal to so great a weight; and soon

appearing ready to faint by the way, he required the assistance of Simon the Cyrenian. A sad spectacle, indeed, which, not without reason, drew floods of tears from the eyes of the daughters of Jerusalem. For the Lord of glory to carry, like a slave, the disgraceful cross! to be driven, beaten, and pushed forward, till he was obliged to stumble and stagger, if not to fall, under the pressure of the tree! For him who relieves all that are afflicted, now to stand in need of a helper!

LI. Had there been nothing more to press him down than what was external and visible, the burden would have been comparatively light. But to that was added the guilt of all our crimes, which were laid upon him, that he might bear them together with the tree; for "he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows," and "he bare our sins in his own body on the tree."u David complains of the grievousness of this burden, saying, "Mine iniquities are gone over mine head, as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me." Yet David never felt the burden in all its weight.

LII. It was also inexpressibly bitter to Christ to be STRIPPED OF HIS GARMENTS, both on account of the pain and the shame. The clothes being driven into the flesh by the stripes and wounds which he had received, could not be pulled off, at least in those parts of his body which had just been pressed by the cross, without the most exquisite sensations of pain. It was a great affront, too, for a venerable person, a distinguished Teacher, a holy Prophet, to be stripped naked in the presence of all, so that on this account he might say; "Shame hath covered my face." When the king of the Ammonites cut off the garments of David's servants in the middle even to their buttocks, and dismissed them in that condition, not only were they greatly ashamed; but King David himself avenged, by a destructive war, so heinous an insult offered to his ambassadors, contrary to the universal law and usage of nations. But now a far greater indignity is done, not to a servant of David, but to his Son, to his Lord, nay, to the Ambassador of the great God, the Angel of the covenant; from whom not merely a part of his garments is cut off, but all of them are

entirely pulled away, that he may be suspended naked, a spectacle to men and angels,—an indignity which was avenged on the unprincipled men to whose counsels it was owing, by their own destruction and that of their city. And behold the surprising change that now took place in the state of things. A few days before, while Christ made his entry to Jerusalem, riding on an ass, "a very great multitude spread their garments in the way," exclaiming, "Hosanna to the Son of David; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!"y Now the same people, with emotions of joy see him, when expelled with disgrace from Jerusalem and about to suffer crucifixion, rudely divested of his own garments, which the profane soldiers divided by lot among themselves. O the impious madness of the inconstant populace!

LIII. But here also a mystery was not wanting. Although Christ was eminently adorned with the beauty of the purest holiness, yet because he was made sin for us, and substituted in the room of sinners that were destitute of all the glories of the divine image, it was proper that for a season he should be divested of all beauty, and covered only with ignominy, and that, in testimony of this, he should hang naked on the cross.

LIV. But ignominy, pain, and the curse, in the highest possible degree, appear to be summarily comprised in the punishment of the CROSS itself. What more contumelious could have befallen the King of kings, whom the choirs of celestial spirits adore with the most profound reverence, than to be numbered among robbers, placed in the middle between them, and disgracefully suspended betwixt heaven and earth, as unworthy of either, and as the chief of malefactors! What more unseemly than for those sacred feet with which he had traversed the whole land of Israel to lay every part of it under strong obligations to himself by deeds of beneficence, and for those hands which were distinguished by so many stupendous miracles, to be fastened with nails to the accursed tree! What more miserable than, during so many hours, without the least intermission of his agonies, to sustain a conflict with death, at once approaching

and lingering! What more intolerable than, while afflicted with so many torments, to be deprived of every sensible expression of God's fatherly regard, which in time past had afforded him such sweet consolation! And not simply to suffer dereliction, but also to experience in his soul the dreadful pressure of Divine wrath and vengeance; and to be suspended on the tree in the sight of angels and men, as not merely a sinner but sin, as not merely cursed but an execration and a curse!

LV. Who can doubt, besides, that it was grievous to Christ to be surrounded with a GUARD of barbarous soldiers, as if there were danger that others would rescue him, or that he would save himself from the pains of the cross; which, if such had been really his intention, not all the legions of Rome, nor all the forces of hell added to their number, could have been able to prevent. But that no instance of ignominy might be wanting, it behoved Christ to be guarded like a furious beast, so that the following complaint was no less suited to him than to Job; "Therefore I will not refrain my mouth, I will speak in the anguish of my spirit, I will complain in the bitterness of my soul. Am I a sea of a whale, that thou settest a watch over me." It was a great consolation to David of old, when he fled from Jerusalem, that he had his servants attending him, with all the Cherethites, and all the Pelethites, and other heroes, who mingled their tears with his, and were prepared to brave all extremities in his behalf.^a But our David, to the increase of his grief, beheld malefactors on each side of him, and around him soldiers sprinkled with his blood;—no friends, except a very few, and those few timid, confounded, more ready to augment than assuage his sorrow.

LVI. But further, as Elisha once beheld a mountain surrounded with good Angels, watching for his defence, so Christ saw mount Calvary encompassed with malignant devils, raging dreadfully against him.¹⁶ Now surely, if ever, the Prince of this world assaults him with his infernal troops. Now he had to maintain a close combat with the enemy. Now, on the confines of death, he had to grapple with him

who has the power of death, and who had erected numberless trophies of his victory on that same territory.

LVII. But what more virulent than those REVILINGS and taunts with which both the corrupt rulers and the insane people assailed him! The most abandoned of criminals, when suffering a capital punishment which they have justly deserved, still find some who, from the common feelings of humanity, condole with them, and comfort them by their tears, if they can do it by no other means. But Christ had reason to say; "Reproach hath broken my heart, and I am full of heaviness. And I looked for some to take pity, but there was none, and for comforters, but I found none." It is a consolation to sufferers to have some to weep with them, and to express their commiseration by their words, and by their gestures. But what more intolerable than to find the hearts of all spectators alienated from one's self in the time of adversity. Hence that dolorous exclamation of Job; "Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me. Why do you persecute me as God, and are not satisfied with my flesh?"^d Christ now experienced similar treatment. His enemies, contrary to the admonition of Solomon, rejoice in the time of his calamity. When very few were able to reach him with their hands, a great multitude attack him with the darts and sharp arrows of the tongue, of which the point is peculiarly keen,^f and the poison peculiarly malignant. They do their utmost to deprive him, as well of honour as of life. They calumniate all that is most excellent,—all that most strikingly exhibited the bright splendour of sanctity, and the finger of God. In fine, they approve themselves the servants of the Devil, in deriding the glory of his Sonship, which, after it had been announced by God the Father,^h and claimed by our Lord, that mischievous spirit assaulted in vain.

LVIII. But the most terrible of all miseries, as it is proverbially called, is the dart of DEATH,—particularly such a death as Christ suffered; which was denounced against the first Adam, as the awful effect of the Divine indignation; and to which the second Adam, in the capacity of our substitute, surrendered himself a prey. Wonderful

indeed, almost surpassing faith, and altogether transcending the grasp of reason,—that he who preserved so many diseased persons from death, he who restored so many dead to life from the couch, the coffin, and the sepulchre, he who only is the Author of life and immortality, the true God and eternal life, did himself submit to death!

LIX. Nay, he submitted to more than one kind of death; for in addition to the common bitterness of animal death, he suffered the pains of spiritual and eternal death. Of these the sufferings of David were typical; yet his words, in their full meaning, were verified only in the antitype: "The sorrows of death compassed me, and the floods of ungodly men made me afraid. The sorrows of hell compassed me about; the snares of death prevented me." Hence those "prayers and supplications offered up, with strong crying and tears, unto him that was able to save him from death." Were any one to affirm that those prayers and supplications arose merely from the fear of temporal death, he would, in reality, do very great injustice to Christ, by representing him as possessed of less courage for facing death than a Socrates, or a Cato; and than many myriads of martyrs, men, women, and girls, who have departed this life with joy and exultation, despising the torments of the most frightful deaths. There was something more, therefore, in the death of Christ; to wit, the envenomed sting of sin, deriving its force and sharpness from the law; by which the soul as well as the body of Christ, was so cruelly pierced, that neither iron-hooks nor fires, nor any thing else which infernal barbarity has devised in ancient or in modern times, can bear a comparison with torments so severe. In a comment on the following words, "He hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin," Chrysostome finely says: "He hath given him to be condemned as a sinner, and to die as accursed; for Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree. And to die in this manner, is far more grievous than death itself."

LX. O what stony, what adamantine hearts must we have, who can write, and read, and hear, and think of all these sufferings without

being dissolved into sorrow, without melting into sighs and tears! When the history of Abel cruelly murdered by his brother Cain, or that of Joseph sold by his brethren, or that of David fleeing from his son Absalom, or that of a worthy martyr singing praises to Christ amidst horrible tortures, or when even a skilfully composed tragedy representing a scene of fictitious distress, is exhibited to our view, we sometimes feel ourselves so much affected that it is with difficulty we can restrain our tears. And shall we not be so moved by the unutterable agonies of Christ, our Brother, our Husband, our Lord and our God,—agonies which, although perfectly innocent, he so cheerfully sustained on account of our sins, from a principle of unbounded love to our souls—shall we not at least be so moved by these agonies, as sincerely to deplore them, and to burn with holy revenge against his enemies!

LXI. I do not require you, however, Christian, to be touched with that natural commiseration towards Christ, with which common humanity teaches us to regard the children of adversity. Christ himself forbade the daughters of Jerusalem to indulge in wailing and lamentation of that sort. And without doubt, it is far more unbecoming now, when, having emerged from all his distresses, and having perfected the work of our salvation, he enjoys his glorious reward in the highest heavens.

LXII. Nor would I have you to indulge your indignation against the Jews in the same way with Clovis, King of the Franks, of whom it is said, that when he had heard the Bishop of RHEIMS recite the history of our Lord's passion, he exclaimed; "Had I been there with my Franks, I should soon have dispatched that impious rabble." Divine justice inflicts sufficient punishment on that wretched nation, which, after so many myriads of them had been miserably slain, and after their land had been smitten with a curse, have wandered for so many ages, having no certain habitation, exiles from their own country, rejected by God and despised by men, enduring that wrath which comes upon them to the uttermost; until, when the fulness of

the Gentiles is brought in, they also shall at last through Jesus obtain salvation and happiness.o

LXIII. It is better, deeply to lament thy sins, by which thou wast the author and cause of all the agonies of Christ; such is the effect of the Spirit of grace. It is better, that contemplating in Christ as in a glass, the punishments due to thy transgressions, thou shouldst be filled with amazement, and confess that thou, even thou, deservest to be torn in soul as well as in body by the strokes of Divine justice;—to be finally expelled, bearing thine own sin, from the society of the godly, whom thou hast so often offended by ill-advised words and deeds, and from the city of God, the heavenly Jerusalem, the general assembly and church of the elect, whose names are written in heaven;—to be divested of all your garments, covered with nothing but shame and disgrace, and made a mocking-stock to men and devils;—to be esteemed a candidate for the cursed cross;—to be treated by all with every species of indignity, and, amidst the pains of death, to receive no refreshing draught, no consolation whatever;—to be constantly surrounded with a hand of devils and guarded for eternal torments;—in fine, fully to experience the whole bitterness of every kind of death without end and without intermission. Consider this, mourn, and lament.

LXIV. It is better for thee, finally, to be inflamed with a holy desire of revenge against thy sins, and to repay them the same severities which they inflicted upon Jesus. Keep under the body of sin, and suffer not the old man to riot in wantonness, or indulge in pride. Expel him from thy house and from thy soul, as an abandoned criminal, and a despicable slave. Divest him of every plea for protection, and nail him to the cross of your Lord, to perish dolefully there; for by virtue of that cross, you ought to "be crucified to the world, and the world to you." Be assiduous in subduing this monster, and cease not till you have taken ample vengeance upon him, having "mortified your members which are upon the earth." Happy the man who is so "planted together with Christ in the likeness of his death, as

to be planted together with him also in the likeness of his resurrection."u

LXV. It is impossible fully to express the great CONSOLATION which arises from the thought of the cross of Christ to those who are thus earnestly engaged in the crucifixion of the flesh. By his STRIPES, O Christian, he has sanctified and sweetened stripes of every sort to thee. Whilst they fell on his blessed body, they were blessed by him. Who art thou, that thou shouldst presume to demand a life exempt from the rod in every shape, since you see that the Son of God himself, who came into the world without sin, did not leave it without suffering. Let it suffice thee, that through Christ the sting of the curse is extracted from thy sorrows, and that "by his stripes thou art healed."w If it should be thy lot, in common with Apostles, to be beaten with rods for the name of Christ, esteem it a joy and an honour that thou art accounted worthy "to fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in thy flesh."¹⁷ The memorials of the ancients and all the historical records of the Church, abound with instances of men and women, boys and girls, who, superior to every feeling of pain, smiling and singing, and transported with celestial joy, presented to astonished spectators, not merely their limbs torn with lashes, but even their bones made bare by stripes, and the innermost recesses of their bowels exposed. To what was this owing? The reason is, that, animated by the stripes and cheered by the Spirit of Christ, they felt nothing unpleasant in their sufferings, but on the contrary experienced that the severest strokes were no sooner inflicted by the executioner than cured by the wounds of their Saviour.

LXVI. It conduces also to thy consolation, Christian, that thy Lord, BEARING THE CROSS, was expelled as accursed from Jerusalem by the infuriated Jews. The way was thus prepared for him, that he might come to exhibit the saving blessings of his cross to us who are shiners of the Gentiles, and that he might open an avenue to the heavenly Jerusalem. He is the true Eliakim, "the God who will strengthen us, into whose hand the government is committed, that

he may be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah," considered not externally but spiritually. The cross which he bears, is "the key of David laid upon his shoulder." With this he "shuts" hell, that neither we may be precipitated into that place of torment, nor our sworn enemies break forth from it for our destruction. With this he "opens" for us the gates of his own kingdom; the kingdom of grace here, and the kingdom of glory hereafter. With this, in fine, he opens a treasury abundantly replenished with the riches of the divine munificence, that he may liberally communicate to us, "the sure mercies of David."y

LXVII. He allowed himself to be STRIPPED of his garments, and suspended naked on the cross, that he might cover the shame of thy disgraceful nakedness contracted by sin;—that he might adorn thee with the fine linen of his own righteousness, clean and white;a—that he might beautify thee with garments of wrought gold, and deck thee with an ornament of grace composed of the Christian virtues as of so many pearls;c—and that he might present thee thus arrayed to his God and Father, having at the same time expiated the guilt of that extravagant fondness for gaudy apparel, to which, according to the fashion of this world, thou wast formerly addicted.

LXVIII. Further, the ignominious tree of the CROSS is the height of thy glory, the support of thy weakness, the ladder of paradise, and "the tree of life, which bears twelve manner of fruits, and yields her fruit every month, and whose leaves are for the healing of the nations." Here, the iniquity of the whole earth was removed in one day.f Here, liberty worthy of the sons of God was procured. Here, the hand-writing of ordinances which was against us, was torn in pieces, and taken out of the way, and then nailed to the cross. Here, "having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it." Here, here, the afflicted soul finds that which sweetens the waters of her tribulation, although they seem to flow from the well of Marah itself.h In one word, he delivered us from every curse, he loaded us with every kind of blessings, when he was suspended on the tree, and made the curse of God for us.

LXIX. Add to this, that Christ was surrounded with a GUARD of soldiers, as of so many dogs, that he might obtain cohorts of angels for thy defence, and might himself keep thee, by the guard of his power, through faith, unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.^k You are exposed, we admit, to cruel mockings, to numerous indignities, and to the reproaches of virulent tongues, by which it is not unlikely that your resolution may sometimes be shaken, and your faith and hope waver for a season; but behold in Christ, all your trials of this sort foreshown, sanctified, and for your sake overcome. Only let it not seem grievous to thee, to be conformed to Jesus in this as well as in other respects: and learn from him to repel and extinguish all such fiery darts by silence, faith, and patience,—relying on the word of God, leaning on that hope which will never make ashamed, and assuring thyself that Christ, who was himself tried in the same manner with thee, will act the part of a "merciful and faithful Highpriest."

LXX. Consider, in fine, the DEATH of Christ, and see in it, 1st, The expiation of thy sin. For he made "his soul an offering for sin," "to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness."ⁿ "As it is appointed unto men once to die, so also Christ was once offered to bear," to take upon himself and thus to take away, "the sins of many."

LXXI. 2dly, See the death of thy death. Death imagined that he would utterly swallow up Christ; but by a surprising reverse, death himself was, by the dying Redeemer, "swallowed up in victory." Christ was to death a worm, by which the monster, with extreme avidity swallowing at once, so to speak, the worm and the hook, miserably perished. He was poison, which death no sooner drank than he felt, so to speak, the sorrows and pains of child-birth; nor could he retain him, or be at ease, till Christ rose again from the sepulchre, and became "the First-begotten of the dead." He was a solid rock, on which death having fixed his sting and dashed his teeth, quite lost the power to sting and to bite. In fine, "he abolished

death;" he rendered it feeble and ineffective,* so that whatever efforts this tyrant, when raging with redoubled fury in the final conflict, may make against the saints, they are without effect. To believers death is not that which it is in itself, the punishment of sin denounced by the curse of the law; but the termination of sin and of all their sorrows, and an entrance into life eternal,t—an event to be desired rather than dreaded.

Death, we confess, retains its name;

Its fatal sting it cannot claim.

The Christian finds this last of foes,

Ordain'd to give him sweet repose.†

LXXII. Luther, in a letter to Hardmannus a Cronbergh, has the following animated expressions: "They often threaten us with death, and with present ruin. But if they were as much distinguished for wisdom as they surpass every one in folly, they ought really to threaten us with life. A truly ridiculous sort of menaces and terrors, as if they could deter Christ and his people from their purpose by the fear of death; while Christians are the conquerors of death through Christ, who vanquished and triumphed over the king of terrors, and exhibited a trophy of his victory to all his followers. Those men, in reality, discover the same egregious madness, as if I should intend to intimidate a person by bringing forth his horse saddled and bridled, that he might take a ride." And a little after; "Since the present life which we live in the flesh, is always exposed to sin, the approaches and stain of which, owing to the flesh which is our constant companion, it cannot avoid,—the new creature formed by the Spirit cries out within us, with unutterable groanings, Make haste, O Death, let my last day upon earth, which is to put an end to death and sin, speedily arrive. Amen."

LXXIII. 3dly, Behold the confirmation of the New Testament. The Old Testament was confirmed by the blood of victims sprinkled on

the altar, the book of the covenant, and the people of Israel. But as the New Testament far excels the Old, it was proper that it should be ratified by much nobler blood, even the blood of the Son of God, dying as a Testator for the confirmation of his Testament.v* Not that by his death he made void his own right to the inheritance; for he soon rose again to live for ever as the eternal possessor of his own goods; but he died to render the promises of the Testament sure and irrevocable. The rending of the vail, which happened at the death of Christ, was an emblem of this, and served to show that the handwriting which was contrary to us was cancelled; and that the wall, which had divided the Israelites from the Gentiles, and had in some respect separated believers themselves from God, was broken down.

LXXIV. Collect now all that has been said into one point, and learn how deeply you are indebted to Christ. Imagine yourself present with him in Golgotha, a spectator of his unparalleled abasement, and addressed by the dying Redeemer in the following pathetic terms: "O man, whoever thou art, behold me with deep attention, and with the eye of a stedfast faith. See in my body the marks of the cruel scourge. See me ignominiously expelled from Jerusalem, and now suspended on that cross which I lately bore. Behold me naked, who was born of a Virgin, and have been always a pattern of perfect modesty. Observe my hands and my feet, signalized by the glory of so many extraordinary miracles, now transfixed with nails. Hear the revilings, the taunts, the blasphemies, which I patiently suffer from cruel and insolent mockers. Know thou, that I, who might have enjoyed all the glories and pleasures of the celestial life, undergo these sufferings from pure and disinterested love to thee; that thou mightest be delivered from the righteous vengeance of God, and from the power of the Devil, and enjoy everlasting felicity. And shall it now seem grievous to thee, to abandon the proud Babel of this world, and associate with the assembly of my humble followers; to bear thy cross in imitation of me; to remove far from thee the prodigious pomp of worldly arrogance so harassing at once to mind and body, and out of thine abundance to administer to my necessities whilst yet

destitute in my members; and for my sake to suffer scoffs and reproaches which can do thee no great harm? Are you not willing to render a slight return to me, who, although possessed of the highest dignity, have done so much for thee? Knowing that shortly my speech must be broken off by death, I exhort and beseech thee, by the bowels of my love, by the wounds of my body, by this cross on which I hang, by thy own life and salvation—Withdraw thyself from the assembly of the wicked; and keep at as great a distance from them as possible, in sentiment, in disposition, and in the whole course of thy life. Go forth without the camp, bearing my reproach; for here you have no continuing city, but you expect one to come. Take upon you with alacrity the delightful yoke of my precepts, and bear it with constancy. Resign not thy body to lewdness, but adorn thy mind with those beauties of holiness which I have procured by my nakedness. Cheerfully celebrate and industriously imitate my virtues, which ungodly men have traduced in vain. Return love to me, who have loved thee with so great a love. Devote thyself wholly to me, who have devoted myself entirely for thee. In short,—for I must die,—LIVE TO HIM WHO DIES FOR THEE."

LXXV. In fine, resort to the death of Christ for an EXAMPLE OF A PIOUS AND BLESSED DEATH. 1st, Perform with activity whatever you ought to do in this life, that having finished your work, you may securely compose yourself to rest; and presume not to take possession of the prize, before you have successfully accomplished the fight. 2dly, Disengage yourself from every secular care, that when the decisive hour approaches, you may promptly and willingly depart to God.y 3dly, In your departing moments give yourself to prayer; and if your tongue become unable to speak, at least pour forth groans which cannot be uttered, for yourself, for your friends, for your enemies. 4thly, Die in the faith of obtaining a better state in heaven immediately after death, and a blessed resurrection at the last day.a

DISSERTATION XVII: ON THE BURIAL OF CHRIST

I. THE death of Christ was succeeded by his burial. "When they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a sepulchre." Of this the Evangelists have given a circumstantial account; and Christian piety requires us to improve it for our own benefit, by holy meditation.

II. The chief care of the interment of Christ devolved upon Joseph of Arimathea, to whom Nicodemus afterwards joined himself. Both of them were honourable men, opulent members of the Jewish council, and held in high estimation amongst their connexions. God has chosen his people from every order of mankind;—not many wise men, or mighty, or noble, yet some of those classes. That Divine providence displayed admirable wisdom in this dispensation, it would be criminal to doubt. The Apostles could not so properly have requested permission to undertake the office of interring their Master, lest the Pharisees and priests, who fabricated the story that Christ's body was stolen from the sepulchre, should have alleged that he was not buried. How much soever, too, the Apostles had wished it, they could not have succeeded in procuring such permission either from Pilate, or from the council of the Jews. It was necessary that men of rank should interpose their influence, that our Lord might obtain an honourable burial.

III. These individuals, having honoured and loved their Master during his life, now discover the same, or even a stronger regard for him, after he had suffered death, nay, the death of the cross. Thus they exhibit an example of sincere and stedfast faith and love, which were so far from declining in any degree in consequence of the ignominious punishment of our Lord, that, on the contrary, they were exercised more nobly than before. While Jesus was living, Joseph was his disciple "secretly for fear of the Jews:" Nicodemus, for the same reason, "came by night." Joseph now becomes bold, and

professes before Pilate the high esteem which he entertained for Christ: d Nicodemus, dismissing his fears, comes forth openly, and honours the deceased with a magnificent gift of spices. Here was an instance of what we read in the Song of Solomon: "Love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave; the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it."

IV. Besides, the more rich and honourable they were, their faith and zeal are the more conspicuous; for by this magnanimous conduct they put all their worldly greatness to immediate hazard. So bitter was the hatred of their colleagues against the Saviour, and so violent the rage of the infatuated people, that there appeared every reason to apprehend at once the confiscation of their goods, the loss of their liberty, and the indignation of their fellow-citizens. And who does not know how mightily the minds of the rich are, in general, attached to their wealth and honours? Our Lord himself accordingly, observes, that nothing is more difficult than for a rich man to be saved, and to enter into the kingdom of heaven. But these great men, now truly great, esteem the most valuable earthly possessions but loss and dung in comparison of Christ. At least, they cheerfully sacrifice them to Him; resolving to be "rich towards God," and "rich in good works."g

V. It is also worthy of notice, that while some of the rulers were friendly to his cause, our Lord would not avail himself of their services or intercession for the purpose of escaping death; but, with great propriety, made use of their influence to procure for him an honourable burial. It behoved Christ by all means to die, that he might abolish death: it behoved him not to remain long unburied, lest the curse should seem to continue after death.

VI. Nor must it be omitted, that the very name JOSEPH reminds us of a type. Joseph was the name of him who supported the patriarch Jacob his father, when living, and magnificently buried him when dead. A Joseph also had the charge of watching over Jesus in infancy,

and of training him up in the days of youth. Now another Joseph is intrusted with the care of his burial when dead.

VII. Having obtained Christ's body from Pilate, Joseph "wrapped it in a clean linen cloth," that is, very fine, and very costly linen. In this manner persons of distinction were of old accustomed to be buried; coverings of silk, as Maimonides* testifies, being forbidden even to a Prince. The body of Christ was attired somewhat more splendidly when dead than when newly born, because he was born to undergo all the sorrows of a mortal life in our stead, but finished his sufferings at death. Hence some beginnings of his glory shone forth in his burial; but they were only beginnings—faint and almost imperceptible dawns; for all this splendour was due to the liberality of others.

VIII. To the fine linen of Joseph was added the magnificent offering of Nicodemus, "who brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight." This was intended either for an honorary embalming, or as others conceive, an honorary burning, to be performed at the first opportunity of showing this mark of respect; for both were in use among the Israelites. The custom of embalming corpses with spices was probably borrowed by the Israelites from the Egyptians. There was, however, a slight difference betwixt them. The Egyptians, anointing the internal as well as external parts of the body, took out the bowels, and even extracted the brain through the nostrils. † The Jews, on the contrary, anointed only the external parts; but liberally, if the deceased were a person of rank. Nicodemus accordingly prepared a large quantity of spices, with which the whole body of Christ might be profusely embalmed.

IX. But that spices were employed also to make a burning at funeral solemnities, appears from the history of Asa. It is recorded, too, that such a burning was refused to Joram, as unworthy of the honour.‡ Not that the Jews burned the corpses themselves, which was the practice of the Greeks, and Romans, and several other nations. Tacitus expressly informs us, that, "according to the Egyptian

custom, they chose rather to bury, than to burn the bodies."* They did not derive this custom, however, from the Egyptians, but from their ancestors; as appears from what the Scripture relates with regard to the burial of Sarah, and others. But the Jews burned spices over the dead, to do them honour. This was done, as Josephus seems to intimate, with very great pomp, to Herod the Great. "Five hundred servants," he affirms, "were employed to bring spices," at his funeral solemnities.† And for what purpose were those spices brought, but in order to be burned? It is elsewhere said expressly: "Fifty of his servants surrounded his bed, having each "a golden censer in his hand, and burned aromatic "wood in great abundance; and all who encompassed "his bed, were constantly throwing into it the purest myrrh."‡ This honour, however, was usually conferred on none but a King, or the Principal of an Academy.* That it was done to Kings, is well known. In respect to Principals, an instance is adduced in Rabbi Gamaliel Senex, upon whom, after his death, Onkelos the proselyte is said to have burned aromatics to the value of seventy Tyrian pounds. Nicodemus, therefore, in bringing so copious a supply of myrrh and aloes at the burial of Jesus, virtually recognises him as a King, and a Principal Teacher.

X. Nor was it altogether without reason, that funeral solemnities were conducted with such anxious attention, and that so great solicitude was discovered to preserve as long as possible the bodies of the dead, and to make them send forth a fragrant odour. Most probably, the pious intended to express in this manner, not only their love to the deceased, but also their hopes of the resurrection. The attempt, indeed, to preserve from putrefaction, by aromatic ointments, him of whom David had foretold that he should "see no corruption," appears to have resulted from some weakness in faith; and it is sufficiently evident, that Joseph and Nicodemus had but very indistinct conceptions of the approaching resurrection of Christ. Yet what they did, was the fruit of love and of faith, striving with weakness and darkness of mind. They could not be wholly ignorant of the prediction of his rising again after three days; which was not unknown even to his enemies: and it were contrary to their piety, to

intend, by the performance of funeral solemnities, to charge that prediction with falsehood. Ignorant, meantime, of the manner in which the prophecy was to receive its fulfilment; and, instead of indulging a presumptuous curiosity, committing it to God with the humility of faith, they were determined not to neglect their own duty. But whatever thoughts may have been entertained by them, the spices with which the body of Christ was anointed, ought certainly to remind us, of the sweet and reviving odour which flows to us from his death and burial; and in this view also, it is pleasant to praise him in the following words: "All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia."

XI. Having thus embalmed, or at least prepared with spices, the body of Christ, they laid it in the tomb; not inclosed in a coffin, according to our custom, but merely wrapped in the linen. The form of the Jewish sepulchres was not a little different from ours. They were accustomed, at least the more wealthy amongst them, to dig out a cavern in a rock; which had first an area in the middle fronting the entrance, and on each side a recess four cubits lower than the area, which again had its own cavities or niches,* in which the corpses were laid, about eight or sometimes thirteen in number, that a whole family might be buried in distinct receptacles in the same tomb. See what Lightfoot has collected on this subject.† These minute matters must not be overlooked, if we wish to understand in what manner the women, and John and Peter, are said to have entered into the sepulchre of Christ, and, stooping down, to have looked into the place where he lay. All of them, we conceive, stood in the area, and looked downwards into that lower place, where the receptacles for dead bodies were formed; and into which Peter even descended.

XII. Further, five remarkable circumstances respecting the sepulchre are noticed by the Evangelists. 1st, It belonged to another, to Joseph, and not to Christ. 2dly, It was hewn out of a rock. 3dly, It was new, a sepulchre in which no one had previously been laid. 4thly, It was in a garden. 5thly, It was in the place where Christ was crucified. None of these particulars is unworthy of our attention.

XIII. The Lord of all was deposited not in his own, but in another's sepulchre. Thus did poverty attend him even to the last. When newly born, he was laid in a cradle which was not his own. When living, he had not "where to lay his head" to sleep. When dead, the liberality of another supplied him with a tomb. This is the poverty by which he makes us rich. Why, too, should he have a sepulchre of his own, who was to continue only three days in the grave? Why should not he be buried in another man's tomb, who having died for the sin of others, was buried for the salvation of others?

XIV. The tomb, besides, was hewn out of a solid rock, that the perverseness of the Jews might have no pretence for alleging, that the disciples of Christ had stolen through concealed passages in the earth, and clandestinely removed the body.

XV. It was also new, that calumny might not pretend that another was raised in place of Christ, or that Christ was raised by the merit or power of any other formerly buried in the same sepulchre; and that none, from weakness, might suspect that something had happened to Christ, similar to that which befel the Moabite, who, when cast into the sepulchre of Elisha, having touched the bones of the prophet, immediately revived. And truly he was worthy of a new sepulchre, who, by his death, has obtained a new name and new honour to sepulchres, having changed them into dormitories,* that is, beds of rest, where his people sleep in the hope of one day awaking to life and immortality.

XVI. Nor is it a circumstance of no moment, that this tomb is said to have been in a garden. As he was pleased to begin his last passion by a bloody sweat in a garden, so he concluded the last stage of his abasement by his burial in a garden. He thus showed, that by his passion and abasement, he has regained those heavenly blessings, which our first parents had forfeited for themselves and their posterity, by indulging luxury and ambition in a garden. And where could He be interred with greater propriety than in a garden, who, like Aaron's rod, was to bud forth again on the third day, and to

whose death, burial, and resurrection, it is owing, that our bodies shall again, like reviving grass, come forth from the earth?

XVII. In fine, this garden was "in the place where a Christ was crucified;" that is, in the immediate vicinity of the place of punishment, and, if we may give credit to travellers who have particularly examined the spot, at the distance of an hundred and eight feet. Thus the prediction of Isaiah was verified: "He made his grave with the wicked."† But of this we shall speak more at large, immediately.

XVIII. This burial of Christ took place according to the Scriptures; in which it was both predicted and prefigured. It was predicted in Psalm 22:15. "Thou hast brought me to the dust of death." This bringing to the dust was begun in Gethsemane, when Christ, almost exhausted by the fire of divine wrath, "fell on the ground;" but it was completed in his death and burial. Our Lord's meaning is, that his vital moisture being exhausted by the agonies of his soul, and by the spiritual contest begun in the garden, and continued on the cross, he was brought sooner than usual to death—death, by which men are reduced to dust, and after which their dead bodies are usually deposited in the dust of the grave. We may here admit the interpretation of Kimchi: "I am ready to be laid in the grave, which is the dust of death."*

XIX. Add to this Psalm 16:9, 10. "My flesh also shall rest in hope;" shall dwell securely, or rest in safety; shall enjoy sweet repose in the grave. "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell," my life in the power of death; or, my corpse in the grave. That nephesh † sometimes denotes a corpse, or at least, a dead man, and sheol,‡ the grave, will be shown more fully in the proper place. "Neither wilt thou suffer thine holy One to see corruption:" I shall descend into the lowest parts of the earth, where death has his court and kingdom; yet that tyrant shall not so far prevail against me, as to cause me to contract any corruption, or experience any symptom of putrefaction in my body; for I am "thy holy One,"§ who have perfectly loved thee, and

who am the object of thy supreme delight. That David personated Christ in these prophetic notices of his burial and resurrection, is demonstrated by the Apostle Peter, in the discourse which he delivered on the day of Pentecost.²¹

XX. But nothing can be more express than the prediction referred to above, Isaiah 53:9. which, literally rendered, runs thus: "And appointed his grave with the wicked, and with the rich man in his deaths."* The purport of this prophecy may be, in the first member of the sentence, to show the intention of Christ's enemies, and in the second, the purpose of God. The perverse people mentioned in the preceding verse, intended that Christ, when dead, should be disgracefully cast with the thieves, into some ditch or pit, infamous as the receptacle of the dead bodies of malefactors. This was demanded by the laws of the Hebrews, as appears from the following quotation. "A man put to death by the Council, was not buried in the sepulchres of his fathers: but two burying places were assigned by the Council; one for those that were slain with the sword, and strangled; another for those that were stoned," who were also hanged, "and burned." † Custom required, that Jesus should be buried in the last of these two places, and the people had in contemplation nothing else. Yet God adjusted matters otherwise, having determined that his Son should be joined "with a rich man in his death," that is, with a man of first-rate dignity and opulence, such as Joseph was; for the word translated "rich" denotes senatorial dignity and rank.^x

The words of this prophecy, however, may be so explained as to be completely fulfilled in the burial of Christ. His grave was in the garden of the rich Joseph; yet, as we have just observed from John, it was adjacent to Calvary, and thus among the wicked. At the urgent request of the Jews, too, it was surrounded and guarded by ungodly soldiers, as by a band of impure dogs.

XXI. Since we have thus an easy and obvious sense, there is no necessity for imagining that a twofold burial of Christ is here

predicted; the one, the burial of the wicked, without interment, to wit, hanging on a tree; the other, the burial of the rich, in the lower parts of the earth:—As if Christ may be said to have been buried with the wicked while he hung upon the tree, whether living or dead; and to have been buried with the rich, when he was laid in Joseph's tomb. This interpretation is frigid, and supported by no similar expression in Scripture. Although lying in the field is represented as "the burial of an ass," it does not follow that to be exposed to the sun,* or to hang on a tree till the evening, is the burial of the wicked; since sacred writ distinguishes the burial even of the wicked, from hanging on a tree.z I am aware of the expression of the slave in Plautus.†

The shameful cross, I know, will be my tomb;

The cross, alas! my patrimonial doom.

For ages past, the men from whom I'm sprung,

My father, grandsire, and the rest, have hung.

But conceits of that sort, however allowable in comedy, are utterly inconsistent with the gravity of sacred prophecies; and critics would unanimously pronounce them extremely unbecoming in tragedy, or serious history.

XXII. We have an illustrious TYPE of the burial of Christ in JONAH; of whom our Lord himself says: "For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly," in the belly of the great fish, "so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

XXIII. It is not necessary that by the word here employed,* we understand a whale; for the term is extensive, and is used of any large fish. Accordingly, in the history of Jonah, we find only that general designation, "a great fish." † It is well known, too, that whales, though creatures of prodigious size, have such narrow throats, that, the entrance being scarcely half a foot wide, they are

totally incapable of swallowing a complete man. Probably, therefore, it was a sea-dog, such as that which some call a shark,‡ on account of the sharpness of his teeth, and others a Lamia or Lamna,§ on account of the largeness of his throat. Monsters of this kind, it is said, have been taken, containing entire armed men in their belly.

XXIV. To this also may be referred the fable of Hercules swallowed by a sea-dog sent upon him by Neptune; from which, after tearing its inwards for three whole days, he came forth with the loss of the hair of his head. Hence also he is styled by the Greek poets Tri-esperos,* because he had remained in the fish three days, or rather nights, as they may be more aptly called, on account of the darkness with which he was enveloped in the belly of the monster. These fictions are obviously derived, by a frivolous perversion, from the sacred history of Jonah; as Cyril has remarked in his Commentaries on that Prophet. See Grotius,† and Bochart.‡

XXV. Jonah says, that whilst he was in the bowels of the fish, he was "in the belly of hell," or of the grave, and "in the midst, the heart, of the sea;" and in this respect he was a figure of Christ placed in the heart of the earth. This does not mean the hell of the damned, which, as Jerome says, "is commonly said to be in the midst of the earth;" but an earthen receptacle, which has earth above, below, and on every side—or more briefly, which is within the earth. As the Scripture places Tyre "in the heart of the sea," that is, in an island surrounded by the sea; as "the way of a ship is in the heart of the sea,"^e where it is surrounded on all sides by the heavens and the sea; as "the mountain burned with fire unto the heart of heaven," that is, simply to heaven; as Absalom was "alive in the heart of the oak,"^g that is, in the oak, within its branches;—so the grave is "the heart of the earth." Chrysostome remarks, that "he doth not say in the earth, but in the heart of the earth, that the expression might clearly denote the grave, and that no one might suspect a mere appearance."^{*}

XXVI. It is more difficult to perceive the agreement with reference to time, and to find the three days and three nights, which our Lord

foretold that, like Jonah, he should spend in the heart of the earth. Several writers on this topic, both ancient and modern, have recourse to subtle refinements. It is observed by the celebrated Cloppenburgh, who, however, seems to favour a more simple interpretation; "that the beginning of the three days is not improperly fixed at that hour in which Christ was lifted up on the cross, and thus removed from the land of the living; after which, the miraculous darkness intervening, the sun thrice shone, and darkness thrice prevailed, before the hour of Christ's resurrection." The rhetorical flourishing of Ambrose[†] is to the same effect "Our Lord had said, that he should be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The sun, having learned this, obeyed the command. He accordingly deliberated, saying, What do I? I rise, and it is day. I set, and it is night. If I shall observe my usual course, I shall obstruct the salvation of the world. Let us therefore make haste for the redemption of mankind.... When he shall have ascended the cross, I will abbreviate the hours. Let night commence precisely at the sixth hour, that I may not behold the passion of the Lord, but avoid the sight of so unnatural a murder. I will set, and there shall be a night of three hours. I will come forth, and renew the day, to continue also for three hours. This, when accomplished, is the first day. The second night follows, lasting the usual time. The day succeeds in like manner. The night will then begin. The Lord will rise again the third night, and the day will break amidst the splendours of his resurrection."

XXVII. A somewhat different manner of solving this difficulty is adopted by William Teeling, a more judicious and grave Divine, in his Catechetical Exercises, published in the Dutch language. He there observes, that Christ may be said to have been in the heart of the earth from the time at which, oppressed by a sense of the Divine anger, "he fell down upon the ground;" so that the night in which he was betrayed, and at the beginning of which he celebrated the supper with his disciples, may be reckoned the first of the three nights.i

XXVIII. These ideas are amplified thus by the celebrated Cocceius. "Our Lord's prediction, that he should be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth, is in part to be understood properly, and according to the letter; and in part according to analogy, as referring to the whole of that period of Christ's humiliation, which extended from the supper till the evening in which he manifested himself to the disciples, and, so to speak, lived again in them. After the supper, he was in the hour of the power of darkness, until he was actually buried in the earth; and he fully revived, only when the greater part of his disciples revived, and were recovered from their sorrow."

XXIX. Let every one put whatever value he pleases on these observations. We must confess, for our part, that, although they are learned, and not unworthy of their authors, we prefer the simple interpretation which is commonly received. Christ, we apprehend, did not compute mathematically the moments of time, but, in conformity to the common mode of speaking, employed the expression "three days and three nights" to denote three natural days,* of which, by a usual figure, † a greater or a smaller part received the name of the whole. He expired, as we commonly say, on Friday, about three in the afternoon, three hours of that day remaining till the setting of the sun—which are counted the first day. The entire Sabbath succeeded, from evening to evening—which makes the second day. The third night followed, and our Saviour rose again at the dawn of the morning.

XXX. It is not certain, besides, that Jonah spent the entire of three days, or seventy-two hours, in the fish. There is perhaps a closer resemblance even in this respect than, owing to unfounded prepossessions, we have hitherto imagined. After having written the foregoing remarks, I providentially lighted on the following words Isidorus of Pelusium, which seem worthy of attention: "Our Lord's three days in the grave are to be explained thus: It is written, AS Jonas was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, SO also shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. He, therefore, who promised that he would fulfil

the type of Jonah, since he knew it exactly—for he was present with Jonah both when cast into the deep, and when thrown out of it again —has ACCURATELY fulfilled it, having remained AS LONG a space of time in the grave, as Jonah remained in the belly of the fish."* The learned writer then subjoins, in perspicuous and correct language, that interpretation, which we have cited above from Ambrose; and adds some other remarks, which there is no necessity for repeating here.

XXXI. Let us now attend to the PRACTICAL USES of Christ's burial. It is profitable, First, For INFORMATION. 1st, That we may possess full assurance of the death and the subsequent resurrection of Christ. Hence it is not without reason stated by Mark, that Pilate did not deliver Christ's body to Joseph, till after he had made accurate inquiry respecting his death, and obtained good information of the fact. Divine providence, too, wisely ordered, that he should not be buried by enemies, who would not have hesitated to lay him in the sepulchre even when half-alive; but by friends, who would, on no account, have interred him, while there was the least appearance of heat or of breath. 2dly, That we may know that Christ has undergone all that abasement which is due to our sins, being humbled to the lowest degree in death, and after death. Although his burial was in many respects honourable, and "his sleep" in the tomb "was sweet unto him;"^k because he rested from his labours that were now thoroughly accomplished, and anticipated the most excellent fruits which were immediately to follow; yet in itself, it was a part of his abasement and humiliation, that he "descended into the lower parts of the earth."

XXXII. Secondly, For CONSOLATION. 1st, The burial of Christ renders it clear and certain, that the expiation of our sins was finished, and the curse abolished by his death. As, according to the legal type, hanging on a tree denoted the curse still existing and remaining, so the burial of the suspended corpse was a figure of its being abolished. Now the truth and substance of these shadows is in Christ. 2dly, He buried our sins along with him—both in regard to

justification, that they might be covered and removed from God's sight, lest they should be "set in the light of his countenance" to accuse us—and in regard to sanctification, for we are "buried with him by baptism into death," that our old man may by degrees be utterly destroyed, and cease to reign and live in us. 3dly, Pursuing death, so to speak, to the remotest corner and asylum of his fortress, he expelled him thence, and sanctified our sepulchres, that they might become pleasant resting-places for our bodies, until we awake "to behold God's face in righteousness, and to be satisfied with his likeness."

XXXIII. Thirdly, for ADMONITION;—that we may not be offended at any part of Christ's abasement, but, agreeably to the example of Joseph, Nicodemus, and the pious women, regard him, even when dead and buried, with the highest veneration; apprehending him by faith as the sole author of life, seeking him early with holy aspirations, devoutly longing for him during his absence, and freely presenting to him ourselves with all that we possess. This, without doubt, will prove far more grateful to him than the most costly spices, or even the extremely magnificent temple erected by Constantine at his tomb, and described by Eusebius in very pompous terms.*

DISSERTATION XVIII: ON CHRIST'S DESCENT INTO HELL

I. OUR LORD'S DESCENDING INTO HELL has attracted great attention, and given rise to much discussion. The Dissertations on this subject which have already been given to the world are extremely numerous; and since it has been so copiously discussed by others, it may be proper for us to treat it the more briefly and concisely.

II. I would observe, first of all, that this expression, Christ descended into hell, nowhere occurs, in so many words, in holy writ. He is said to have descended; he is said to have been in hell: but we never find the expression, he descended into hell.

III. Paul affirms that he descended "into the lower parts of the earth." In these words the Apostle seems to include the whole state of Christ's humiliation, which began in his nativity, and ended in his death and burial. The whole universe is divided into two parts, the upper, which is heaven; and the lower, which is the earth. Christ, therefore, when he came forth from the Father out of heaven, clothed himself with human flesh and appeared on the earth,—descended into the lower parts of the world. It deserves to be considered also, whether the following expression in Isaiah may not have the same meaning: "Sing, O ye heavens, for the LORD hath done it; shout, ye lower parts of the earth; break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein," &c. "The lowest parts of the earth," or the earth which is below,^c several parts of which, namely, the mountains and the woods, are afterwards mentioned, are here opposed to the heavens, which are above. The Psalmist, too, appears to have metaphorically styled the womb of his mother, "the lowest parts of the earth." "I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth." These words are explained not improperly by Jansenius thus: "My whole substance, which I had in my mother's womb, a place more secret than any cave of the earth, was not hid from thy sight".

This exposition, however, does not appear to me to exhaust the meaning of the Apostle. If we attend to the natural signification of the words, "the lowest parts of the earth," the expression denotes not only the earth itself, as opposed to the highest heaven, but also those parts of the earth which are lower than other parts of it—than "the land of the living." It denotes, I mean, the place of death and burial. Accordingly, we read in Ezekiel: "When I shall bring thee down "with them that descend into the pit, with the people of old time, and shall set thee in the low parts of the earth." And, again: "They are all

delivered unto death, in the midst of the children of men, to the nether parts of the earth, with them that go down to the pit."g These passages are sufficient to show the manner in which the phrase is employed in Scripture. Chrysostome expresses the same view of its import in the following words; "He calls death, the lower parts of the earth."* Those that are buried, are even said to be under the earth. Ignatius, says; "On Sabbath he remained under the earth in the tomb."† The Apostle's entire meaning, I think, is briefly expressed by Theophylact thus: "It is manifest that he who was above, not only descended into the earth, when he became incarnate; but also into hades, when he died."‡

IV. With respect to the time of Christ's continuance in hell, David prophesied, saying; "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell:" the meaning of which prophecy, is explained by Peter thus: "Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day.... He, seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption."i We shall attend to the several words of this prediction immediately.

V. It must also be remarked, further, that this article respecting the descent of Christ into hell, is omitted in almost all the ancient Creeds; which is evident from a long induction of instances by Moulin* and by Vossius.† The most ancient copy in which it is found, is the private Creed ascribed to Athanasius. But that Creed seems to be falsely attributed to Athanasius; it is, at least, extremely doubtful whether he be its real author. Of this we are fully convinced by the strong arguments of Vossius; who shows that it either did not exist at all, or was not known in the Church, till the beginning of the seventh century.‡

VI. In fine, it is worthy of notice too, that anciently those Creeds which had the article of Christ's descent into hell, did not contain the article relating to his burial; and those in which the article respecting the descent into hell was omitted, did contain the article relating to

the burial. Learned men are of opinion, that since originally those which exhibited the one omitted the other, both of them, owing to some mistake, afterwards began to be conjoined. In the time of Rufinus, indeed, that is, about the beginning of the fifth century, the Church of Rome herself deemed it sufficient to mention the burial only. The Church of Aquileia,§ however, had both in their Creed; but if we may adopt the opinion of Rufinus, they supposed that both had one and the same meaning. And here I entirely acquiesce in the sentiment of Vossius: "that the Churches of the East originally understood by Christ's descent into hell, what the Churches of the West denominated his burial."

VII. At what time these synonymous expressions began to be joined as if they differed in meaning, cannot be exactly ascertained. Erasmus is of opinion that this was done by Thomas Aquinas, who flourished about the year 1365. I find in Socrates,* however, that the Arians, by the appointment of Acacius, met at Constantinople, to the number of fifty, and there compiled a Creed, in which they profess that they believe in Christ, "who was dead, and buried, and who penetrated the subterranean regions, at whom even Hades was struck with terror."† By these expressions they appear to understand something more than burial. This happened about the year 359.

VIII. Nevertheless, though the article respecting the descent of Christ into hell, does not occur, in express words, either in sacred Scripture or in the most ancient Creeds, we sincerely believe and assert it, when rightly explained. In examining the sense of the expression, we shall not inquire so much, what several of the ancients may have understood, as what, in conformity with the analogy of faith and the language of Scripture, they ought to have understood by these words. Nor, provided the subject itself be placed in a perspicuous light, shall we deem it of great importance, in what order we find this article now arranged in the Creed; in which, we have shown that originally it was entirely omitted.

IX. When we profess that Christ descended into hell, the expression is to be referred, we apprehend, partly to the BODY, and partly to the SOUL.

x. As it respects the BODY, it denotes burial, or the retention of the body in the grave, and in the state of death. Among all persons of candour it is undoubted, that the Hebrew term Scheol,* which the Greeks render Hades,† often denotes the grave, or the state of dead men of every description. To omit many other instances which are adduced by the learned, it expressly denotes the grave in Psalm 141:7. "Our bones are scattered at the mouth of the grave, Scheol."— And the state of death, Psalm 49:14. "Like sheep they are laid in the grave, Scheol;" that is, they die like sheep, which are not usually buried, and which surely do not penetrate into the hell of the damned, or into what is called a Limbus.‡

XI. Further, as Scheol and Hades denote the state of the dead and the grave, so to go, or to descend into Scheol, or Hades, signifies to pass into that state and place. Hezekiah says accordingly: "I said, in the cutting off of my days, I shall go to the gates of the grave, Scheol;" I shall be added to the number of the dead and buried; "I am deprived of the residue of my years." The patriarch Jacob, in like manner, said: "I will go down into the grave, Scheolah, to my son, mourning." This most directly refers to the state of death; but there is nothing material to hinder the expression from being explained also of the grave. Admitting that Jacob may not have thought that Joseph was buried, yet in descending to the grave, he was to go to Joseph, though unburied, and, as he supposed, to be with him among the dead. It is not those only who are interred in the same tomb with their fathers, that are said to "go to their fathers," or to be "gathered with" them; but those also, who, by descending to the grave, are brought into the same state of death even with ancestors that had not been honoured with a tomb. This interpretation may suffice, without resorting to the gloss of Solomon Jarchi, who explains it thus: "I will descend into Scheol on account of my son;"* referring the expression to the cause of death, not to fellowship in death.

XII. Whoever intends, then, to express our Lord's condition in the grave and in the state of death, in the language employed by ancient patriarchs and prophets, cannot make use of more elegant or striking terms than these: "Christ descended into hell, hades." And this is the native, proper, and literal sense of the expression.

XIII. But we have said that it may also be referred to the SOUL. Our reason for saying so, however, is not that it is written, Psalm 16:10, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell;" for it is not necessary to understand those words of that part of man which we call the soul or the mind. The Hebrew word Nephesh,[†] which the Psalmist here uses, sometimes means a living creature, whether irrational, or rational. The following passages refer to the latter: "Whosoever hath killed any soul—person;" "Let my soul,—let me die the death of the righteous;" and "Let my soul,—let me die with the Philistines." The expression, Psalm 16:10, might be explained in the same sense: "Thou wilt not leave my soul," that is, MYSELF. But, what is more in point, Nephesh signifies even a dead animal, or a corpse: "He that toucheth the dead body of any man, shall he unclean seven days:" "Whosoever toucheth the dead body of any man that is dead," &c. Innumerable phrases of the same sort might be quoted. Why then may we not, with the venerable Beza, in his first edition of the New Testament, understand at least, if not translate, the Psalmist's expression thus; "Thou wilt not leave my dead body in the grave." For we have now seen that a dead body is sometimes meant by Nephesh; and from what was formerly said, it is sufficiently evident that Scheol sometimes means the grave.

XIV. We acknowledge, nevertheless, that, even with respect to the soul, Christ descended into hell; but truly not in that sense which was maintained by several of the ancients, and is now embraced by the Church of Rome. These hold, that the soul of Christ, when separated from the body by death, actually, properly, and locally visited certain subterranean places, either in the abode of the damned, that he might display to the men consigned to everlasting punishment, and even to the Devils themselves, the power of his

kingdom, and the victory which he had obtained over sin;—or in a kind of Limbus, a region alleged to be situated on the confines of the place of torment, that he might announce to the souls of the fathers the salvation which he had procured, and might bring them thence along with him, and exalt them to heaven.

XV. The Scriptures, the only rule of our faith, give us no intelligence respecting any such descent of Christ's soul into hell; nor was such a descent at all necessary or expedient. The Saviour, when about to die, in solemn and express language, commended his spirit into the hands of his Father. This he did, doubtless, with the same views with which it was done, by David before him,^t and by Stephen after him: of the latter of whom, at least, it is certain, that he had no conception of descending to hell. Besides, the same day on which he suffered, Christ assured the penitent thief that he should be with him in paradise.^v Now paradise is not in hell. Nor is it probable that the soul of Christ, after conducting the soul of the malefactor to paradise, straightway left it, descended into hell, called out the fathers, and forthwith hastened back again, and introduced them to heaven; whence, at the commencement of the third day he returned to the body,—having, within so short a period, travelled over the space of the whole world, no less than four times.

XVI. And what purpose could be served by the soul of Christ taking such a journey to the place of the damned? Was making a show of his victory among devils and condemned spirits of so great moment, that he should have preferred an excursion to the centre of the earth to the enjoyment of rest in heaven? Was that the most proper season for a triumph, when, being still bound with the chains of death, he rather resembled a vanquished person than a conqueror? Who ever saw the leader of an army betake himself to a prison for the purpose of a triumph? What is there, too, so terrible in the soul of Christ, when separated from the body, that it should cause so great a consternation amongst the inhabitants of hell? Would not a more intense sense of the Divine wrath, have been more powerful to produce that effect? Or will it be necessary, that, after the last

judgment, the soul of Christ should reside eternally amongst the damned, that they may be increasingly tormented by his presence?

XVII. As to that Limbus Patrum which accurate surveyors of the infernal regions place in the vicinity of the lowest hell, it is evident that it has no existence at all; for God brought many sons to glory previously to Christ's being perfected through sufferings. Nor if it did exist, was it requisite that Christ should descend into it, in order to rescue the fathers. Neither the purchase, nor the revelation, nor the application, of their salvation, rendered this necessary. Not the first; because a right to salvation was fully acquired by the death of Christ.—Not the second; because the Divine Spirit, who illuminated holy souls, and inspired them with a most certain hope of things to come, could by his influence more easily unfold to them the Gospel, than Christ's human soul.—Not the last; for, as the body of Christ will not descend at the last day into the graves of believers, to bring forth their bodies from the dust; so, supposing that the souls of the godly had been, even in the strongest sense of the expression, in the infernal regions, it was by no means necessary for the soul of Christ to penetrate to their abode. He could, without difficulty, have called forth their souls, by the power of the same Spirit, by whom he will raise up their bodies at his glorious appearing.²⁵

XVIII. But in what manner, then, according to our apprehensions, did Christ, as to his soul, descend into hell? Not indeed properly, but metaphorically; nor after it was separated from his body by death, but when, being yet united to the body, it wrestled with dreadful agonies. As men who mean to affirm that they have attained the summit of happiness and glory, boast that "they have reached the stars," and that they "strike the stars with their lofty head," why may it not be said, with reference to those incredible pains to which Christ's soul was subjected, that "he descended into hell?" When things usually happen only in a certain place, it is quite common for them, even though transacted at a distance from that place, to receive their denomination from it.

XIX. Expressions of this sort are not unexampled in Scripture. The arrogance and imaginary felicity of the king of Babylon are called an "ascending into heaven;" and his ignominious fall, his being "brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit." Heman, too, speaking of himself, or of the church, or perhaps personating Christ, says; "For my soul is full of troubles, and my life draweth nigh unto the grave, scheol." And again; "Thou hast laid me in the lowest pits, in darkness, in the deeps."a These words cannot be understood but in a figurative sense, as relating to the sorrows of an afflicted spirit; for this is not the complaint of a man dead and buried, or of a separate soul, agonizing in subterranean dungeons, but of a man living on the earth, and confounded by impressions of the divine anger. Similar expressions occur in many other passages of sacred writ.

XX. Nor let it be imagined, that it was necessary Christ should suffer in his soul in the separate state, in order to his having a more exquisite sense of the pains of hell. It is manifest, on the contrary, that the bodies of those who shall be condemned at the last judgment, will be re-united to their souls in hell, that the sense of their torments may be the more exquisite. Accordingly, as the celebrated Cloppenburg has acutely observed, our Lord had a peculiarly exquisite feeling of the curse, when "the travail of his soul," conflicting with a sense of Divine wrath, sharpened the bitterness of his bodily tortures. The Compilers of our Catechism, therefore, and other Theologians, have done nothing wrong, when, to illustrate the article respecting his descending into hell, they have exhibited the doctrine of the agonies of Christ's soul, which is one of the most mysterious, essential, and useful doctrines of our holy Religion."26

XXI. We shall briefly explain three things relative to those agonies of Christ. First, their NATURE or QUALITY. Secondly, their CAUSE. Thirdly, the ADVANTAGES that redound from them to us. Under their QUALITY I include two things, their severity and their purity.

XXII. Their Severity may be gathered from the accurate descriptions of them by the Evangelists. Here again we notice distinctly, 1st, The parts. 2dly, The adjuncts. 3dly, The effects of this agony;—each of which shows its severity.

XXIII. The parts of it are two. 1, Sorrow arising from the view of present evil. This is expressed by very emphatical terms. It is called sorrow, by which the soul of Christ was "exceeding sorrowful,—even unto death:"—An agony, a struggle with grief and perplexity, resembling that of a man who prepares himself for a sharp and dreadful contest:—Great heaviness, by which the mind fails with horror, faints under the weight of grief, and is utterly perplexed.*

XXIV. 2. Fear, resulting from the apprehension of future evil. It is denominated *ἐυλαβεια*; and none moderately acquainted with the Greek language can be ignorant that this word is used, as well by classical as sacred writers, to signify fear. In Joshua 22:24. it corresponds to a Hebrew word which denotes anxiety.† It is said of Saul; "and he was afraid of David." To this add the following expression in the Acts: "The chief captain, fearing lest Paul should have been pulled in pieces."—Many other instances are collected by Chamier.‡ Mark and Luke call it *θαυθος*, consternation, which is something more than fear,—something that almost stupifies a person and disorders the judgment.

XXV. The two following adjuncts serve to evince the greatness both of the sorrow and the fear. 1. The bloody sweat, which proceeded from him in such abundance as to congeal into "great drops." This discovered deep anguish of mind, and an extraordinary rushing of the blood alternately from the external to the internal, and from the internal to the external parts; by the heat and agitation of which, not only the pores of the skin and flesh, but even the mouths of the blood-vessels, and almost the whole frame of the body, were melted and dissolved. Instances of persons affected in this manner are mentioned in history; but they are exceedingly rare, and occur only when the mind is violently agitated with sorrow, and labours under

uncommon and dreadful perplexity. See the copious Dissertation of the venerable Voet on this topic.

XXVI. 2. The appearance of the angel to strengthen him. The angel strengthened him, indeed, not by the communication of power, or by taking upon himself a part of the burden which was laid on Christ, for he "trode the wine-press alone;"^m but by a forcible representation of the short continuance of his sufferings, of the promise of divine support, and of the glory that should follow, in respect to God, himself, and the elect. Yet how great must this agony have been, in which the Master derived comfort from the servant, the Creator from the creature, God from an angel!

XXVII. The effects of this agony were the very fervent prayers and supplications, which, with strong crying and tears, he thrice offered up to the Father—prostrating himself on the ground, and commanding the Apostles, that, whilst he went a little farther, they should not neglect to watch and pray. These earnest supplications indicate the most intense grief, arising from apprehensions of some very grievous evil, either present or approaching.

XXVIII. His extreme sorrow is apparent also from the mention of the Cup, which Christ wished to pass from him. In holy writ this expression generally denotes any portion, whether good or bad, which God assigns to men. It appears to be transferred from the practice of masters of families, in allotting to every one the portion of liquor he should drink. The same practice was usually observed among the Romans, by the stewards, or rulers of the feast, who, as Horace says,* "obtained by lot the power of distributing the wine;" for they were appointed by the casting of lots. Here, however, it signifies not a cup of joy, which is its meaning in some passages; but a cup of sorrow, which it denotes in other places of Scripture.

XXIX. Thus far respecting the Severity of Christ's sorrows. Let us now attend to their Purity; which must be shown both in the agonies themselves, and in the prayers to which they gave occasion. The first

is not very difficult; for neither the sense of present, nor the fear of approaching evil, nor grief arising from either, is of itself a moral evil or sin. If there be any crime in undergoing such sufferings, it consists either in the weakness of a disconsolate spirit that makes too great account of its calamities, or in despairing of the issue when there is cause for good hope, or in impatience of mind and murmuring against God. None of these, however, but quite the contrary, are found in Christ. The weight of the sufferings he sustained exceeds all calculation; and his faith continuing firm and unshaken amidst the greatest dangers, and rising superior to every temptation, he constantly directed his mind to his Father's promise of the issue, and thus maintained a vigorous hope. This was both proved by the cruel scoffs of his enemies, and testified by his own solemn profession. At the last supper also, whilst he distributed the cup as a symbol of that effusion of his blood in which he himself was to drink a cup of wrath, he immediately added that he would drink of the fruit of the vine new with his Apostles, in the kingdom of his Father. So completely, in fine, did he avoid every appearance of murmuring, that he could not have discovered a more entire acquiescence in the decree of God and the prophecies of Scripture. "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it."s

XXX. It is somewhat more difficult to understand the prayers of Christ, and to show their consistency with his wisdom and his piety. What wisdom appears in so earnestly, and no less than three times, soliciting the removal of that cup, which, in conformity with the decree of God and thine own engagement, thou knewest it was necessary for thee to drink to the bottom, and which thou didst come into the world to drink? What piety, also, is discernible, in showing such a desire of obtaining thine own will, as may seem diametrically contrary to the Divine counsel and will? And how can it be pretended that no mistake was committed, since Christ, by correcting himself in the last part of his prayer, confesses that he had exceeded due bounds in the first? But even here we are at no loss to vindicate our Lord; and indeed no vindication would be necessary, if we were

disposed to form our opinion of his actions with becoming wisdom and piety on our own part.

XXXI. Here three volitions* fall to be distinctly considered—two on the part of the man Christ Jesus, and a third on the part of God—which are directed in different ways, but all of them in a wise and holy manner, to their respective objects. The first is a volition of Christ as a true man, namely, a natural inclination for his own good, and for exemption from all evil. The understanding of Christ formed a just and enlightened estimate of the dreadfulness of those evils that were coming upon him, with a sense of which he already began to be affected. God is the author, too, of that propensity of human nature by which we are prompted to dread and shun evils, so far as we know them to be grievous to ourselves. Nor would Christ have been in all things like unto his brethren, and, consequently, a real man, unless he had dreaded those terrible evils abstractedly considered. He discovers this natural inclination of his will, when regarding the cup as extremely unpleasant and bitter, he prays that, if it were possible, it might pass from him. This inclination is at once wise and holy, as it is agreeable to nature, to reason, and to God the author of both. "For no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it."t

XXXII. But, besides being contemplated as grievous and distressing, the evils which were coming on Christ might be considered in another light; to wit, as the means which God had appointed for the promotion of his own glory in the salvation of the elect; and, in this view, they were not evil, but good and desirable. Hence arose another volition of Christ, different from the former, though not opposite to it; because the object now presented itself to his understanding and will under a different aspect. The same thing, which, viewed merely as an evil, he beheld with dread and aversion, when regarded as the means Divinely appointed for attaining the highest good, and thus agreeable to the will of God, was the object of his voluntary choice. Can it admit of a doubt, that in willing it in this view, he acted in a manner consonant to the dictates of wisdom and holiness? It is the

part of wisdom, cheerfully to make use of means, how difficult soever, for the attainment of a great good; and particularly, if they be the only means, and singularly conducive to the end. It is the part of holiness, to bring all the affections of nature into subjection to the will, and service, of God.

XXXIII. It is not foreign to the point before us to take an example from the conduct of the afflicted. If one offer a sick person the bitter juice of wormwood, he can scarcely help trembling at the unpalatable cups of medical men, and is unwilling to drink them. When he reflects, however, that the potion will prove beneficial for restoring his health, he returns thanks to the physician, buys the nauseous draught at a great expense, and causes the appetites of nature to submit to the dictates of reason. In like manner, Christ, considering the cup presented to him as bitter, wishes it to pass from him. But regarding the same cup as conducive to the salvation of his people, he by no means desires to be excused from drinking it. He thus limits his conditionate will, namely, the will of nature, which shuns evil as grievous, by his absolute will, that is, the will of reason, which attends to all the circumstances of the case,—that both may be consonant to the will of God.

XXXIV. It is truly a vain and quite puerile cavil, to allege, as an evidence that some mistake must have been committed, the terms of correction, but, nevertheless; which, according to the Evangelists, Christ employed. It is unfair to gather from a rhetorical, that which may be justly inferred from a logical or moral, correction. A logical correction substitutes what is true for what is false; a moral, what is good for what is bad. But a rhetorical correction is not the emendation of that which is improperly expressed; for the art of rhetoric prohibits every improper expression: it is only the addition of that which is more explicit, and forcible, and precise, to that which is less exact and less apposite. Of this we have an instance in the following words of Paul: "I laboured more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." The correction here does not substitute what is true for what is false, but explains

and limits that which had been truly, though less fully asserted; for Paul had himself in reality laboured, yet through the aids of divine grace. In like manner, in the place under consideration, the correction made by our Lord, is not the rectifying of a mistake, but the withdrawing of a condition formerly proposed; and an express declaration that the conditionate will, which, prompted by a just self-love, shrunk from the bitterness of sufferings, was subjected to the will of the Father—by that absolute will, which, having duly considered all circumstances, chose to suffer.

XXXV. The CAUSES of this dreadful agony of Christ appear to be chiefly the three following. The first is the weight of the Divine wrath and curse, already lying, and still farther to lie upon him, on account of our sins. He was burdened, not with the sins of one individual, but with all the sins of all the elect; for which, conformably to the office of suretiship which he had undertaken, he saw that he must now make satisfaction to the last farthing. He saw the awful tribunal of God, before which he was to be sisted, that he might "restore that which he took not away;"w—the Judge armed with inconceivable vengeance—the law brandishing the lightening of its curse—justice severe and inexorable to the last degree. The whole mind of Christ being at that time absorbed in these contemplations, he could not fail to be most grievously afflicted by them; for there is nothing more terrible than the object which was then presented to his view, and nothing stronger than the energy with which that terrible object was pressed upon his mind.

XXXVI. With respect to the object itself; that it comprized all that is horrible in the greatest degree, collected, so to speak, into one mighty sum, may be thus evinced. As sin is committed against a Being of infinite majesty, the curse denounced against every sin of every individual of mankind, necessarily includes an infinite punishment. Now, the curse due to all the elect was laid on Christ. If any thing, therefore, can be more infinite than what is infinite, the punishment which it was proposed to Christ to undergo, infinitely exceeded, so to speak, infinity itself: For who is able either to

enumerate his own sins, or to calculate the number of all the elect? Accordingly, referring to this, he says: "Innumerable evils have compassed me about; mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; therefore my heart faileth me." He calls them mine iniquities, not because he had committed them, but because by his surety-engagement he had taken them on himself.

XXXVII. Besides, not only did the mind of Christ voluntarily apply itself to the contemplation of so dreadful an object; but God himself also exerted the energy of his power, to affect the innermost parts of his mind with its terrors. The relation of Judge required him to present so terrible an evil, in all its horrors, to the mind of Christ. The sufferings which affected the body, could be inflicted by men; but the conscience could be tormented with a sense of pain sufficient for the satisfaction of Divine justice, only by that same Divine justice revealing itself within him. God himself "spared not his own Son;"—"smote him;"—"made him to be sin for us;"—"laid upon him," caused to rush upon him, like a mighty army, "the iniquities of us all."

XXXVIII. Another cause of the Redeemer's anguish was subjection to the powers of darkness—not indeed in such a manner as to be overcome, but certainly to suffer great vexation, and to sustain a most grievous conflict. The Devil, "the prince of this world," having obtained permission from God, marched against Jesus, with all his infernal forces,—making use of men as his agents,—to rend in pieces his body, and, as far as possible, his soul. But that wicked one himself chiefly attacked his soul, which he terrified by injecting the torments of hell. He made every effort to shake, by his temptations, the faith of Christ, and thus to prevent our salvation; or at least to harass, by the most malignant arts, him who was engaged in obtaining it. Owing to the entrance of sin, Satan had acquired a kind of dominion over the whole human race; in reference to which, sinners are called "lawful captives."e When, therefore, we were to be "redeemed in righteousness," the just Judge of the universe determined that whatever dominion the Devil had obtained over elect sinners, he

should exercise it on Christ, by fixing the sting of death deep into his heart, according to the sentence pronounced in paradise, "Thou shalt bruise his heel."

XXXIX. But a third cause of Christ's agony was not wanting. Amidst all these distresses, he found himself forsaken by God his Father—deprived of those delightful manifestations of his favour, in which in time past he had so often and so greatly rejoiced, and that at a season when he stood in much greater need of them than formerly. Hence that mournful complaint; "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me." To this we may refer the darkness which happened at the crucifixion of Christ—analogueous to that "outer darkness," which is employed as an emblem of a condemnation alleviated by no mixture of comfort. Nothing is more frequent in the sacred books, than for times of sorrow to be styled "days of darkness and gloominess," "days of clouds and of thick darkness."ⁱ This miraculous darkness, therefore, penetrated not only into the eyes, but also into the mind of Christ; and he found himself no less deserted by God, the fountain of light and joy, than the earth was deprived of the light of the sun.

XL. Let us now inquire, what ADVANTAGE the consideration of these agonies can afford us. And doubtless it tends to shake off the torpors of carnal security. Nowhere are the malignity of sin, and the severity of God's wrath against it, more clearly discerned, than in our Lord's descent into hell. Go, sinner, to mount Olivet; behold Christ rolling in the dust; see that brave and magnanimous Prince stretched on the ground, that generous Lion of the tribe of Judah prostrate on the earth; hear him, who is the only Consolation of wounded spirits, and even the God of our exceeding joy, complaining bitterly of sorrow surrounding him on every side; see the drops of blood with which, owing to the incredible anguish of his soul, his sacred body is stained; hear the supplications offered up with strong crying and tears to his now inexorable Father. Ask the Saviour, what was the real cause of anguish so immense, when hitherto no hostile bands, no chains, no scourge, no accusers, no judge, no cross, were present—when, on the contrary, he was in a pleasant garden, and at no great

distance from his faithful disciples.—And you will learn, that those very sins, which you have hitherto regarded so lightly, were the causes of his unparalleled sorrows. Those very sins, now laid on Christ, afflicted and weighed him down, and failed only to overwhelm him utterly. And can any one presume, that either no atonement for sin is necessary, or that a very slight atonement, or satisfaction, is sufficient? You could not, O man,—most certainly you could not make satisfaction to God, although you should "come before him with burnt-offerings, or with calves of a year old, or with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil;" no, if you should even "give your first-born for your transgression, and the fruit of your body for the sin of your soul." Behold, behold, I beseech you, —behold again and again, the inconceivable bitterness of those sufferings which Christ endured, when he bore the transgressions of the elect, in order to expiate their guilt.

XLI. But who art thou, O thou most infatuated of the sons of men, who, although an entire stranger to fellowship with Christ, yet, wretchedly secure, dost daily abandon thyself to mirth, indulge thy natural inclination, accustom thy body to effeminacy, and withhold thyself from no forbidden pleasure? Since you now hear the doleful lamentations of Christ, it is for you also to "weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you." "Say henceforth of laughter, it is mad, and of mirth, what doth it?"—knowing that "even in laughter the heart is sorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heaviness." Why do you delight in bowls overflowing with wine, whilst the cup of God's fury awaiteth thee; "the wine of which is red, and full of mixture; out of which he poureth; and the dregs whereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring out and drink?" Know that the Lord shall rain down upon thee "snares, fire, and brimstone; and that an horrible tempest shall be the portion of thy cup." O Why do you encourage yourself in your transgressions, and employ the most frivolous apologies to silence the remonstrances of conscience? Why make every possible effort to dismiss from your mind all thoughts of hell, to which your vices are fast precipitating you, and flatter yourself with vain hopes of heaven? The more arrogantly you boast

that you shall ascend into heaven, the more terribly will God reply: "Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit: thy pomp is brought down to the grave, and the noise of thy viols: the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee." Why do you presume on God's hearing your prayers, when perhaps you may be disposed and have leisure to address your supplications to his throne from the bed of affliction? Instructed by the example of Christ, I can now with certainty foretel what answer you are then to receive. I say not the words, but the thunderbolts, of an angry God, will be as follows: "Because I have called, and ye refused, ... I also will laugh at your calamity; ... Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me."q And so forsaken by God, harassed by the Devil, tortured by conscience, thou shalt be overtaken by the darkness of despair; then by the darkness of death, and, in fine, by the extreme and everlasting darkness of hell. O that these considerations, which, by no fallacious reasoning, are inferred from the horrors undergone by the suffering Redeemer, may make a strong impression on the minds of those that are living in carnal security, lest the season of grace and the day of their visitation and salvation expire, whilst their attention is engrossed by other concerns!

XLII. But to those who are in Christ, his agonies supply abundant matter of consolation. 1st, He underwent the pains of hell in their room, that they might not have to undergo them. He entered "the palace of the strong man armed," namely, the Devil: but being "stronger than he, he took from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divided his spoils." O the incredible compassion of our Lord! O the bowels of his love! He plunged himself into a deep abyss of infernal pains, that through the blood of the everlasting covenant, we, "the prisoners, might be sent forth out of the pit wherein is no water,"—not the smallest refreshing drop.s We have now no cause to tremble at the assaults of the Devil; for whilst he bruised Christ's heel, Christ bruised his head.

XLIII. 2dly, He has obtained for them the heavenly glory. He shed a bloody sweat for us, that in the cold sweat of death we might have access with boldness unto God. He drank the dregs of Divine wrath out of the cup of suffering, that an overflowing cup of Divine grace might be administered to us; and that we might be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of his house, and drink of the river of his pleasures.^v He began to fear and tremble, that we might stand undismayed before the tribunal of God. He fell on his face for our sins, that we might lift up our heads.^x He offered up his supplications, so to speak, to an inexorable Deity, that we might always be heard in those prayers which we present in his name. He was forsaken by God, that we might never be forsaken.^z In fine, because he descended into hell, the principal gate of heaven stands wide open to us; and the lower his descent, the higher, in consequence, is the glory which he has merited for us.

XLIV. 3dly, He has secured comfort for his people even amidst the sorrows of a wounded spirit. It cannot be denied that the godly themselves have sometimes their hour of darkness, in which they are harassed by the Devil, tormented with fears of hell, and apt to complain that they are forsaken by God. Yet even then they may derive consolation from the agonies of Christ; for, 1. Nothing befalls them which has not befallen their Lord before; to whose image it is fit they should be conformed in sufferings, that they may be conformed to him also in glory. What can be more unbecoming than to refuse to drink of the cup of which the Saviour hath drunk before us? 2. By the sorrows of Christ, the sting of the curse is entirely taken away from their sorrows. God does not expose them to such distresses, as an angry Judge, but as a kind and judicious Father, for the exercise of their faith, patience, hope, and charity; "that their holy desires may be strengthened, their devout affections tried, and their labour of love exercised."* "He doth not desert the believer that he may be deserted, but deserts him that he may not be deserted; and he appears to forsake, because he is unwilling to forsake him." 3. They have to do with an enemy, over whom Christ hath already triumphed. Nor can the conflict fail to be glorious, and one from

which they shall come forth "more than conquerors." Light shall arise after darkness.^b This violent tempest shall be succeeded by a calm serenity, delightful in proportion to the severity with which the thunders and the storm may have raged. 4. The very bitterness, in fine, of that condition, will impart a double sweetness to the succeeding joys, as well of grace as of glory. "Security is pleasant to all, but particularly to him who has been in fear. Light is joyful to all, but more than commonly joyful to one who escapes from the power of darkness. To have passed from death to life, gives a double relish to the blessing of life."^{*}

XLV. Learn, in the last place, in what manner you ought to conduct yourself, when visited with such sorrows. 1. Beware of an immoderate fondness for places of retirement, favourable to a sorrow, which gradually becomes a kind of mischievous pleasure to the unhappy mind. After you have poured forth your complaints in secret into the bosom of God, return at intervals to the society of your acquaintances and friends. 2. Be unwearied in prayer. Some forms of prayer suited to your condition, are contained in the seventy-seventh, eighty-eighth, hundred and second, and several other Psalms. A form of the same sort, peculiarly adapted to the troubled soul, and uncommonly pathetic, you will also find in a valuable little book composed by Thomas Goodwin, entitled, *The child of light walking in darkness.*^{*} 3. Lay aside all murmuring; and renouncing the reasoning of the flesh, and the inclination of your own will, commit yourself entirely to God, and always subject your own wishes to his sovereign, most wise, and most excellent will: Having protested that, while you desire that, if it be possible, the cup may pass from you, you do not refuse, if necessary, to drink it up to the bottom, if it be conducive to the glory of God, and to your own ultimate advantage.^e 4. In fine, wait in patience and faith, till he who at last heard the prayers of Christ, and delivered him from fear, 29 both affording him strength to sustain his sorrows, and making him victorious over all adversities, shall also manifest his sympathy for you under your distresses, and refresh you with the fulness of his consolations. He who now seems to stand at a distance from you,

will doubtless return. Sooner or later he will return; and—to adopt very nearly the expressions of Augustine—"interrupting you possibly in the midst of your prayers, will impart himself speedily to the longing soul; and being covered with the dew of celestial sweetness, and anointed with fragrant ointments, will refresh the weary, satisfy the hungry, and enrich the indigent soul, and, by his liberal communications, restore it to health and vigour."†

DISSERTATION XIX: ON THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

I. FROM the remotest ages of antiquity, "the Spirit of Christ which was in the prophets, testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." The Messiah's twofold state of humiliation and exaltation, which is in some degree delineated in obscure predictions, and in the symbolical enigmas of the types, is elsewhere described more clearly and explicitly. At one time the prophet says; "He shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness, &c.^b But we hear him saying also: Behold, my servant shall deal prudently; he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high." In one passage, the Messiah is represented to us as "a servant of rulers, whom man despiseth, and whom the nation abhorreth." But he is also described As given for a light to the Gentiles, and to be God's salvation unto the end of the earth; whom kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship."^d

II. The modern Hebrew Doctors, absurdly wishing to disjoin these different states, pretend that there are two Messiahs. The one, they tell us, is the Son of Joseph by Ephraim, who, after having appeared and exerted himself for a little while in the work of salvation, is to terminate an afflicted life, and, as they express it, "the sorrows of the Messiah,"* by a bloody death. The other is then to succeed, to wit, the Son of David, a more fortunate Messiah, who is to subdue his enemies on every side, to restore the Israelites to the land of their fathers, to revive the golden age;

O'er the wide world his peaceful sceptre sway,

And all his Father's virtues still display.[†]

III. The true faith, on the contrary, whilst it knows only one God, recognises, also, only "one Mediator between God and men." But to that one Mediator it ascribes two states; the one a state of abasement and suffering, in which he procured our salvation; and the other, of advancement and glory, in which he powerfully applies the salvation he has purchased. It is said of the same person: "Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels," that by the grace of God he might taste death for every man; and,— "Thou hast crowned him with glory and honour." It is one King of Zion, "just and having salvation," who first comes to her, "meek and lowly;" but whose "dominion shall subsequently extend from sea to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth."g Both are united in that Jesus whom we confess, who "made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant," and "whom God, in consequence, hath highly exalted."

IV. We have reason to contemplate each of these states with great pleasure and delight. As in the state of humiliation, we behold the incredible philanthropy of Christ, descending of his own accord to the lowest abyss of suffering; so the state of exaltation, gives a representation of Christ, in which we may at once exceedingly rejoice with him from a principle of gratitude, and greatly exult on our own account. To whom ought it not to afford the sincerest pleasure, to think of the joyful rest and triumphant glory of so dear a Brother, Husband, and Head, who lately sustained so arduous a conflict with so vast an accumulation of evils? A glory which he has received from the Father, not for himself only, but that he might share it with his brethren, his spouse, his members; who are, therefore, said to be "raised up together with Christ, and made to sit together in heavenly places."

V. The subject of the exaltation, properly so called, is Christ according to the human nature only. As the true God, he is adorned with the title of "the Highest;" on account of his immutable blessedness and his unparalleled and boundless perfection; and it is utterly impossible for him, in the form of God, to be literally exalted, or made higher. It is the human nature only, that receives an

accession of glory. Yet, since a mere man cannot be the recipient of a highness so great as that which appertains to our exalted Saviour, the term exaltation denotes also the illustrious manifestation, afforded in the glory of the human nature, of that divine majesty of Christ, which was previously veiled under the form of a servant. This is the manifestation for which he prays, John 17:5.

VI. Further, as it was by different steps of humiliation, that he descended at length to the lowest depth of abasement; so it is also by several steps of exaltation, that he is advanced to the greatest height of glory. The four following steps are particularly enumerated in the Creed. First, HIS RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD. Secondly, HIS ASCENSION TO HEAVEN. Thirdly, HIS SITTING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD THE FATHER. Fourthly, HIS COMING AGAIN in the clouds of heaven TO THE GENERAL JUDGMENT; which will be the last and the most glorious act of his mediatorial office.

VII. The RESURRECTION of Christ, is the great support and foundation of our faith. "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Take away that pillar, and no part of the faith remains secure; all our hopes of salvation are entirely overthrown. "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ, are perished."1

VIII. We are at present to speak of this raising of Christ from the dead; and propose to illustrate the four following heads. First, Its NATURE and MANNER. Secondly, Its TRUTH and CERTAINTY. Thirdly, Its NECESSITY. Fourthly, Its UTILITY.

IX. In order to understand rightly the NATURE of Christ's resurrection, it is necessary to attend to the following observations. 1st, That the body of Christ was preserved from all corruption in the grave, partly by his remaining in it for so short a period, partly by the

virtue of the spices; but principally by the power of his divine nature, which, with singular vigilance, maintained it exempt from the least stain of putrefaction. 2dly, That his soul, having been, at its departure from the body, commended to the Father and received into heaven, rested sweetly there, as in a paradise, from all its labours. 3dly, That at the appointed hour of revival, his lifeless body was, by the energy of the divine omnipotence, prepared in its bowels, blood, animal spirits, and other parts, so as to become a proper habitation for the soul; and the soul was at the same time recalled from heaven to inhabit and govern the body,—the natural and essential union of his soul and body being restored. Our Lord styles this the "taking again," the re-assumption, of his life. 4thly, That both parts of his human nature were enriched and adorned with more excellent qualities, adapted to a new and spiritual life:—The soul with admirable light, resplendent purity, and inexpressible and glorious joy, arising from the ardent love of God, and a delightful sense of that love:—The body with a new accession of glory, being, from the moment of the resurrection, at least immortal, and spiritual; so that it no longer required the earthly functions of the animal, and was fitted for the pure and exalted offices of the celestial, life.

X. While Christ remained on the earth, however, his body was not advanced to that full perfection of glory, which it has possessed ever since its exaltation above the heavens. From condescension to the weakness of the disciples, he suffered it to be somewhat obscured, so as not visibly to shine forth in all its brightness, during the forty days he conversed with them. They must, otherwise, have been incapable of looking stedfastly upon him, and far less able to behold his splendour, than were the Israelites of old, to behold the radiant face of Moses.

XI. It was another instance of kind and judicious condescension, that, with a view the more clearly to establish the certainty of his resurrection, he requested some food; and that the Apostles "did eat and drink with him, after he rose from the dead." This must not be

attributed to his body being then in a state of mortality, or to its standing in need of nourishment, but to the voluntary concealment of the rays of his glory. Augustine nobly says: "To be incapable of taking food, and to stand in need of food, would be equally an evidence of imperfection in the resurrection body. The parched earth swallows up water, in a manner very different from that in which it is swallowed up by the burning rays of the sun. The one does it from need, the other, by power."* His design is to show, that our Lord's eating after his resurrection, was an evidence, not of weakness, but of power; and that the food was not digested in the stomach, but absorbed, as moisture is absorbed by the heat of the sun.

XII. It was no dishonour, besides, to the body of Christ, that after the resurrection it bore visible marks of his wounds in his hands, feet, and side; nor will it disgrace it in the least, if he shall be pleased to bear them on the great day of final judgment: For those marks are indications of his glorious triumph over death, as a conquered enemy.

XIII. The CAUSE of the resurrection of Christ, is, in general, God; as we are informed in many passages of Scripture. Sometimes, however, it is ascribed particularly to the Father, as in the following words: "The God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory," displayed "the working of his mighty power in Christ, when he raised him from the dead."w But elsewhere it is attributed to the Son himself; and not without reason: "For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son, to have life in himself."y The same Divine essence is common to both,—that ever living, ever active essence, which is the source of all the life that all other living beings enjoy, and in particular, of the blessed life possessed by a nature so closely united to the divinity.

XIV. It cannot admit of a doubt, that the same life-giving power, which belongs to the Father and the Son, belongs also to the Holy Spirit. Yet I do not recollect of reading in Scripture, that the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Godhead, raised Christ from the dead.

In Rom. 8:11, it is not ascribed to the Holy Spirit, but to Him whose Spirit dwelleth in us, namely, the Father. In 1 Pet. 3:18, Christ is indeed said to be "quickened by the Spirit;" but since "the Spirit" is there opposed to "the flesh," it is more proper to understand it of Christ's divine nature, which possesses "the power of an endless life." 30 The phrase "justified in the Spirit," is of the same import; and so, too, is the expression, "declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." But, since at the very beginning of the world, the Holy Spirit cherished the rude mass of matter by moving upon it,^c since he it expressly called "the Spirit of life," and since God shall quicken our mortal bodies by him,^e it would be totally unreasonable to represent the resurrection of Christ as accomplished without the power and energy of the Holy Spirit.

XV. Our Lord's resurrection, it is worthy of notice, is much more frequently spoken of, as effected by the Father, than by Christ himself. For this, two reasons may be given. First, That the Father's calling of Christ to glory might not be obscured; for it became him not to take this honour to himself, that though once dead, he should become alive for evermore, and be the Prince of life; but being "called," to receive it from him who said, "Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee." Secondly, that it might be manifest, that this glory of a new life is assigned to him justly, and in conformity with his own merit, by the sentence of the Father; who justifies him, and adjudges to him a glorious reward, in consequence of his having endured the condemnatory sentence of the law, and rendered ample satisfaction to justice. Our Lord makes this the subject of his glorying, and comforts himself with the prospect of that glory which was immediately to succeed a short period of suffering. "He is near that justifieth me; who will contend with me? Behold the Lord God will help me; who is he that shall condemn me?"

XVI. But whether the resurrection of our Saviour be considered as the work of the Father, or of Christ himself, it affords us, in either view, an incontrovertible argument for his eternal Deity and Sonship.

The unbounded efficacy of Divine power, as we have just learned from Paul, was displayed in this work; and therefore, if Christ exerted it in raising himself, it is clear that he is armed with Omnipotence, and so is the eternal and co-essential Son of the most high God, who has, equally with the Father, life in himself.

XVII. The Father, too, could not raise him without openly acknowledging him as his own Son. He was accused of blasphemy, and condemned to death by the Jewish Council, on this ground, that he boldly professed himself to be the Son of God, "making himself equal with God."i When, therefore, after he had expired on the ignominious cross, and gone down to the dust of death, the Father brought him forth again from the darkness of the grave to the land of the living and the light of day, he condemned the Jewish Council, and absolved Christ. By thus raising him from the dead, he made it indisputably evident, that the Saviour's profession respecting himself was true. In every view, then, Christ is "declared to be the Son of God with power ... by the resurrection from the dead."

XVIII. With regard to the TIME of the resurrection, four things are to be noticed. 1st, That it took place in the season of Spring, at the feast of the passover, in the month Abib. This month derives its name from the new ear of corn; for in those warm climates, the fruits of the earth, necessary to human sustenance, were nearly matured in that month: and, by divine appointment, it was the first month of the sacred year. And truly the resurrection of the Lord Jesus from the dead, brought happier times to the Church after a long and severe winter, and introduced a new year of grace, in which "the mountains brought forth peace to the people, and the little hills by righteousness;"—so that every where there was "a handful of corn in the earth, upon the top of the mountains, the fruit whereof shaked like Lebanon, and they of the city flourished like grass of the earth."k

XIX. 2dly, That it took place on the third day after his death and burial; which was the time foretold by Christ, and which, after his resurrection, was carefully noted by the Apostles, in order to

demonstrate the truth of the prediction. It pleased God so to adjust the time of Christ's continuance in the sepulchre, that it might be sufficiently long to evince the reality of his death, and sufficiently short to correspond with the divine purpose respecting the preservation of his body from corruption. Of the manner in which the three days are to be computed, we have formerly spoken.*

XX. 3dly, That it happened on the first day of the week. As the creation of the world and of light began on that day, so our Lord was pleased to determine that, on the same day, by his coming forth from the grave, the epoch of a new world, and of a happier age, should commence. From the earliest times of the Christian Church, that day was, therefore, held sacred, and called "the Lord's day."n

XXI. 4thly, That it took place early in the morning of the first day, whilst the sun was rising, or about to rise. Thus he showed himself that "hind of the morning,"p which, while the shades of night were disappearing and the day was only beginning to dawn, burst from its fetters, leaped into the open fields, and coming forth from its lurking-place, brought day out of night. For he is not only "the bright and the morning-Star," but also "the Sun of righteousness,"r who "gives light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death," to guide their feet into the "way of peace."

XXII. As to the MANNER of the resurrection, the following circumstances demand our attention. 1st, It was accompanied by an earthquake; which indicates "the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain." Since at the death of Christ the vail was rent, and the enmity abolished in his flesh;u and the handwriting having been blotted out on the cross, a discharge, so to speak, was given him by the Father, at his resurrection; the consequence was, that the things which were appointed to continue "until the time of reformation," were shaken, to make room for those which are perpetual and stable. Now this was symbolically signified by the shaking of the earth. 2dly, A glorious retinue of angels was present;

for "When he again brought in his First-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him."w 3dly, He left his sepulchral vestments in the tomb; to wit, "the linen clothes, and the napkin wrapped together in a place by itself." By this it was intimated, that our Lord stood in no need of funeral ornaments, because he was to put on immortality; and that the saints, when raised again from the dead, shall, through him, have every cause of shame done away, and, instead of garments, be adorned with celestial glory.

XXIII. The leaving of the linen clothes served, also, in no inconsiderable degree, to confirm the truth of the resurrection of Christ. This argument is illustrated by Sedulius in the following lines; which, considering the age in which he flourished, are not inelegant.

Speak, ruthless keeper; answer, guard profane;

Your words, I'll show, are wholly false and vain.

If fast asleep, as you presume to say,

Within the grave immur'd, our Jesus lay,

Till stolen from the tomb by daring hands

Unawed by terror of the Roman bands,

Whose are these clothes that in the grave remain,

The charge of which, two angels don't disdain?

Can you suppose, the thief would long delay,

Judging which might seem the quicker way;

T' unbind the clothes, and strip the body bare,

Or seize the sacred corpse without such care.

If thieves make haste, and not one moment lose,

What man of sense or reason can refuse,

That, in its linen wrapt, 'tis fully proved,

Christ's stolen body, must have been removed.*

And thus we come insensibly to another head of our discourse, namely, the TRUTH and CERTAINTY of our Lord's resurrection; which we are now farther to establish.

XXIV. And, first, let us attend to the evidence of the fact itself; which is sufficient to overcome the incredulity even of the most pertinacious. The Jewish rulers, conscious of guilt, and full of apprehensions arising from the predictions of Christ, urged Pilate to command that the sepulchre should be secured till the third day, to prevent the removal of the body by force or fraud. Having gone themselves, they secure the sepulchre as carefully as possible, seal the stone, and set a watch. In the mean time, as it began to dawn towards the third day after his death, the earth is shaken by a great earthquake; and a celestial messenger, descending from heaven, rolls back the stone from the door of the sepulchre, and sits down upon it. His raiment was so white, that it surpassed the snow; the splendour of his countenance so great, that it might be denominated lightning rather than brightness.* The keepers, whom Jewish malignity had provided, see him; but struck dead, in a manner, with fear, they fall prostrate on the earth. Mean time, no man daring to hinder him, Jesus comes forth alive, and betakes himself to the place, where, conformably to the notice he had given, he was to make his first appearance to his friends. Some of the keepers, having gradually come again to themselves, hasten to the city, to relate to the chief priests the events which had happened. The priests, however reluctant to admit the fact, could not refuse them credit. Yet, wishing others not to believe what their own mind told them was too true, they bribed the soldiers by a large sum of money, to circulate a

ridiculous and impertinent story—to report, that the disciples had come by night and stolen Jesus away, while the guard were asleep. Are not all these events, which were not done in a corner, but in the most populous city of Judea—are not these events, of such a nature, that if they were not true, they could never have been contrived or published by any one, and especially at that time and place in which they are affirmed to have happened—whilst those whose interest it was that they should not obtain credit, were living, and were the rulers of the land?

XXV. Add to this, the testimony of the Angels, who, notwithstanding the impotent rage of the soldiers, showed the Lord's empty sepulchre to the women, testifying that he had risen, and was going before them to Galilee, where they should see him.

XXVI. But what can be more decisive than the frequent appearances of Christ after his return from the grave, by which he extorted conviction even from the most incredulous of his friends? Peter urges this evidence in the Acts, and Paul in his first Epistle to the Corinthians.^b Of these appearances, we find eleven in the sacred history, previous to Christ's ascension to heaven;—five of them on the very day of the resurrection, and six on subsequent days. We cannot, however, in every instance, exactly determine their order. He appeared, 1. To Mary Magdalene alone at the sepulchre. 2. To the women, when they had returned from the sepulchre.^d 3. To the two disciples, Cleophas and his companion, when going to Emmaus. 4. To Simon Peter alone.^f 5. To the Apostles when assembled at Jerusalem, Thomas excepted. Mark calls this college of Apostles, "the eleven;"^h and Paul calls them "the twelve." For colleges or societies, that have been restricted to a certain number at their first institution, as those of the Septemviri, the Decemviri, and the like, still retain their original appellation, though the number be diminished or increased. Thus also the Rulers of Athens are styled by Xenophon, the Thirty; though, after Theramenes was put to death, only twenty-nine remained. 6. Eight days after, to all the disciples together, Thomas being present. 7. At the sea of Tiberias, to seven disciples,

when they were fishing. 8. To the eleven disciples on a certain mountain of Galilee, as Jesus had appointed. 9. To more than five hundred brethren at once. 10. To James apart. 11. On the very day of the ascension, to all the Apostles at once on mount Olivet.

After his ascension into heaven, too, he appeared to Stephen, to Paul, and frequently to John in the Revelation; although those visions were rather extatic and emblematical, than corporeal and personal.

XXVII. It would be unreasonable to demand, that our Lord should show himself alive after his death, in the temple, or in any other place of concourse, to the whole Jewish people, or at least, to the priests and elders of the people. 1. It is fit that he should be Master of his own actions, and it is sufficient that the reason of them is known to himself. "He giveth not account of any of his matters." 2. The Jewish people, with their rulers, had wantonly abused the time of grace; now was the day of judgment and severity, and of the hiding of God's countenance from them, according to that threatening; "For I say unto you, ye shall not see me henceforth till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." 3. It was the time of humbling that arrogance on the part of the rulers, by which they exalted themselves above the people of God, and of teaching them that the kingdom of Christ is entirely spiritual and heavenly, not founded on human authority, and not standing in seed of human protection or patronage. It pleased God that the history of so important a matter should be published to mankind, rather by some of the common people than by the princes of this world, "that our faith might not stand in the wisdom," or authority, "of men, but in the power of God." 4. Our Lord intended to exercise the faith of his followers, agreeably to these words; "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

XXVIII. Further, those Saints that slept in the dust, who "came out of their graves after the resurrection of Christ, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many," furnish an incontestable proof of the

resurrection of Christ. Whether they were ancients, as Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, and others; or saints of a later age, as Simeon, Anna, Zacharias, John the Baptist, or others well known at that time,—they unquestionably bore witness to Christ's resurrection, and recognised it as the cause of their own. They appeared to many for this purpose, as it is expressed by Euthymius, "that by their resurrection, others might be assured of the resurrection of Christ, concluding that, since he raised them, much more did he raise himself." This argument serves to demonstrate, not only the truth of our Lord's resurrection, but also its efficacy. "Christ, when returning after the third day," says Eusebius of Emesa, "brought back with him to the land of the living, the fruits of his three days journey; and, that none "might question his return from the dead, he showed them, with himself, to those that were living on the earth, as witnesses and preachers of the victory obtained over death."*31

XXIX. I intend not now to speak of the visible effusion of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost; or of the gift of tongues; or the miracles performed by the Apostles in his name; or the propagation of the Gospel, which is the "rod of his strength sent forth out of Zion;" or of the efficacy of his quickening Spirit in the hearts of the elect; or the destruction of idolatry; or the overthrow of the Jewish polity; or the wonderful protection afforded to the faithful; or of the dreadful vengeance inflicted on enemies, by which, in spite of their hostility, confessions of the truth were extorted from their breasts. On these, and other such considerations, which might easily be enlarged on, and urged as evidences that Christ is alive and that he reigns in heaven, it is not my design at present to insist.

XXX. Nor is there the least pretext for any to contend, that the statements which we have produced from the sacred volume, were disingenuously devised by the Apostles, either from blind attachment to their deceased Master, or from ambition or avarice, or from a design, by subtle fabrications, to impose on men of a superstitious spirit, or from any other conceivable motive for such an imposture. It

can with no appearance of reason be alleged, that they performed a part similar to that which was acted by Philostratus, who, without assigning bounds to the colouring, has artfully delineated the character and history of one Apollonius Tyanæus, and represented him as a kind of Semi-God, exempt from death, and possessed of an immortal nature. The Apostles, however simple and harmless, were by no means such arrant fools, as to suffer themselves to be persuaded of any thing whatever, by, or concerning, their Master;—especially of any thing which the very circumstances of the case might clearly discover to be false. Observe their behaviour in relation to this very point. They could not allow themselves to believe that their Master had risen again, till their incredulity was at last overcome by irresistible proofs. Nor was it possible, that, in opposition to the consciousness of their minds, they could have furnished the whole scene with fables of their own contrivance. What extreme arrogance would it have been, so wantonly to fabricate stories regarding events which had happened, at that very time and place, amongst men that were at once the ruling powers, and anxiously attentive to all that passed! What, in short, was their reward for the imposture? Not, surely, riches or honours, but quite the contrary, the indignation of the people and the rulers, prisons, stripes, banishments, the most dreadful deaths; all of which they might have prevented by an obsequious silence on this subject. Our conclusion, therefore, must be the following; As to those who have testified of these things, and wrote these things, we know that their testimony is true. Philostratus, in his splendid account of Apollonius, had certainly a different object in view. From its whole contexture it is manifest, that he wished rather to attract admiration of his own skill and eloquence, than to adhere strictly to historical truth. Had he been obliged to answer on oath in the presence of a Judge, in reference to every particular, he would undoubtedly have deemed it better to acknowledge the imposture, and renounce his fictitious Hero, than to submit for his sake to the most exquisite punishments.

XXXI. Besides, let none object the seeming contradictions in the different accounts of the Evangelists, as tending to weaken the credit

of the whole history. It served a useful purpose, as the celebrated Vossius has judiciously observed, that the history should be written by the Evangelists in a manner thus apparently inconsistent; for otherwise it would have been alleged, that they had combined, and adjusted the matter by previous concert. It appears to be written in this manner, too, in order to exercise our faith and our diligence; for if we examine all the narrations with serious attention, we shall find, that there is really no disagreement between them, and that apparent discrepancies are owing to the fault of the readers, not of the writers. To show this in detail, however, would lead us beyond the bounds of the present Dissertation.

XXXII. We now pass on to the third head, which relates to the NECESSITY of the resurrection. This is taught us by our Lord: "OUGHT not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" It was necessary that Christ should rise again, 1st, That the prophetic oracles might be accomplished. 2dly, That the typical emblems might be fulfilled. 3dly, Because the glory alike of the Father and of Christ, required, that he should be declared the Conqueror of death.

XXXIII. "He rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures." The resurrection was frequently and clearly foretold in the Scriptures.^z In the twenty-second Psalm, after the prayers of the Lord Jesus under his sufferings and immediately before his death, have been rehearsed, he is introduced as expressing himself in these words: "I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee."^b With this compare the language of Paul, where he affirms, that the prophets and Moses foretold, "that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles."

XXXIV. It is written, also, Psalm 110:7. "He shall drink of the brook in the way." "The way" denotes the course of his mortal life. The way is intersected and divided by "the brook." The rapid "brook," or

torrent, signifies a violent inundation of suffering. "To drink of" the torrent, is to be so inundated by it as only to escape suffocation, while "the waters come in to the soul." After Christ shall have done this, then, nay, "therefore,"* according to the promise of the Father, according to the value of the foregoing sufferings, according to merit most strictly so called, "shall he lift up the head." He shall emerge from the brook of sufferings and death, and shall cause the members of his mystical body to emerge with him, that they may partake of his glory, as they have partaken of his sufferings.

XXXV. Add to this, Is. 53:8. "He was taken," that is, to glory, "from prison and from judgment;"—from the power of the rulers of the people, who were intrusted with "judgment,"—from the coercive authority of the Roman Governor,—from every distress to which he may have been subjected by the judgment of God, as well as by that of human tribunals. "And who shall declare," who shall conceive in his mind, or express with the tongue, "his generation?"* that is, the duration of his life, which, after he shall have submitted to death, will be everlasting; and his progeny of children, that shall afterwards arise. The tenth Verse, if I mistake not, refers to the same thing, which the celebrated Cocceius not improperly translates thus: "And Jehovah has enfeebled, or reduced to impotence, him that wished to weaken him." † He that wished to weaken, harass, afflict, and, if possible, destroy Christ, is the Devil, who instigated at once the infernal hosts, and the Jews and Gentiles to seek his ruin. God, however, reduced the Devil to impotence, "destroyed him," and "stilled" him;h that he might be unable to retain Christ in a state of death. Further, "when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he," that is, Christ, "shall see his seed;"—himself shall live, and be shall behold his children living; "he shall prolong his days," that is, himself and his seed; "and the pleasure of Jehovah shall prosper in his hand," in the band both of Christ and of his seed.

XXXVI. And what should hinder us from referring to this, Zephaniah 3:8. "Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, until the day that I rite up to immortality?"* In this chapter, the Prophet gives an

account of the condition of Jerusalem in her latter days, the coming of the Son of God in the flesh, and the character of that age.ⁱ "The just Jehovah," he who is both God's "righteous servant," and "JEHOVAH our righteousness," "is in the midst thereof; he will not do iniquity;^l every morning doth he bring his judgment to light; he faileth not." He preached the doctrine of true righteousness, and confirmed it by the testimonies of the prophets, and by works evidently Divine. "In the day-time he was teaching in the temple; ... and all the people came early in the morning to him in the temple for to hear him." "But the unjust knoweth no shame." With this compare Christ's bitter lamentation: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, &c."ⁿ The prophet, for the admonition of the Jews, next mentions the judgments of God inflicted on the Gentiles. And indeed before the coming of Christ, Egypt was subdued by the Persians; the inhabitants of Palestine were vanquished by the Greeks; the Jews took the towns of the Moabites from the Greeks and possessed them; they also subjugated the Edomites; the Romans conquered all. God is then introduced speaking thus, after the manner of men: "I said, Surely thou wilt fear me; thou wilt receive instruction, &c." With which compare the following expression in the parable of the vineyard: "Last of all, he sent unto them his Son, saying, They will reverence my Son."^p In fine, the Son of God turns towards his friends, whom he enjoins to wait patiently for his resurrection, which will be to eternity;^{*} in which acceptation the original word occurs in several other places,^q Aberbenel, aware of this, explains it as "a perpetual resurrection."[†] In the subsequent verses, events that wore to succeed the resurrection of Christ are foretold; namely, the infliction of God's dreadful wrath on Jerusalem, with the desolation of the whole land by fire and sword, and that by means of the nations gathered and assembled into one empire, to wit, the Roman; and then, the conversion of the nations by the preaching of the Gospel. It seemed proper, for the instruction of my pupils, to state the meaning of this passage at some length, in order to throw light on a remarkable prophecy, taken notice of by few. There are many other prophecies to the same effect, which I have not now leisure to illustrate.

XXXVII. I cannot, however, omit that one, to which Paul directs our attention, namely, Isaiah 55:3. where God addresses his elect.‡ in the following words: "Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David."* This last expression is explained and applied by Paul thus: "And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise; I will give you the sure mercies of David."r Here, as in many other prophecies, David signifies Christ. Of him it had been said: "My mercy shall not depart from him:" and, "My mercy will I keep for him for evermore."t Now God exhibits him to believers as the Pattern of all the blessings promised in the everlasting covenant, including the happy life of the whole man; which supposes the resurrection from the dead. For such is the import of these words, "I will give you the sure mercies of David;" that is, I will grant you those sure, lasting, solid, and truly valuable blessings which I have conferred on the Messiah. But no blessing, with which the resurrection of the body is unconnected, imparts complete felicity, or is worthy of a designation so magnificent. Consequently, God has raised up Christ also from the dead. The force of the Apostle's reasoning will be manifest to every man's conscience, if it be reduced, as has been done by a celebrated Interpreter, to the form of a syllogism, in this manner. God has raised up from the dead to die no more, him whom he is pleased to appoint the Pattern of all blessings, including the resurrection to eternal life. But when he says, "I will give you the sure mercies of David," he makes Christ, under the name of David, the Pattern of all blessings, and of the resurrection from the dead. Therefore, he raised up Christ from the dead, to die no more.

XXXVIII. To prophecies of the resurrection of the Messiah, TYPES were added. I shall not speak here of those historical types, which others have noticed; as JOSEPH, who was wonderfully delivered from prison; DANIEL, who was rescued from the den of lions; and the three ASSOCIATES of that Prophet, who were saved from the burning furnace:—all of whom were likewise promoted to great dignities. It is sufficient to bring forward one legal type—from Levit.

14:4–7. In the purification of the leper, the priest is commanded to take two clean birds: of which the one was to be killed, and its blood poured out into an earthen vessel over running water; but the other, after having been dipped in the blood of the bird that was killed, was permitted to fly at liberty into the open field. The leper was then sprinkled with the blood. Each of the birds denoted Christ, but in a different state. He is compared to a bird for his alacrity in obeying the commands of God, for his heavenly conversation, and because he was obliged to flee from place to place to escape the snares of men. He is compared to a clean bird, which might be eaten, because he is holy in himself, and is also the bread of life to sinners. The bird that was to be killed, denotes the death of Christ. The shedding of the blood over running, not standing, water, represents his obedience, conjoined with his sufferings and death, which proceeded from an overflowing, not a languid love. The living bird, which was dipped in the blood, and so allowed to escape, signifies Christ raised again from the dead, and flying to heaven "by his own blood." And the blood of Christ who was dead, and is alive again to apply it to his people, cleanseth us from our spiritual leprosy.

XXXIX. Further, not merely the resurrection itself, but also the time of it, was foretold and prefigured. We have a prophecy respecting it in Hosea 6:2. "After two days will he revive us; in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight." I do not deny, what is indisputably evident, that this prophecy relates to the Church, which is the mystical body of Christ. Whilst it refers to the Church, however, it is primarily and literally verified in the Head. Such is the spiritual sagacity of believers, that they do not rest in external deliverances, but, through them, ascend, in their meditations, to such as are spiritual, and through these again, to the fountain itself, —Christ risen from the dead. In the resurrection of our Lord, there is an exemplar of those revivals which are experienced by the Church. As therefore he was to be restored to life after two days, and to be raised up on the third day; so the Church assures herself, that after two days, that is, after a short interval of time, she should rise again from her calamitous condition to more auspicious circumstances.

Nor is it without an emphasis that she joins herself to Christ in rising again. The Apostle doth the same thing. She therefore here considers the resurrection of Christ, as the foundation and pattern of her own mystical resurrection to a happier state; and the appointment of three days, as corresponding to the short space which she was to spend in affliction.

XL. Nor are types wanting. Not that either in the Old or in the New Testament, we read of any other person raised the third day after death; for, so far as appears, this was peculiar to Christ. But we have figures of this circumstance in a Patriarch, a King, and a Prophet:—in ISAAC, who was, in a manner, restored from death the third day after his father Abraham had received a command to slay him in sacrifice;—in HEZEKIAH, who likewise went up to the temple the third day after sentence of death had been passed on him;—and in JONAH.

XLI. In fine, the glory as well of the Father as of the Son, which the law and justice of God would not suffer to continue under a cloud, indispensably required the resurrection of Christ. With respect to the Father, the Apostle says emphatically: "Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father;"—not merely to the glory of the Father, or with the glory of the Father, but, by the glory of the Father. The glory of the Father demanded, and, so to speak, accomplished it; for the end has the nature, as well of the cause as the effect. It was of importance to the glory of the Father, that the Son, who had been unjustly condemned by the Jews for his confession of the most sacred truth, should be justified; and that, since he had most perfectly fulfilled the conditions, all the promises due to him, according to an inviolable covenant, should be no less exactly accomplished. Unless this were done, how could the justice and the faithfulness of the Father appear? Jesus himself, when soliciting the glory promised him, urges this argument.

XLII. With regard to the Son, the matter is clear of itself. By his death, he overcame death, and the Prince of death; and pursuing

him, when laid in the sepulchre, to the remotest corner of his kingdom, he completely defeated him. It was therefore utterly impossible, that he should be holden of death.^c He had in himself, as "the true God and eternal life," "the power of an endless life."^e It was necessary for him to display this power in himself, as a Mediator now made perfect through sufferings. He could not be to others what he is called in Isaiah, "the Father of eternity," unless he were so, in the first place, to himself. It behoved him, in fine, to be declared and publicly manifested to be what he really is, the Conqueror of death and the Triumpher over it. But in what way could that be done, unless by rising again, that he might stand last on the earth, having put the enemy to flight.³⁶ Hence those two characters are joined together, "The first-begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth;" and he says also: "I am he that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."ⁱ

XLIII. Let us now consider, in fine, the UTILITY of Christ's resurrection. The advantage which redounds to us from this important event is chiefly three-fold, 1st, Our justification. He "was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." When God released his Son from the bonds and prison of death, into which he had been thrown on account of our debts, he is to be viewed as having given him a discharge, and as having declared by that very deed, that his justice was now satisfied to the last farthing. When Christ was raised up, he was thus "justified in the Spirit." But if he was justified, we must at the same time have been justified in him.

XLIV. 2dly, Our sanctification. "Ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." Hence believers are said to be "risen with Christ," that is, in a spiritual sense;^m and to be "planted together with him in the likeness of his resurrection, that, as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so they also should walk in newness of life." This is "the power of his resurrection," of which Paul speaks.^o Christ, when he came forth from the earth, was made,

not merely like the first Adam, "a living soul, but a quickening spirit." He received life, not only for himself, but also for his people; and not merely that he might live with the Father in heaven, but also that he might live by the Spirit in believers.^q As the animal spirits, derived from the brain, and distributed through the nerves to the whole body, communicate life and motion even to the remotest members; so the Spirit of life, which is in the Saviour as the head and fountain, flows down by secret channels to all the members of the mystical body, producing in them a new life, and a life worthy of Christ. While believers are "members of his body," they are also "one spirit with him;"^s and he is "our Life."

XLV. 3dly, Our glorification in a blessed resurrection. This is inferred by the Apostle from the resurrection of Christ: and the reasoning is just; for he is our first-born Brother, and we are "joint-heirs with him."^v If he then received life and immortality by a hereditary title from the Father, we too, in our place and order, must be partakers of the same inheritance; that, as he is "the beginning, the first-born from the dead," he may be so, "among many brethren."^x "Christ the first-fruits; afterwards, they that are Christ's, at his coming." Besides, Christ is our Head, we are his members; he would not therefore reckon himself entirely alive, unless we also were alive with him. Hence he teaches us to reason from his life to our own: "Because I live, ye shall live also."^z Job had long before argued in the same manner. Christ, too, is the second Adam, from whom life is no less certainly derived to those that are his, than death from the first Adam to all: "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."^b In fine, since the same Spirit, by whom God raised up Jesus from the dead, dwells in us, what reason can be assigned, why he should not perform the same work in us? "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." That is to say; God, by his Spirit, was the author of the resurrection of Christ, both by his omnipotent power, in which is the fountain of life; and by the virtue of that unspotted holiness, with which he adorned the human nature of Christ, and

effectually preserved it from sin, the only cause of corruption. And he will accomplish the same work in believers, first by sanctifying their souls, that is by raising them to spiritual life, and hereafter their bodies, by raising them to a glorious life; for these also, according to their measure, were the subjects of sanctification.

It were easy to improve these topics for Consolation; and, in the mean time, to inculcate assiduously, that none can justly assure himself of the privilege of a blessed justification, or of a glorious resurrection, arising from the resurrection of Christ, unless he also experience its power to communicate the vigour of the spiritual life.

DISSERTATION XX: ON CHRIST'S ASCENSION INTO HEAVEN

I. THE second step of Christ's exaltation, is his ASCENSION INTO HEAVEN; in treating which we shall adopt the same method as on the article immediately preceding. We shall explain the four following heads. First, Its NATURE and MANNER. Secondly, Its TRUTH and CERTAINTY. Thirdly, Its NECESSITY. Fourthly, Its UTILITY.

II. By the Ascension of Christ we understand, The second step of his glorious exaltation, by which, on the fortieth day after his resurrection, and in the sight of his disciples, he removed his already glorified body from the earth, and in particular, from mount Olivet on the side which lay towards Bethany; and advanced it, through the air and the visible heavens, into the highest heaven, to remain there in glory till the day of the last judgment.

III. Observe here, 1st, The subject. 2dly, The time. 3dly, The place. 4thly, The cause.

IV. The SUBJECT of the ascension, is the Person of Christ, GOD-MAN. Properly indeed, it is the human nature in soul and body;—which human nature was translated from the vicinity of bodies in the lower world to the vicinity of bodies in the upper world. Figuratively, however, the Divine nature is also the subject of the ascension; for, as in reference to that nature, he is said to have "descended into the earth," when he appeared among men at the assumption of the human nature, so he may be said to have ascended into heaven, in as much as he causes the splendour of his glory to shine forth in that humanity, now exalted to heaven. To this I would refer the following words of Paul: "Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended, is the same also that ascended," &c. It is not true of every one who ascendeth, that he first descended. Moses first ascended to the mount, and afterwards descended. But it was necessary that Christ should first descend, before he ascended; for he is "from above," and is called "he that cometh from above," and "he that cometh from heaven." This appears also from Ps. 68:8, 9, 11. where he is called GOD and LORD. Further, Christ descended, not as to the flesh, which it is certain he did not bring from heaven; but as to the manifestation of his Deity, in the flesh which he assumed from the Virgin Mary. In like manner, "he that descended is the same that ascended,"—giving now a far brighter display of the same Deity, in the human nature, advanced to the throne of glory.

V. Hence also, in reference to the ascension of Christ, it is said to "Jehovah our Lord, whose name is excellent in all the earth;"—"who hast set thy glory above the heavens." Every word is emphatical. Hod,* if you attend to the meaning and origin of the word, signifies brightness and evidence: and hence comes Hodoth,† to confess that any thing fully corresponds to its name. Hod malchoth,‡ signifies the dignity and majesty belonging to a king, by which men are induced, hodoth, to be subject to him, to obey and submit to his will and

appointment; as a celebrated Interpreter has acutely observed. The brightness and majesty of such glory belongs to none in a more eminent degree than to the Most High God, who displays his perfections in the magnificent works which he performs. Of old, God set his glory in the earth, when he dwelt between the cherubim, above the mercy seat.^h In due time, he made all Jerusalem "the throne of his glory;" having his seat not only in the sacred apartments of the sanctuary, but exhibiting himself in human nature to be seen and heard throughout the whole city, and every where in the streets of Jerusalem. But by the ascension of Christ, the glory of God was set "above the heavens;" for no where doth it shine more illustriously than in our Lord's human nature, crowned with glory and honour.

VI. Nor can I venture to contradict those, who are of opinion, that the same thing was foreshown to Ezekiel, in the obscure representation described in the tenth Chapter of his book. He saw "the glory of Jehovah go up from the cherub over the threshold of the house; and, the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of Jehovah's glory." The glory of Jehovah, is "the glory of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." It was formerly "above the cherubim," that is, in heaven.^l It moved thence, proceeding "to "the threshold of the house;" as a king, rising from his throne, shows himself at the gate of the palace, graciously affording an opportunity to his people to see him. Meanwhile, "the house was filled with the cloud;" which may denote God's dwelling with his people in an humble form, yet so that the rays of divine majesty shone through the cloud; "the court being full of the brightness of Jehovah's glory." For "majesty, and honour and glory," attended Christ at his coming, and were apparent to all the people, in his discourses, which were altogether heavenly; and in his deeds, to which nothing similar had ever been heard of. But Ezekiel soon beheld the same glory "departing from off the threshold of the house, and standing over the cherubim."ⁿ This is the ascension of the Son of God from the earth to his throne in heaven. Henceforth there is no earthly sanctuary, where the glory of God dwells, or is to be sought

for by Israel; but Christ is immediately found, without a temple made with hands, showing himself openly to the Gentiles, who resort to him from all quarters. And this is what Ezekiel saw in the symbol of "the glory of the God of Israel at the east gate of Jehovah's house, standing over the cherubim above." The temple was situated in the east part of the city, and Mount Olivet was opposite to it. Consequently, that which was at the door of the east gate of the temple, lay open to the view of all that approached. And certainly these two things ought to be connected: while the glory of God is placed above the heavens, his name should be great in all the earth; as we have just learned from the eighth Psalm.

The design of all these remarks, is to show in what manner Christ may be said to have ascended, even with regard to the Divine nature. His Deity, which was formerly manifested on earth, while he dwelt among men as the Son of man, is now most gloriously displayed in heaven, in his exalted humanity.

VII. Nevertheless, in the proper acceptation of the word, as it denotes local motion, ascension is competent to the human nature only, and indeed principally to the body. The entrance of Christ's body into heaven, serves to distinguish the ascension of which we now speak, from that ascent of Christ's separate soul to heaven, which preceded his resurrection from the dead. That ascent, however happy, is not esteemed glorious, because it was connected with the ignominious descent of his body to the grave.

VIII. With respect to the TIME of the ascension, let it be observed, 1st, That it took place on the fortieth day after the resurrection. 2dly, That it happened in the same hour in which he was conversing familiarly with the disciples, and whilst he was blessing them. Each of these circumstances is mystical, and highly instructive.

IX. Our Lord was pleased to show himself alive to his disciples very frequently, and to converse with them for a considerable time, that he might give them the stronger an assurance of the truth of his

resurrection, of which they were to be witnesses and preachers through the whole world; and that he might communicate to them the more ample instruction respecting the mysteries of his heavenly kingdom. But the space of forty days precisely, is not unaptly compared with the time of his presentation in the temple. As on the fortieth day after his birth, Joseph and his mother brought him to Jerusalem, and presented him to the Lord in the temple; so on the fortieth day after his resurrection, which was a kind of second nativity, he went to his heavenly Father, and appeared before him in the temple not made with hands. The same space of time, besides, was consecrated in Moses and Elias, who had been his attendants on the holy mount. Moses, when, after holding intercourse with God forty days without food, his body, at his return, was so far from being emaciated almost to death, that it shone with an extraordinary lustre which dazzled the eyes of the beholders,^s exhibited to the Israelites some resemblance of a glorified body, while yet residing on the earth. Elias also, being awakened from sleep and supplied with food by an angel, accomplished, in the strength of that food, a journey of forty days through the wilderness, till he arrived at Horeb the mount of God, where he was to see God in a figure, and to hear his voice. And the Lord Jesus, in like manner, being awakened from the sleep of death, which was sweet to him on account of the inestimable benefits resulting from it to his people,^u and honoured with the ministration of Angels, walked about for the space of forty days through the wilderness of this world, and in particular through the land of Judea, (which alas! bore a very great resemblance to an uncultivated desert,) till he betook himself to the mount of the heavenly Zion, to be eternally present with the Father.

X. But we must not overlook the circumstance, that it was while Jesus was still speaking with his disciples that he was taken up from them; just as, whilst Elijah and Elisha were walking and conversing together, a chariot of fire, with horses of fire, suddenly parted them both asunder.^w Our Lord thus discovered his assiduity in instructing and comforting his disciples to the very last. As he had begun to teach when he was a youth scarcely twelve years of age, so he did not

desist on the cross; and his last hour upon earth found him engaged in the same work. In conformity to his Master's example, CALVIN nobly replied to his friends, who exhorted him to abstain entirely, during his indisposition, from the labour of speaking, or at least of writing, "What! Do you wish that the Lord should find me idle?"

XI. At the conclusion of his discourse, Christ blessed the disciples. Accordingly, Luke says: ... "He lifted up his hands and blessed them; and it came to pass while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven." Lifting up the hands was a gesture used in prayer; and blessing is a species of prayer. The hands of one person, were laid on the head of another, on whose behalf prayers were preferred; for it was the request of the one, that as he protected the other with his hand, so God would protect him in his ways. Such was the practice, wherever there might be only one or two to be blessed; but if the number were greater, a more expeditious method was adopted, and instead of many repeated impositions of hands, the supplicant stretched forth his hands over the heads of the assembly. We read that "Aaron lifted up his hands towards the people, and blessed them."z Christian Bishops were accustomed to observe the same practice, both at the beginning, and at the conclusion, of every meeting. And in the ancient constitutions which are commonly ascribed to Clement, "the imposition of hands, and blessing both small and great," are numbered among "the services of priests."* Our Lord thought proper to depart, whilst employed in this exercise. He had already discharged his functions as a Prophet; as a Priest, he had offered up himself. And now as a most merciful High-priest, he imparts his blessing to his disciples; being about to enter immediately into the most holy place, to present the virtue of his shed blood to the Father, and to sit down on the throne of glory, encircled with royal magnificence. Not only did he bring a blessing with him, when he came into the world; but when he departed, he left a blessing behind him. Thus the blessed seed is always like himself. At his departure no less than at his advent, he is the source of the most desirable benedictions.

XII. A two-fold PLACE must here be considered. 1st, The place whence Christ departed. 2dly, The place where he arrived. In stating the former, Scripture uses some diversity of expression. In Acts 1:12. it is said that the Apostles, immediately after Christ's ascension, "returned unto Jerusalem from the Mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a Sabbath day's journey." Now, men acquainted with the customs of the Hebrews always define a Sabbath-day's journey by two thousand cubits,* or, as others express it, two thousand moderate paces. † According to the calculation of Beza, and of Ludovicus de Dieu, these make five furlongs; and according to Josephus,‡ Jerusalem is distant that number of furlongs from Mount Olivet. But in Luke 24:50. it is related, that the disciples were led out "as far as to Bethany;" whence Christ was to ascend to heaven. Bethany, too, is "fifteen furlongs" distant from Jerusalem; that is, if Beza's computation be correct, three times the distance of a Sabbath-day's journey. To solve this seeming contradiction, is truly difficult. I intend not now to examine the various opinions respecting it, which may be seen in the writings of those who have proposed them. I shall only bring forward what appears most probable, and best calculated to remove the difficulty. Let it then be observed, 1. That Josephus speaks the truth, when he affirms that mount Olivet is at the distance of five furlongs from Jerusalem; that is, where the mountain begins to rise to any considerable height: for it is attested by them who in our own times have travelled in those regions, that the lowest parts of the mountain are still nearer the city, and are scarcely five hundred paces distant, whilst the brook Kidron flows between the Mount and the city. 2. That a Sabbath-day's journey is most accurately defined, not five furlongs, but seven and a half; as the Syriac Translator renders it about seven furlongs.* On this subject Drusius and Lightfoot, men of uncommon skill in these matters, may be consulted. A Sabbath-day's journey, therefore, extends to a considerable height in mount Olivet, perhaps not much less distant from the bottom of the mount, than its bottom is from Jerusalem. 3. That there are two Bethanies,—the one, a town, or village, or fort, situated beyond mount Olivet, fifteen furlongs from Jerusalem, of which we read in John 11:18.—the other, a tract, or part of mount

Olivet, contiguous to Bethphage. As Bethphage † was the tract of Olivet most adjacent to Jerusalem, being so called on account of the figs which it produced; so Bethany‡ is a tract of the same mountain, that derives its name from the dates with which it abounds. Bethany began where Bethphage ended. § 4. That Christ ascended to heaven, not from the village of Bethany, but from the tract of Olivet which bore the same name: For he did not select a place where a multitude of inhabitants, or others, might see him ascend; but called the disciples, who alone were to be the witnesses of his ascension, to a solitary part of the mount. When these remarks are attended to, every appearance of contradiction vanishes.

XIII. It is related by the ancients, that when the Empress HELENA erected a splendid chapel on the place whence Christ ascended to heaven in a cloud, it was found impossible to pave, along with the rest of the floor, the spot which last received the print of our Lord's sacred feet. Whatever was applied for that purpose, the earth indignantly refused to accept of human embellishments, shaking off the marble stones, and dashing them in the faces of those who laid them. It is mentioned, besides, as a permanent evidence of the dust of that place having been trodden by the Son of God, that the impressions of the footsteps may yet be discerned; and although religionists that are daily resorting thither in multitudes, eagerly snatch away portions of the earth trodden by our Lord, the ground sustains no perceptible loss, and the earth preserves the same appearance, being still marked with the traces of the footsteps. Such is the account given by Sulpitius Severus. Jerome adds:* "In fine, whereas the Church, in the middle of which the marks of the footsteps are, was built in a circular form, and in a style of workmanship exquisitely beautiful, it was not possible, as is reported, by any means, to cover and arch over the summit of the edifice, where the Lord's body had passed; but that passage from earth to heaven still continues open." The same thing has been noticed by Optatus of Milevi, Paulinus, and Bede; whose words are cited by Baronius. † Not satisfied with even these accounts, geographers, and travellers in the holy land, affirm that to this very

day, the traces of the footsteps are visible even amidst the infidel Turks; nay, further, that they are directed towards the West, lest, forsooth, the Roman catholic Church should derive no honour from this affair to herself; since to her, as to a spouse peculiarly dear, Christ, when leaving the earth, last turned his attention.*

XIV. Casaubon is of opinion that this miracle of the impression of Christ's footsteps is highly deserving of credit, because so many writers, and amongst them the celebrated Jerome, concur in relating it. To me, however, to confess the truth, it appears in a different light; nor do I doubt that this is one of those fables, which a later age has either devised or eagerly embraced, contrary to the belief of earlier times. Eusebius, as Hornius has judiciously observed, when giving a very particular description of the Church on mount Olivet, makes no mention of this miracle; and surely, he would not have omitted a circumstance so notable, and so likely, had it been founded in truth, to be of great utility for the confutation of the heathen. It is also passed over in silence by Socrates, Theodoret, Sazomenus, and by Nicephorus, the father of fables; who yet indulge in splendid trifling about the discovery of the cross. Compare what we have said in the tenth and several subsequent Sections of the sixteenth Dissertation. As to the marks of footsteps that are still pointed out to travellers, the thing itself shows, that these are merely the tricks of idle people. Nor doth the modern story agree with the ancient. According to the ancient account, the marks are impressed on the earth; according to the modern, on the rock. The prints of footsteps, besides, are not now to be seen, but only the print of one foot, in a certain part of the rock; the other print, with the stone on which it is said to have appeared, having been removed by the Turks to a mosque of their own.* And doth our Lord, in reality, now take so little interest in the traces of his feet, that, although anciently, when a pious Empress erected a most splendid Church to his honour, he would not suffer it to be covered with an arch, yet he now permits one part of that sacred memorial to be transferred to a temple dedicated to the false Prophet?

XV. Hornius supposes that he has discovered the source of the mistake, in the words of Eusebius in his Life of Constantine;† where, when narrating the visit of HELENA to Judea, he says; "But, as she regarded with due veneration the footsteps of the Saviour, &c."‡ What is spoken in general of Judea, where Christ lived, was perhaps ignorantly applied to mount Olivet, whence Christ ascended. And, without doubt, a very small matter is sufficient to give rise to a fable, which, how improbable soever, increases in course of time to a prodigious size. But the occasion of the story, I am rather inclined to think, was taken from a prophecy of Zechariah. In the writings of that Prophet we have the following words: "His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives;"^b—which expression, Baronius, taking it in an extremely literal sense, has applied to this affair. Or it may have been taken from these words of the Psalmist: "We will worship at his footstool;"—which Paulinus renders thus, "We have worshipped where his feet have stood;" and refers to this story. To point out the absurdity of such interpretations, is quite unnecessary.

XVI. It will be more useful to observe, that Christ chose rather to ascend from this, than from any other place, for the following reasons. 1. That as he had given evidence of human weakness and of the greatest love to us, when his sweat was great drops of blood, whilst conflicting with the wrath of God on mount Olivet; so he might exhibit a certain proof of his divinity, by ascending to heaven from the same place. 2. That the same place which had afforded a commencement to his ignominy and passion, might prove a kind of step to his highest glory, and that from the very spot where he had struggled with infernal hosts, he might ascend in triumph above all heavens. Thus also we learn from him as our pattern, that we must not expect to possess the joys and glories of the triumph, till after the labours of the contest are accomplished; and that we need not despair of being advanced to the kingdom from the same place, to which we have lately been led forth to the conflict.

XVII. The place to which Christ ascended, is the highest heaven. Hence the following expressions: "He was taken up into heaven;"

"Who is gone into heaven;"^f "We have a great High-priest that is passed through the heavens," that is, the visible heavens; "Made higher than the heavens;"^h "He ascended up far above all heavens."

XVIII. The heaven to which Christ ascended, is not God himself, nor the heavenly society, or glory, or blessedness; but "his Father's house," and "his dwelling place."^k It is not every where, but in the highest regions. "He was received up into heaven;" and there the body of the Lord Jesus has its assigned abode. "I go," says Christ, "to prepare a place for you, ... that where I am, there ye may be also."^m "Seek those things," says Paul, "which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God."

XIX. Christ is in heaven, too, with respect to his body, so as to be contained in heaven; not indeed as in a prison, but a most august palace. "Whom the "heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things." Nazianzen has well interpreted the words of Luke thus: "For he must reign till then, and be contained by heaven till the times of restitution."^{*}

XX. Since the Scriptures, then, so expressly mention the place whence, the place whither, and the way by which Christ ascended, and affirm that his ascension happened in the sight of the disciples; it is exceedingly absurd to set aside this local motion, and to define the ascension of Christ as a mere disappearing, or glorification, of his body. It is one thing, to disappear, or to be glorified; and another thing, to ascend. The two first are distinguished from the last, as things which precede, are distinguished from that which follows. And there is no reason why men should imagine the distance betwixt the highest heaven and this globe which we inhabit, so immense, that it would require several centuries to pass from the one to the other. At the command of God, motion may be accelerated beyond what we are able to conceive: and the body of Christ, after his resurrection, was not an animal body, pressed down by its own weight; but spiritual, and obedient to the spirit, so as to be immediately present wherever the spirit would have it to be.

XXI. The CAUSE of the ascension is the omnipotent power, both of the Father and of the Son. It is distinctly attributed to each. Sometimes the Father is said to have exalted and received up the Son, and sometimes the Son himself is said to have ascended. Each mode of expression has its own emphasis. By the one, the will of the Father is signified; by the other, the power and authority of Christ; and since both are used, the unity of the Father and the Son is denoted. Of the Father it is said, "Being by the right hand of God exalted,"—and again, "Him hath God exalted with his right hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour."r Christ took not this honour to himself, to rush into the heavenly sanctuary before the appointed time; but waited till he was received up by the Father. "GOD hath highly exalted him." As by raising him from the dead, he gave him a discharge in testimony of his having made full payment; so now, when he had accomplished the whole work of his embassy, he recalls him from the foreign land where he had sojourned for a time, to his native country, and heavenly palace.

XXII. The word Ἀναληψις, *Analepsis*, is a remarkable term, which is often employed on this topic by the sacred as well as ecclesiastical writers. It occurs in the following passages; "When the time was come, that he should be received up." "He was received up into heaven." "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven," &c. "—Unto that same day that he was taken up from us." "—Received up into glory." Irenæus calls the ascension of Christ "his bodily *analepsis*, reception, into heaven;" and the Greeks style the very day of the ascension, *Analepsimus*,* the reception-day. Now, as has been learnedly noted by Budæus, ἀναλαμβάνειν signifies to resume, to take back again: and in Demosthenes against Neæra, ἀναλαμβάνειν τὸν παῖδα, to receive the child back again, is opposed to disowning;† as amongst the Latins, *agnitio*, the acknowledging of children, is the opposite of *abdicatio*, the renunciation of them. He therefore concludes that *Analepsis* signifies "the acknowledging of Christ, who was previously in a manner disowned by the Father." Beza rejects this observation as an empty quibble. We concur, however, with several eminent writers in cordially receiving it; for it

both suits the genius of the language, and affords excellent instruction. Thirty-three years prior to that event, the Son was sent by the Father to accomplish the work of redemption, during the performance of which, he was so afflicted in body and mind, that he appeared to be forsaken of God, and treated with neglect; but the fact of the ascension doth itself imply a declaration on the part of the Father, that he recognises him as his Son, and that it is his will that he should be crowned with glory and honour. This analepsis, then, involves the justification of Christ.³⁹

XXIII. But in other passages of Scripture, Christ himself is said to have ascended. To this the word Ἀναβασις, ascension, refers; akin to which is the term Πορευομαι, I go; which was frequently used by Christ himself, and repeated in the history of the ascension.^b These expressions intimate, that our Lord, making use of the right which he acquired by his obedience and sufferings, found a way for himself to heaven. "By his resurrection from the dead he was declared to be the Son of God with power;" "all power being given him" alike "in heaven and in earth."^d He now, therefore, avails himself of that power. As the glorified Son of God, being "without sin," being no longer defiled, so to speak, with the guilt of any sin, to prevent his access to his Father's house, or to require him to remain without, or stand at a distance; but, on the contrary, having accomplished his whole work, in the highest perfection, according to his Father's will and his own engagements, and having obtained a solemn testimony of this in his resurrection,—he now goes to his Father with joy and alacrity; and, the gates of heaven opening spontaneously to give him admittance, he takes possession of that throne of glory to which he is entitled.

XXIV. It was also a remarkable circumstance attending the ascension of Jesus, that a cloud received him, and removed him from the sight of the disciples, while they looked stedfastly towards heaven. It is ascribed to JEHOVAH, who is very great, as an evidence of his divine glory and majesty, that he "makes the clouds his chariots, and walketh upon the wings of the wind." Christ's being conveyed in a cloud, therefore, when he ascended to heaven, is a proof of his Divine

majesty. "Every where," says Bede,* "the creature approves itself obedient to its Creator. At his birth, the stars indicate the place of his nativity; the clouds overshadow him at his sufferings; they receive him at his ascension; they will attend him at his coming to judgment." So, too, whilst the saints are engaged in the most delightful contemplation, God is often pleased to draw over them a cloud, which serves, like a veil, to intercept their views of the heavenly glory; for in this world "we walk by faith, not by sight."h He gave also a salutary check to human curiosity, when he permitted the disciples to see Jesus ascending, but not to see him enter into heaven. It was proper they should see a part, that unbelief might have no pretence. It would have been improper for them to see all, that faith might have its due exercise in admiring, not in boldly surveying, the hidden glories of the upper sanctuary.

XXV. The CERTAINTY of the ascension of Christ is clearly confirmed by the following testimonies. 1st, By the testimony of the APOSTLES; whose number is competent, whose integrity bids defiance to calumny, and whose faith was supported by the indubitable evidence of their senses; to which, as to this and similar matters, they every where appeal.

XXVI. 2dly, By the testimony of HOLY ANGELS; who declare that Jesus was, in reality, seen by the Apostles, when he ascended; and also that he is one day to come again from heaven in the same manner in which they saw him ascend.

XXVII. 3dly, By the testimony of STEPHEN; who, "being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God;"—and who, in the immediate prospect of death, informed his enemies, with a joyful countenance, of what he saw. It is perfectly credible, that Stephen saw with his bodily eyes, something of the same kind with that which was often seen in mental visions by the Prophets, and in particular, by John in the Apocalypse; who saw the throne, and Him that sat on it, and a Lamb as it had been slain.l Stephen saw "the heavens

opened;" as Christ also did at his baptism. This signifies at least the removal of impediments that obstructed the sight, and that would otherwise have rendered it impossible for him to penetrate to the things which are transacted in heaven. That God, who makes the seeing and the blind, who allots to individuals the different measures in which they possess the sense of sight, and who has taught mankind the art by which they can present to their view distant objects as if they were near, and small ones as if they were great, and bring to their eyes, by means of optical tubes, objects which otherwise are beyond the sphere of their vision,—that God could, with the utmost facility, miraculously strengthen the eye-sight of Stephen, so that, notwithstanding the almost unmeasurable distance intervening, he might see the objects exhibited in heaven.

XXVIII. 4thly, By the testimony of PAUL, who more than once affirms that he saw the Lord; that is, saw him in the same manner in which he was seen by Stephen. A great light from heaven having suddenly surrounded him, he turned his eyes to the quarter whence so extraordinary a brightness shone, and there he "saw that Just One, and heard the voice of his mouth." We are not to imagine, that, on Paul's account, Christ left the highest heavens, and descended to the aerial regions adjacent to the earth; for we are assured that "the heavens must receive him until the times of the restitution of all things." Nor are we to suppose that an Angel appeared to Paul, representing the person and sustaining the character of Christ; for it is unlawful for an Angel, or any creature, to usurp the place and prerogatives of God. One of two things, therefore, must have happened. Paul either saw Christ in a symbol, as the Israelites saw God in Sinai; or by a miraculous elevation of the power of vision, he beheld Christ's very body in heaven. That the last of these was his privilege, he seems indeed to intimate, when he adds himself to the number of those who saw Christ alive after his death, that is, saw him actually in the body, and not merely in a symbol. Without doubt, too, he saw him in heaven, when, being caught up to paradise, he "heard unspeakable words,"—words of greater force and energy than the language of mortals is able to express, and which, being reserved for

the world to come, are proper to be heard only in paradise:—"Which it is not lawful for a man to utter;" that is, which a mere man is not permitted to speak,—words so superlatively excellent, that whoever uttered them must be recognised as greater than man. We ought not, without necessity, to admit a tautology in the Apostle's language: and in order to avoid it, the first member of the clause must be referred to the person who hears, to whom the words were "unspeakable;" and the last, to the person who speaks, whose language was so transcendentally excellent, that it were impossible for any but God to speak in such a style.

XXIX. 5thly, By the testimony of JOHN, Rev. 12:1, 2, 5. "And there appeared a great wonder," a remarkable emblem of the most important and interesting things.—"In heaven," whence John received all his revelations, and whither he was required to go up in order to behold them.—"A woman," that is, the Old Testament Church.—"Clothed with the sun;" not like that other woman, who was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls; but irradiated by the bright beams of divine truth, proceeding from the Son of God, who is "the true light," and "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever".—"And the moon under her feet," nobly trampling on earthly, fading, and transitory objects; for the moon, being the lowest of the planets, and subject to continual variations, is a fit image of the instability of the world.—"And upon her head a crown of twelve stars." The Church is a Queen, and the daughter of the King; and hence she wears a crown. The twelve stars are the patriarchs, the prophets, and the saints of the twelve tribes. Previously to the birth of Christ, the twelve tribes were united in one commonwealth, and all that were genuine saints of each of the tribes of old, contributed to the beauty and splendour of the Church.—"And she being with child," by virtue of the promises of God regarding the Messiah, who was to be born amongst the people of Israel,—"cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered." The travailing in birth, denotes the hope and expectation of believers of those times. The crying, relates to the fervent prayers, by which they earnestly solicited the Messiah's coming. x The pain,

signifies the oppression sustained by the Church, partly from Herod, that determined enemy of the Messiah's kingdom, partly from the Pharisees and Scribes, who loaded the Church with heavy burdens, whilst they darkened and almost exploded the doctrine of the righteousness and grace of Christ;—which served to inflame the desire of the Messiah in the breasts of the faithful.—"And she brought forth a man-child." Christ, that strong and mighty Conqueror, was born at last, according to the hope and expectation of believers—"Who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron; to rescue his people from the power of their enemies, and to break in pieces those enemies, compelling even the Dragon to surrender to him the government of the nations.—AND HER CHILD WAS CAUGHT UP UNTO GOD, AND TO HIS THRONE." After most violent conflicts with the dragon, he, by the power of his heavenly Father, was caught up to God, from death, and from hell, or the grave. Being raised from the dead, he ascended to heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God to reign over the nations. It seemed proper to explain this passage somewhat particularly, that we might understand the meaning of so distinguished an emblem.

XXX. 6thly, By the testimony of the SPIRIT sent from heaven. "Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." The Spirit could not have come, unless Christ had gone to the Father.z

XXXI. 7thly, By the GREAT AND ADMIRABLE WORKS performed after his ascension, which extorted confessions of his glory from his inveterate enemies. "Nevertheless, I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." They saw this, when all Jerusalem was amazed at the effusion of the Spirit on the Apostles, while they heard their discourses, and beheld their miracles. They saw it, when Paul, one of the persecutors, beheld him shining gloriously from heaven, and heard him accosting himself. They saw it, when he came with just severity, to demolish their temple and overthrow their polity; for, as

Maimonides has rightly observed, descending in a cloud sometimes denotes wrath and vengeance. They saw it, in fine, when Christ, going forth in the Gospel, as in a triumphal chariot, "and in his majesty riding prosperously because of truth,"^c extended his kingdom on every side amongst all the nations. In these and similar works, we behold a prelude of his approaching advent in the clouds of heaven.

XXXII. But, further, it was NECESSARY that Christ should ascend on high. "OUGHT not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" Christ's ascension was necessary, 1st, That the prophecies might be accomplished. 2dly, that the types might be fulfilled. 3dly, Because it was of great importance to God the Father, to Christ, and to us.

XXXIII. The PREDICTIONS of this event are numerous and express. For the sake of brevity, we shall only illustrate the three following, two from the Psalms, and one from Isaiah. The first is Ps. 47:5. "God is gone up with a shout; JEHOVAH with the sound of a trumpet." It is possible, indeed, although it is merely a conjecture, that the ancient Church may have sung this Psalm, when the ark was introduced into Zion, or into the temple. But the introduction of the ark into its appointed place, directs our views to a far greater event. It signified Christ's reception into heaven; which is foretold by the Psalmist. Our Lord's ascension was celebrated "with a shout, and with the sound of a trumpet,"—preceding the event, for the fame of Christ's resurrection from the dead had filled Jerusalem, and even all Judea;—accompanying it, for it took place amidst rejoicing, applauding, and witnessing Angels; and also following it, for the preaching of Apostles full of the Spirit of Christ, and those other magnificent works of Christ, of which we have just spoken, were more efficacious than the sound of any trumpet. The ascension of Christ, too, is above every thing else, the cause and matter of a song, of a shout, and of the most exuberant joy, to believers.

XXXIV. Memorable also on this topic, is the sixty-eighth Psalm; in which, after a variety of emblematical expressions relating to Christ and the Church, the Psalmist, addressing himself to the Messiah, says, verse 18. "Thou hast ascended on high." Thou, who didst once descend from heaven to earth to accomplish the salvation of mankind, having finished the work of redemption, now returnest to heaven, to take possession of thine original glory. In vain, therefore, do "the mountains, and the high hills," that is, the kingdoms, the nations, and the tribes, form insidious designs against one another; each by unavailing protestations arrogating to itself the throne of God. He hath his throne in heaven, and thence he rules the Church. "Thou hast led captivity captive." Thou hast triumphed gloriously over thy vanquished enemies, and taken the prey from the haughty foe. Let Paul suffice for an example, whom Christ "led about in triumph,"^f as a signal conquest from the camp of the enemy, nay, a standard-bearer, who formerly raged against Jesus even unto blood, and withstood him in the front of the battle. He exhibited him to the world in a state of so complete subjection, that no slave could be more entirely his master's property than Paul was Christ's. Paul himself avers, that he "bears in his body the marks of the Lord Jesus;" as servants of old, both in the East and amongst the Romans, were distinguished by the marks of their masters, impressed on their bodies with red-hot iron.* "Thou hast received gifts." Thy Father hath given thee power over all, that from the abundance of spiritual and heavenly treasures, thou mayest impart to thy church, whatever is calculated to adorn and to enrich her. Nor hast thou obtained the rewards due to thy merits, in thine own person only, but also—"in men." For since they are thine, given thee by the Father, redeemed by thy blood, and members of thy mystical body; and since nothing is given them but by virtue of thy satisfaction and merit, and whatever is given them redounds to thy glory and honour as the Head,—thou receivest in them, as a recompence for thy service, whatever they receive on thy account.—"Even the rebellious also;" that is, Thou hast received the rebellious—thou wilt possess the once refractory Jews for thine inheritance; that, although, by the righteous judgment of God, they have long "dwelt in a dry land,"ⁱ destitute of all grace and

comfort, they may now "inhabit the comeliness, † or beauty of Jehovah." To inhabit the beauty of Jehovah, is to be joined to the Church of Christ, where it is our privilege to behold and to enjoy the pleasant light of Jehovah's countenance. Or if any one disrelish this interpretation, let him take the expression in the following sense;—in order to dwell, that is, that thou, O JAH JEHOVAH, O LORD, LORD, mayest dwell in them by thy grace and Spirit. Thus we have here a truly luminous prophecy, respecting the ascension of Christ, and its consequences; which the Apostle also explains in his Epistle to the Ephesians.

XXXV. Add to this Isaiah 53:8. "He was taken from prison and from judgment." The Hebrew word* exactly corresponds with the Greek term *Analepsis*, of which we spoke above, and signifies here his being taken up to the heavenly place, and the heavenly glory. It is said, in like manner, of Enoch: "And he was not, for God took him." And the disciples of the prophets at Bethel said to Elisha: "Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head to-day?" Nor is that expression dissimilar, which we have just cited from the Revelation, namely,—"caught up unto God."

XXXVI. The Jewish High-priest was the most illustrious TYPE of Christ's ascension to heaven. Once every year, on the tenth day of the seventh month, upon the first day of which the common or civil year began, the High-priest entered, with the shed blood of a victim, within the vail, into the Holy of Holies, to make intercession for the people. In like manner also, at the commencement of the year of grace and of liberty, the Lord Jesus, by his own shed blood, and through the rent vail of his own flesh, entered, not into the holy places made with hands, but into the heavenly sanctuary, to consecrate the way for us, that by representing the virtue of his satisfaction to the Father, he might make continual intercession for us.

XXXVII. The ascension of Christ was also shadowed forth by the golden pot or casket of Manna, which was deposited in the presence

of Jehovah, that there it might be preserved, exempt from all corruption and putrefaction. It was thus signified, that he who descended from heaven to be the bread of life to sinners, who without him must inevitably have perished, was again to be taken up to heaven, that, no longer obnoxious to infirmity, he might live eternally with the Father in unfading glory.

XXXVIII. Add to this, the translation of Enoch and Elijah. As the former was translated to heaven under the promise, and the latter under the law; so Christ was translated under grace, as the exemplar of believers of all ages. A vast difference, meantime, may be observed, between the ascension of our Lord, and the translation of these ancient prophets. They were graciously translated to heaven, by no power and by no title of their own; but by the power of God, and by the virtue of the merits of Christ, and of his future ascension—a virtue which was exerted even from the beginning. Our Saviour, on the contrary, ascended to heaven, as to his own habitation, by his own power and authority, and by the right of his Deity, as well as by a mediatorial title acquired by his sufferings. This observation throws light on that expression of Christ: "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man, which is in heaven;"⁴² They were translated, besides, without tasting death; for it did not belong to them to make satisfaction for sin. But Christ ascended, after having undergone death, and after having conquered it by his own death, and triumphed over it by his resurrection from the dead; for he was not to "sit down at the right hand of the Majesty on high," till he had first "by himself purged our sine."

XXXIX. And truly it was of importance to God the FATHER, that he should receive home at last to the embraces of his love, his Only-begotten Son, who "was daily his delight," and who had now spent so many years in a sort of exile on the earth; and that this honorary ambassador, having performed his whole work aright, should, after sojourning so long in a foreign land, return to court, to render an account of his embassy. The glory of his justice required, that his

well-beloved Son should not be disappointed of that reward, which was due to an obedience so signal, and a service so arduous and so perfect; and which was to be enjoyed only in heaven.^u

XL. It was of importance, also, to CHRIST, that he should possess the right which he had procured for himself, and that having valiantly and successfully overthrown his enemies, he should be carried in a triumphal chariot, and, amidst the shrieks of devils, and the acclamations of angels, amidst the amazement of the wicked, and the songs of choirs of the faithful, make a joyful and glorious entry, not into such a place as Rome, or the Capitol, but into the heavenly Jerusalem, and the Temple not made with hands, there to enjoy a delightful rest, after the protracted travail of his soul. He had indeed finished all those parts of his work, which were to be discharged in the state of humiliation. But some operations belonging to each of his offices remained, which could be accomplished only in heaven. There he had to erect his chair as a Prophet, that he might instruct his people by his Spirit, who irradiates their minds from above. There he had to appear in the presence of God as a Priest; and this was so absolutely necessary, that if he had remained on earth, he could not have been our Priest. It behoved him either to be a Priest in every respect, or not to be a Priest at all. It belongs also to the Priest, namely, the High-priest, of whom we now speak, to enter within the vail, to make intercession for the people. Hence such an High-priest became us, as, after having offered up himself, "is made higher than the heavens."^y There, in fine, he was to take possession of the Throne of the kingdom, that he might hear the Angels around the throne, shouting with a loud voice: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing;"—that, looking down from on high, he might laugh at the impotent rage of his enemies;^a—and finally, that from that impregnable fortress he might afford the most effectual succours for the protection of his people, and liberally supply them with the richest gifts.

XLI. It is of importance also to US, who, by this means, were to be weaned from every worldly inclination and pursuit. Such is the disposition of the flesh, that, wholly intent on external advantages, it doth not elevate the mind to heavenly objects, but is occupied about trifles to the neglect of better things. Of this we have an instance in the Apostles themselves, who, so long as they enjoyed Christ's bodily presence, could, with the utmost difficulty, be induced to renounce the expectation of a carnal and worldly kingdom. Our Lord, therefore, was pleased to deprive us of the sight and presence of his body, that we might not rest in that which is external and corporeal, but, directing our attention to his merit and Spirit, might place our hearts on heavenly and spiritual objects. After his resurrection, too, he did not indulge his most affectionate friends with embraces, and kisses, or any similar expressions of accustomed familiarity; that they might gradually learn to be content with his spiritual presence, and to submit to the absence of his body.

XLII. But in addition to all this, it is truly impossible to declare the great UTILITY of Christ's ascension to us. I shall not now show particularly, that all his faithful subjects cannot fail to take a lively interest in so splendid an inauguration, and so magnificent a triumph, of their King. What can possibly be more delightful to them, than to see their Lord, who was so lately covered with so many swelling waves of unparalleled trouble and sorrow, and almost overwhelmed in the very abysses of hell, now shining in the fresh splendour of a spiritual body, exalted far above the stormy clouds and dreadful thunders, nay, above the sun himself and the loftiest of the stars,—made higher than all heavens, and taking possession of the throne as the Father's equal, amidst the congratulations of angels, and of the spirits of just men made perfect! That was a joyful day to Israel, in which the ark of the Lord was brought to the city of David, and into the tabernacle that he had prepared for it:—when it belonged to the Levites, to carry it on their shoulders;—to the Princes, their associates, to accompany it with instruments of music, psalteries, harps, and cymbals;—to all the Israelites, to attend it with shouting, and with the sound of the cornet, and of trumpets;—to king

David himself, clothed with a robe of fine linen, to leap and dance in public;—and when the lips of all were dissolved in the most joyful songs. "We have seen thy goings, O God, even the goings of my God, my King, in the sanctuary. The singers went before; the players on instruments followed after; among them were the damsels, playing with timbrels. Bless ye God in the congregations, even the Lord, from the fountain of Israel." Yet what was the translation of the ark into the city of David, but a very faint shadow of Christ's ascension into heaven! And if that solemnity so wonderfully moved the Israelites, into what joy and exultation ought we to break forth, whilst we do not eagerly survey the shadow, but behold the substance itself, as if present before our eyes! "God is gone up with a shout; Jehovah with the sound of a trumpet. Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises to our King, sing praises. For God is the King of all the earth; sing ye praises with understanding." On the day when Solomon was anointed king over Israel, so extatic was the joy of the people, so vehement were their acclamations, so loud the noise of the pipes, "that the earth rent with the sound of them."f But how much more joyful to us that splendid day, on which Solomon's Antitype and Lord, solemnly took possession of the kingdom! Then was it for Angels, then was it for all the pious inhabitants of heaven and of earth, to clap their hands together, and to sing together with one voice. "The LORD reigneth, let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of the isles be glad. The LORD reigneth, let the people tremble; he sitteth between the cherubims, let the earth be moved. The LORD is great in Zion; and he is high above all people." These sacred odes, adapted to that occasion, were dictated long before to the Church, by the Spirit of prophecy. And truly that man has no love to Jesus our King, to whom it is not a pleasure, to celebrate his glorious triumph in joyful songs.h

XLIII. But another point now demands our attention. For us, even for us, the ascension of Christ is expedient. As for us he was born, for us he lived, for us he suffered, for us he died; so for us, also, he rose again, and for us he ascended to heaven. The following, in particular, are the purposes for which he ascended. 1st, That he might pray for

us, pleading that the whole virtue and worth of his satisfaction may be imputed to us. Heaven sometimes appears to be at so vast a distance from us, and the voice of our prayers so feeble, that we can scarcely dare to hope that it will pierce through the intervening clouds, and reach the ears of the Supreme Being. But how great a comfort is it, that we have an Advocate in heaven, at once thoroughly acquainted with our concerns, and industriously attentive to them; who being near to God, and being his intimate Friend and Confederate, pleads our cause without intermission; and who, as he is always heard, will certainly obtain for us whatever he pleaseth.

2dly, That he might prepare a place for us. It was already prepared of old in the immutable and eternal decree of God. It was reared and furnished "from the foundation of the world."m It was acquired for us by the merit of our Lord's sufferings, death, and descent into hell. It only remained, that he should go to possess and inhabit it, in our name and place. As our "forerunner, he hath entered into that within the veil;" and we are "made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."o

3dly, That he might thence shed down upon us his gifts, more precious than gold. When the ark of the covenant was introduced into its habitation, David gave "to the whole multitude of the Israelites, as well to the women as men, to every one a cake of bread, and a good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine." But far better gifts were to be expected from Christ after his ascension to heaven;—not bread, or flesh, or wine, adapted merely to the support of the body,—but the quickening virtue of his own flesh, lately offered up to the Father, and that celestial corn, which makes the young men eloquent," and that mystical "new wine," which has the same effect on "the maids."* The Redeemer himself being most liberally anointed with the oil of joy above his fellows, he doth not distil a few drops of it merely on his people, but waters them with a copious shower. The kings of this world, at the festival of their coronation, throw amongst the people a small number of pieces of money, perhaps of silver or of gold; which a few individuals, and generally the boldest and the most forward, seize for themselves. But, unlike those kings, Christ doth not require his people to be satisfied, so to speak, with a few crumbs and toys. On the contrary, he confers on all

of them, gifts, which cannot be valued with the fine gold of Ophir, or with the precious onyx, sardius, or the sapphire, or the finest jewel, or the topaz of Ethiopia; namely, the gifts of his Holy Spirit, who is "the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord;"—"the Spirit of adoption," in fine, "by whom we cry, Abba, Father." 4thly, That when he shall at last return from heaven, he may receive us to the place where himself now is. O how blessed will that day be, in which our soul, emancipated from the prison of this vile body, shall be gently conveyed by angels above the moon, the sun, and all the stars, into the magnificent palace of the greatest of kings, to the possession of heavenly joys! And how much more blessed the day when the body, now made glorious, spiritual, and heavenly, shall be re-united to the soul, and when, in soul and body, we shall be caught up in the clouds, together with all the saints, "to meet the Lord in the "air;" that, associated with choirs of patriarchs and of angels, we may "be ever with the Lord."

XLIV. The man who cherishes this glorious hope, cannot fail to be excited by it, to the study of a sublime and exalted holiness. Of this holiness, he has in the very ascension of our Lord, 1st, An exemplary cause. It belongs to Christians to be constantly "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of faith, who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Since he, therefore, who, as we have just learned, is our Forerunner, has taken leave of the dust of this lower world, and sought the things which are above, who can doubt that it is incumbent on us, to tread the same footsteps? And as we cannot follow him now but by prayers, by desires, by sighs, by endeavours, and by the efforts of a soul earnestly tending upwards; let us not, in these respects at least, neglect him, or be wanting to ourselves. 2dly, A primary and morally influential cause* 1. Where the treasure is, there is the heart also. The soul is not so much where it lives, as where it loves. Bodies are carried according to their weight: such as are heavy, downwards; such as are light, upwards. Love is the weight of the soul; love carries it whithersoever it goes. If,

therefore, we love Jesus, as we ought, with a sincere and ardent love, that love will give wings to the soul, on which it will fly upwards, and bend its course towards the Lord; that, as far as possible, it may obtain familiar intercourse with him, in heavenly meditations, prayers, and devout aspirations of mind. It is out of its power,—nor were it able, would it be inclined—to bring down Jesus from heaven. It longs, however, to be united with him—to enjoy him. What remains then, but that, scorning the deceitful pleasures of the world, it should aspire to heaven, by the strenuous cultivation of a noble sanctity? 2. What a disgraceful crime would it be, if, whilst the Head shines in heaven like the purest gold, the members of the spiritual body should basely roll themselves in the dust of the earth, in the filth of sin, and in the abominable mire of hell! This would be to transform Christ into a monster, akin to Nebuchadnezzar's great image; of which the head was of gold, but the feet, part of iron, and part of miry clay. 3. If Christ has gone before to prepare a place for us, in his Father's house, and to prepare glory worthy of so magnificent a place, what an indecorous and abject meanness of spirit would it discover, to cleave to the trifles, the toys, and the refuse of this world; to pursue them; to be distracted by them; or to be drawn away by them, from the pursuit of those glorious felicities, which we believe are reserved for us with Christ in God. 3dly, A supernaturally efficacious cause. Christ is the head; all believers are the members of his mystical body. Owing to this intimate union, the Spirit flows down from the head to the members: and, as the Spirit comes from heaven, so he raises to heaven, those to whom he is given; just as the beams of the Sun, which warm the earth, cause the vapours to ascend. This, however, is effected by the Spirit in a gradual manner, and by several distinct degrees. 1. He causes believers to ascend by holy desires, and endeavours, to which the following words in the Song, are usually referred: "Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars," as if perfumed with pillars, "of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense," better than "all powders of the merchant." 2. He actually wafts the soul itself to heaven, after its separation from the body, to enjoy the presence of Christ, till the day of judgment. 3. He will convey the whole man, in

fine, to the place where Christ is.—And such is the order which the Lord observes, that there is no possibility of passing to the higher degrees but by the first. Whoever expects to be admitted to heaven, is deceived, unless he feel himself impelled by the Spirit of Christ, to seek those things which are spiritual and heavenly, and manifest that impulse by the holiness of his life.

DISSERTATION XXI: ON CHRIST'S SITTING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD THE FATHER

I. WHOEVER loves Christ in sincerity, cannot fail, on many accounts, to take pleasure in meditating on that unbounded glory, to which the Father has been pleased to exalt him. No spectacle can be more excellent, more splendid, or more delightful in the esteem of believers, than that to which they are invited in the following terms: "Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold king Solomon with the crown where with his mother crowned him, in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart." "King Solomon," is the Lord Jesus, the Head of the Church, the son of David, the Prince of Peace, the Supreme Wisdom. "The day of his espousals," is the time of the New Testament, confirmed and sealed by the Mediator's blood; who, after ratifying his Testament on earth, himself ascended to heaven, that, by the Spirit of grace and liberty, sent down from thence, he might dwell for ever with the Church. It is also called "the day of the gladness of his heart:" for then, having finished the most grievous sufferings, he was himself "anointed with the oil of joy above his fellows;" and embraced the opportunity also of displaying the riches of his grace and mercy, by conferring on his people the most signal benefits, the enjoyment of which would

inexpressibly gladden their hearts. Christ cannot but rejoice, when he fills his much loved people with joy, and causes them to delight themselves in his blessings.^c "The crown" put upon his head, denotes the great glory of his heavenly kingdom—a glory which includes the multitude of his faithful subjects, who are given to him, "that he may be glorified." God the Father, doubtless, gave him that glory; as Solomon owed his kingdom to his father David. Yet the crown is here said to have been procured by his "Mother:" because, as Bathsheba, by earnest and importunate entreaties, solicited the crown for her son; so likewise the Church, from whom according to the flesh Christ came,^e and who, by hope and expectation conceived and brought him forth, entertained a most ardent wish, that he should bring the sharpest conflicts to a successful issue, and in consequence rule peaceably and gloriously in the midst of his enemies. Besides, by the word of faith, she brings forth those, who are "the glory of Christ."^g "The daughters of Zion," even all believers, as many throughout the whole world as belong to that kingdom of the Messiah, which is given him in Zion, are invited to "behold" the crown. For this purpose they are required to "go forth,"—to go out from the world, and "their own people," and from themselves and the reasonings of the flesh. They must turn away their eyes and their minds from all other persons and things; since in the contemplation of Christ alone, they will tell in abundance, whatever is calculated to administer the most ample satisfaction.

II. Acquiescing, therefore, in so kind an invitation, let us now apply ourselves with pleasure to devout meditation on that glory which the Scripture attributes to Christ, when it affirms that he SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD. All those inducements that can stimulate the students of divine truth to the diligent investigation of any doctrine, concur to attract our attention to this noble theme. As, however, it is a topic singularly sublime and profitable, so it is also attended with considerable difficulty; which has given rise to a variety of controversies amongst Theologians, both ancient and modern. Let us then be careful that we do not wander from the true sense of a very important article. We may attend, in the first place, to

the words, and then proceed to a more accurate consideration of the subject.

III. With regard to the expression, it does not seem so necessary to examine what is meant by the right hand, (for that will throw no great light on the question at issue,) as what is denoted by a person's BEING AT THE RIGHT HAND. It must be inquired, besides, whether there be any latent force in the word SITTING.

IV. There are some who suppose, that by Christ's sitting at the right hand of God is intended a glory somewhat inferior to the Divine; and the reason they assign for this opinion is, that amongst the ancients, the person at the left hand was accounted more honourable than the person at the right. The first writer, so far as I know, that conceived this notion, was Antony of Lebrixa; who, judging nothing more incongruous, or more indecorous, than that the Son should occupy the first place, which it became him, although equal in nature to the Father, yet as the Son, and as man, to yield to the Father,—began to suspect that the order of sitting amongst the ancients was different from that which is observed in modern times, and imagined that he had proved by several testimonies, collected from old writers, that the place at the left hand was deemed superior in dignity.* Goropius Becanus embraced the same opinion, and defended it by additional proofs. † Baronius, too, supported this new sentiment by new arguments, for the honour of his Roman Pontiff, whose legates, it appears, sometimes sat on the left hand in the ancient councils. That this circumstance might prove no disparagement to the Holy See, he contends that, with the Romans, the place on the left, was, in sacred matters, the more honourable, and that on the right the less so.‡ But Lipsius proves incontrovertibly, that the arguments adduced by Becanus are by no means solid, but mere straw and stubble, which cannot stand the ordeal of strict examination.§ Compare Turnebus,|| and Casaubon, who keenly satirizes that rage for the paradoxical.¶ Even the evidence of the thing itself refutes Baronius. In common with Theodoret, he will have Eustathius of Antioch to have been the Bishop who occupied the first seat on the right hand in the council of

Nice, and addressed the Emperor. I shall not now examine the accuracy of this statement. I only observe, that in the Epistle to Zeno the Emperor, respecting the deposition of Peter of Antioch, Felix, the Roman Pontiff, makes mention of Eustathius, as President of the council of Nice. His words are as follows:—"And of Eustathius the Confessor, and "PRESIDENT of the three hundred and eighteen holy "Fathers who met at Nice."* Now if this be true, most certainly the first seat on the right hand bench, which belonged to the President, could not be considered inferior to any seat on the left.

V. Whatever may have been the practice amongst the Romans, it clearly appears, that amongst the Hebrews, the right hand place was more honourable than the left. Hence the Apostle speaks of "the right hand of the majesty;" and of "the right hand of the throne of the majesty."j He whom God loves and honours most, is called "the Man of God's right hand." "A wise man's heart is at his right hand; but a fool's heart at his left."l The former pursues right-hand; the latter, left hand things. The one meditates and devises in his mind, what is laudable, useful, and excellent; the other, the contrary. Joseph, when presenting his sons to his father Jacob to receive his blessing, placed them according to the order of seniority, so that Manasseh, the elder, was on Israel's right hand, and Ephraim, the younger, on his left. Job, when complaining of the arrogance of young men towards him, says; "Upon my right hand rise the youth:"n That is, matters are now come to such a pass, that youths not yet arrived at the years of discretion, are not ashamed wantonly to prefer themselves to me, although an aged and a venerable man. In fine, Christ will set the elect on his right hand, as a token of honour and love; and the goats on his left, in testimony of contempt and disgrace, Mat. 25:33. But what necessity is there for multiplying examples in so clear a point?—That the language of the sacred writers, too, referred to the custom of the Hebrews, requires, I think, no laborious proof.

VI. The matter was thus understood by the ancient Christian writers. Basil says, "The place on the right hand denotes equal dignity and eminence." "If he had intended to intimate," says Chrysostome,*

"that he is inferior, he would not have said on the right hand, but on the left." It is observed by Theophylact.[†] that "he sits, and that on the right hand, and on high; in order to show that he is equal in dignity to the Father." And Maximus of Turin[‡] expresses himself in the following words: "The Father offers Christ his Son an exalted place with himself on his throne; and, for the purpose of doing him honour, he has set him in an everlasting seat at his right hand." Let it then be regarded as certain and indisputable, that to sit at one's right hand is a mark of dignity and honour.

VII. What then? you will say; because Christ is at the right hand of the Father, is he greater and more honourable than the Father? Socinus, indeed, with Schlichtingius his disciple, speaks to that effect, absurdly affirming, "that in some degree, and according to a certain sense, Christ now sits in a more honourable place than the Father." Maldonatus, too, on Psalm 110 seems to adopt the same idea, asserting that this expression signifies, "that Christ is not merely equal, but even greater; namely, in the administration of the kingdom, although not absolutely." A more preposterous opinion, however, cannot be formed. "When" the Scripture saith, "all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, who did put all things under him," 1 Cor. 15:27. And since the Divine majesty and supremacy are absolutely infinite, it is impossible for the mind to suppose, or the imagination to conceive, any thing that is in any respect greater, or more exalted than God. It is highly indecorous also for those, who on other occasions are wholly bent on depreciating Christ and robbing him of his true glory, now to attribute to him a glory in some respect superior to the Divine; which is but a vain glory, and what he never claimed to himself. A writer whom I have just quoted, namely, Maximus of Turin, makes the following excellent remark: "Some may perhaps wonder, why Christ is said to be at the right hand. There are indeed no degrees of dignity, where there is a fulness of divinity. Yet Christ sits at the right hand,—not that he may be preferred to the Father, but that he may not be considered inferior."

VII. But since Christ is not more honourable than the Father, what is meant by his being placed at the Father's right hand? For the solution of this difficulty, it is observed by learned men, that when one, for the sake of honour, is placed at the right hand of a king, we must not attend so much to the person of the king as to his throne. The throne itself, too, is to be considered as having two sides,—having a seat not only on the right hand, but also on the left; whilst the seat on the right side, is more honourable than that on the left. Yet the king's own seat in the midst of the throne, is more eminent than either; for the middle place is the most honourable of all.* To this there is a reference in the ambitious request of the sons of Zebedee, who employed their mother to solicit, that it might be given them to sit, the one on the right hand of Christ, and the other on the left, in his kingdom. The same form is alluded to in the following passage of Suetonius concerning Tiberius:—"After this, when a young man, in the triumph celebrated for the victory of Actium, he accompanied the chariot of Augustus, riding upon the horse on the left hand; while Marcellus, the son of Octavia, rode upon the horse that was joined to the chariot on the right."† The right hand horse, as the more honourable, was given to Marcellus; to whom Augustus had destined the empire. Augustus himself, however, it appears, held the middle, being the highest place. The middle, therefore, is the first place; and the right hand, the next.

IX. The learned men add, that it is not necessary that a third person be associated with the king, on the left hand; for it is understood that a vacant seat, which might be occupied, is on that hand. Of this we have an instance in Solomon, who, to confer honour on his mother Bathsheba, caused her to sit on his right side; for had he caused the left side to be occupied, whilst the seat on the right was vacant, he would have seemed to prefer some one for whom that seat was reserved, to his mother. But by the mode adopted, he assigned her the honour next to that which belonged to the king. Christ, therefore, is on the right hand of the Father, because the Father is considered as sitting in the midst of the throne, to whom our Lord, as Mediator, is next in dignity. Hence he is said to sit on the throne of the Father;

not excluding the Father, or superior to Him, but with the Father: as his Mediatorial dignity in the state of exaltation makes the nearest approach to the Divine.

X. In making these observations, the learned men indeed discover ingenuity. But it will be no disadvantage to us, to lay aside such hypotheses, and perhaps unnatural refinements; provided only we remember, that, since it is impossible for any to be greater or more honourable than a king in his own kingdom; a king, when he makes any one sit on his right hand, wishes him to be very highly honoured, yet doth not exalt him above himself. To be at the right hand of the highest, is the dignity next to the highest; or, if the case so require, it is to possess equal honour. Nor is it necessary to imagine a vacant seat on the left. In Psalm 45:9. the Queen is represented as standing on the right hand of the King; and we read nothing of a person occupying the left. Nero, according to Suetonius,* placed Tiridates king of Armenia, "next himself on the right hand." And with this Casaubon judiciously compares the following passage of Eunapius:† "And so great a height of wisdom and power did he attain, that the king himself became enamoured of him, and had him for his assessor in public, setting him in the right hand place." Claudius, according to Suetonius also,‡ "appointed a triumph to Aulus Plautius; and, having gone forth to meet him, when he made his entry into the city, proceeded to the Capitol, and returned,—supported his side," that is, if we adopt the interpretation of Eutropius, marched on his "left," This he did, surely, not for the purpose of degrading, as Becanus would understand it, but of exalting him; yet by no means so as to advance him above himself. Hence it appears, that princes placed on their right hand, those on whom they wished to confer the greatest possible honour, without any reference to a third place in relation to which the prince held the middle station. From this custom, then, we ought to explain the expression, that Christ is on the right hand of the Father. The meaning is, that he is exalted by the Father to the highest dignity, and honoured with a "name which is above every name." "He shall be exalted," says Isaiah, "and extolled, and be very high."s

XI. Let us now inquire into the import and force of the term **SITTING**. This word denotes, 1st, Honour. It belongs to servants, to stand;—to a master, to sit. Of the former see 1 Kings 10:8. Dan. 7:10. Angels are called those that stand by. Of the latter see Dan. 7:9. "I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit." See also 1 Kings 2:19. and Esther 1:14.—"Seven princes of Persia and Media, which saw the king's face, and which sat the first in the kingdom." "I sat chief," says Job. Christ, therefore, whilst he sits by the Father, possesses a dignity superior to all the angels. "For to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit thou on my right hand." v 2dly, Judicial and royal authority. "Ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." "I sit a queen." In like manner it is said of Christ,— "And he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon "his throne;" and again,— "In mercy shall the throne be established, and he shall sit upon it." 3dly, Rest after labours which have been sustained. The blessed and glorious rest which Christ enjoys, is plainly indicated in the Father's address to him; when, having invited Christ to sit, he devolves on himself what remains of the work of conquering and triumphing over his enemies:—"Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." 4thly, An undisturbed abode for a long period in the same place. "Shimei dwelt, sat, at Jerusalem many days."—"He coninuted, sat, there a year and six months." So also the glory of Christ will be constant and perpetual; "for he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet."

XII. It is not inconsistent with this sitting, that Stephen saw Christ "**STANDING** at the right hand of God." The expression must not be understood grossly, as relating to the posture of the body, but as referring to the thing denoted by that posture, namely, Christ's glorious rest and ample authority. The standing attitude in which he appeared to Stephen, was intended to indicate his perfect readiness, amidst the glory with which he is surrounded, to defend and strengthen that noble martyr, and to receive his spirit.g "We must consider," says Gregory the Great,* "what is intended by Mark's expression, he sat on the right hand of God, and by Stephen's saying,

I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. Why does Mark affirm that he sits, while Stephen avers that he saw him standing? But know, brethren, that it belongs to a Judge, to sit; to a Warrior, or Helper, to stand. Since therefore our Redeemer, being exalted to heaven, even now exercises universal judgment, and will come at last as the Judge of all, Mark describes him as "sitting after he was received up; for, in consequence of the glory of his ascension, he will appear as Judge at the end of the world. Stephen, engaged in the labours of the contest, beheld him whom he regarded as his Helper, in a standing posture; because he fought for him, and supported him by his grace from heaven, that he might obtain the victory over the perverseness of his persecutors on earth."

XIII. Having premised these observations respecting the terms and the phrase, let us now examine the subject itself; which, agreeably to what has been said, we explain thus. Christ's sitting at the right hand of God, is that supreme and peculiar glory, both in his person and in his Kingly office, which, after his ascension into heaven, was conferred on him by the Father, and most justly taken possession of by himself, for the glory of God the Father, and for the perfect salvation of the Church.

XIV. This definition sets forth, without doubt, the, HIGHEST GLORY OF CHRIST; to which he rose by several distinct steps. First, whilst he was yet in a state of abasement, some rays of glorious majesty occasionally broke forth. In the next place, in his resurrection, he was exalted from a mortal to an immortal state;—which is the beginning of his glorification. Further, in his ascension, he was raised from a condition till then terrestrial, although immortal, to a celestial state;—which is an advance in glory. And in fine, he was exalted in heaven, to the dignity of sitting at the right hand of God: "He was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God;"—in which the summit and perfection of his glory consists. "He is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens."j

XV. This glory is not merely supreme, but also peculiar to Christ. It far surpasses the dignity of all the Angels, much more of all mankind. "He set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principalities, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in that which is to come." That is, he set him above all that is eminent and glorious; whether amongst men or angels; whether in the former age of the Old Testament, which, at the time of the Apostle's writing these words, was hastening to its termination, and in which the name of a Moses, of a Prophet, and of a High-priest was great,—or in the New Testament age, which the Apostle might denominate the age to come, in reference to the expectation of the ancients, and because, whilst the temple was yet standing, the Church did not fully make use of her liberty. In this age, it is perfectly clear, the name of Christ is transcendentally excellent. But the expression extends also to the future age of glory, and intimates that our Lord is much higher than all the Angels, whatever be the lofty titles with which they are adorned, and that if there be names of Angels still more august than these, which we shall at last know to be associated with them in the world to come, he has dominion also over them.

XVI. This glory, then, is so far peculiar to Christ, that he divides it with no creature. When believers are said to "sit on his throne," or to "stand at his right hand," in these expressions must be understood of their communion with Christ; owing to which they rejoice in his glory, as if it were their own, and do themselves, according to their measure, obtain glory, somewhat similar, although by no means equal, to that glory of which their Saviour, in human nature, is possessed. In this view, they are even said to be "partakers of the divine nature." How exalted soever the dignity to which believers are advanced, it cannot exceed that which it is fit for creatures, blessed with the divine favour, to receive. That which is given to Christ, is suitable to the Only-begotten and co-essential Son of God, and to that high office, to the participation of which no mere creature can be admitted.

XVII. But doth he not possess it in common with another Divine person? I reply, the glory of which we now speak, is economical, and pertains to Christ as Mediator. As therefore, of all the three persons of the Godhead, the Son alone undertook the office of mediation; so the glory, which is the reward and recompense of the faithful discharge of that office, belongs only to Christ. The Scripture nowhere says, that the Holy Spirit sits at the right hand of God. In the mean time, so far as this glory involves the supremacy of the Deity, and that equal dignity with the Father, which is founded in the unity of the Divine Essence, in that view it cannot be separated from the glory of the Father and of the Holy Spirit. They possess, in that respect, the same glory, and the same throne: The distinction being preserved,—a distinction not indeed of degree, much less of kind, but merely of order,—of that order which can subsist between him who gives honour, or who shows that one is to receive from all his subjects equal honour with himself,—and him to whom that honour is done, or who is declared entitled to equal regard.

XVIII. This glory is two-fold, relating partly to his Person; partly to his official character, and particularly his regal office. Both are elegantly included by Zechariah in the following words: "He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne;" namely, the throne of Jehovah.

XIX. The glory of his Person may be considered, partly in reference to the divine nature; partly, to the human. The former is nothing else than a most illustrious assertion, vindication, and display of the Divine majesty of Christ, reflected from the glory of the human nature. During his abode on the earth, the Son of God had so concealed his glory under the vail of his humbled flesh, that only a few faint rays, despised by the generality of spectators, appeared. But now, in his glorified humanity, he shines forth like the sun, having, by his bright and exalted lustre, dispelled the clouds of his obscure and debased condition; and declares, in a striking and glorious manner, that the Son of man is the Son of God, and truly God. This was the matter of his request in the following solemn prayer: "And

now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee, before the world was." That is, "Gloriously declare that I am thine eternal and only-begotten Son:"—which the Father has done chiefly by setting him at his right hand, as the place of the highest dignity and glory.

XX. The glory of the human nature consists in the greatest height of perfection and excellence, as well in soul as in body, and in the most glorious joy arising from the perfection of both. The perfection of the soul, is the enlargement to the highest degree of its knowledge and power; added to its original holiness, which was perfect at first, and continued undefiled. The perfection of the body, comprehends the greatest vigour, with unparalleled beauty of form, and splendour of appearance. Hence the Apostle speaks of Christ's "glorious body." Hence, too, it appears from Scripture, that the eyes of men may see Christ sitting at the right hand of God.^t The knowledge and consciousness of his own perfection produces a glorious and unutterable joy and exultation, which he expresses in the following words: "Thou wilt show me the path of life; "in thy presence is fulness of joy, at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." See the Theses of Gomar, in which he has delineated, with the utmost accuracy, the whole of this glory of the person of Christ.

XXI. The glory that respects his Office, denotes the most glorious administration of the kingdom of Christ. And therefore what is called by the Psalmist sitting at the right hand, is explained by the Psalmist himself as synonymous with ruling, and by Paul, with reigning. It implies an opposition to its contrary, namely, ministering in the state of humiliation. To this the following declaration of Peter refers: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."^z—"Hath made," that is, hath manifested, having vindicated to him, and demonstrated before all creatures, that dignity and authority which become the Anointed of God, and from which his dominion over all may appear. Or,—^z"hath made," even truly and properly; not with regard to the commencement of his lordship, for

he was "born Lord," and in his deepest abasement he continued "the Lord of glory;"^b but with regard to the highest degree and the glorious perfection of his lordship.

XXII. The kingdom of Christ is two-fold. 1. He has a Divine or essential kingdom, which he possesses in common with the Father and the Holy Spirit. 2. He has a Mediatorial, or personal kingdom, as God-man. This distinction, however, must not be understood to imply, that Christ's dominion as Mediator over the Church, so far as it involves a plenitude of power, and a name above every name, to which every knee must bow, differs in substance from the essential kingdom, or denotes a majesty of dominion inferior to the dominion of the Most High God: For this kingdom is of such a nature, that it imports a substantial demonstration of the true divinity of Christ, and of his being of the same essence, and of equal dignity, with the Father. It is of such a nature, in a word, that it can belong to no mere creature: "For Jehovah is our Judge; Jehovah is our Lawgiver; Jehovah is our King."

XXIII. Christ's coming to his Mediatorial kingdom is also to be viewed in different lights, according to the disparity of the two distinct natures in his person. If you attend to the Divine nature, it is the vindication and demonstration of that authority over all, which, in his own right, the Son of God, who has become man, possesseth, possessed from eternity, and will possess to eternity. He emptied himself, in some respects, of the glory of his kingdom, during the period of his humiliation; not by divesting himself of that dominion which is inseparable from godhead, but by veiling it under the form of a servant. So, when he laid aside the appearance of a servant, he is said to have received the kingdom;—not by attaining a new authority that he did not formerly possess, but by manifesting, and signally demonstrating that ancient sovereignty, which he had always enjoyed; that, although clothed with a human nature, he may be universally recognised as Lord. But if you look to the human nature, his coming to his kingdom, signifies the glorious exercise of that very great, yet limited, and subordinate authority, which is given to Christ

as man, exalted far above all creatures; to which, owing to the personal union with the Word, the highest orders of Angels, neither have, nor can have, any thing equal,—"that in all things, he might have the pre-eminence."

XXIV. Further, the Mediatorial kingdom, is either Universal, by which he rules over all creatures with sovereign authority, yet with a certain respect to the Church, as he makes use of all creatures for her benefit:—Or it is Particular, being a sovereign and glorious power to build and preserve the Church, collected from all nations. "He gave him to be the Head "over all things to the Church."g

XXV. Christ will illustriously assert and display this authority, when he shall restore the people of Israel, overturn the throne of Antichrist, and destroy the destroyers of the earth; and when, in consequence, great voices shall be heard in heaven, at the sound of the seventh trumpet, saying, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever;" and the four-and-twenty elders shall say, "We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned."

XXVI. Christ is to sit at the right hand of the Father; that is, to possess his Mediatorial kingdom, "till he hath put all enemies under his feet." "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father." For, "when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." In what sense these expressions are to be understood, we have been at some pains to show, in the tenth Exercitation, Sect. 39. &c.

XXVII. We must know, besides, that this royal dignity of Christ extends itself also to the rest of his offices. He now executes his prophetic office with regal majesty, by the powerful co-operation of his Holy Spirit with the preaching of his Ministers, and, where

circumstances might render it expedient, by accompanying miracles. "They went forth and preached every where; the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following." He exercises also a regal priesthood, whilst he pleads our cause in heaven, not ignobly, but gloriously, as becometh a King; being "a priest for ever, after the order "of Melchizedec," and a "PRIEST UPON HIS "THRONE."

XXVIII. This highest step of Christ's exaltation, is sometimes ascribed to the Father, sometimes to Christ himself, as its cause. In some passages the Father is said to have "set Christ at his own right hand." To this effect are the following expressions: "Being by the right hand of God exalted:"ⁿ "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour:" "Thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands."^p In other places of Scripture, Christ is said to have "sat down at the right hand of God;" and to have taken that glory to himself by his own authority. We read in Zechariah,— "and he shall take the glory."⁴⁴

XXIX. Neither of these forms of expression is without its emphasis. The Father, according to the covenant into which he entered with Christ, gave him glory, conformably to the dictates of justice; which requires, that the glorious exaltation of the Son of God, should be exactly proportioned to his voluntary abasement. Since the latter was carried to the lowest degree, it is proper that the former should rise to the greatest height. That Christ hath acquired this right, we learn from the following words: "Ask of me," that is, according to the tenor of the covenant, "and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance:" "Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great;— because he hath poured out his soul unto death:" "Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness;" (this refers to the obedience of Christ;) "therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of joy, above thy fellows." The anointing here meant, is not the unction of grace on earth, but of glory in heaven. The metaphor is taken from joyful and festive entertainments.^v

XXX. The conferring of this glory is attributed elsewhere to grace, as in these words; "In mercy shall the throne be established;"⁴⁵ and again, "He hath graciously given him a name which is above every name." Two things are thus taught us; first, that the exaltation, no less than the humiliation of Christ, flows from grace towards his people; and, secondly, that from the impulse of strong affection, God gratified the Son by conferring this glory upon him. The Greek expression, according to Hesychius, signifies, to do what is agreeable.* The term grace, however, must by no means be wrested for the purpose of disparaging that right, which on the very best grounds appertains to Christ; for the Apostle has, in this very place, clearly asserted that right. It is twofold. He has a natural right founded in his having the same essence with the Father; for he was "in the form of God," that is, the true God, and also manifested and known as such; "and he thought it not robbery to be equal with God;" that is, he believed in conformity to truth, that without any sacrilege or unjust usurpation, of the divine glory, he might openly profess equality with God, although, for good reasons, he concealed it for a time. He has also an acquired right, founded in his voluntary obedience, according to the covenant. "He became obedient—WHEREFORE God also hath highly exalted him." "Will they deny," says Vigilius,* "that all these honours have been conferred upon the Lord Jesus Christ, on account of the merit of his sufferings and death? Let them read the Apostle, where he says of him, 'He humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross: WHEREFORE God also hath highly exalted him,' &c."

XXXI. Christ himself is said to have sat down, because availing himself of his own right, he rests in peace, after having accomplished his labours; and because he takes, asserts, and vindicates the glory, to which he has an unquestionable title, and which is entirely his own; and, suitably to his celestial condition, magnificently displays it, for the glory of the Father, and the salvation of his people.

XXXII. THE GLORY OF THE FATHER, which cannot be separated from that of the Son, is concerned in this matter.—"That every

tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Here the Veracity and Power of God shine forth, in the effectual and constant performance of the promise of Christ's sitting at his right hand;—Justice, in giving the recompence and glory that are due;—Grace, in the elevation of the human nature of Christ far above all Angels, and in the accomplishment of our salvation by that means. But this is not all. The Father cannot be honoured, nor recognised as a Father, by sinful men, but in the Son. Hence that expression of our Lord,—"that the Father may be glorified in the Son." It is the glory of God, not only to be known as eternal, perfect, powerful, the creator, the chief good, and the chief end of man, worthy of obedience and of worship; but also to be known, loved, and honoured, as the righteousness of a sinner,—as a God who justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies the guilty. Now this glory is given to God, only in the Son, humbled in the first instance, and then exalted.

XXXIII. But OUR SALVATION also depends on this point. 1st, The whole of this glory of our Head, redounds to our honour. Since Christ himself in all that belongs to him is our's, it follows of necessity, that his glory is our's. The Father "gave him to be the Head over all things to the Church, which is his body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all." These words, as has been judiciously observed by a celebrated Interpreter, are to be understood in this sense. He gave him as Head to the Church, that through him the Church might be placed above all things. The Church, I say, "which is his body," namely, given and joined to Christ, that he might quicken it, and live in it by his Spirit: "The fulness of Him that filleth all in all;" that is, the fulness of God so that it may be filled, not merely by God, but also with God. The design is, that God may be all in the Church, and that it may not consist as now, of one part flesh, and another part spirit; one part living and another part dying; but that all things may be changed into incomprehensible glory and joy. Or the expression may denote the fulness, by which Christ himself is filled and completed; as the other members of the body tend to the perfection of the Head, and the glory of the Head cannot be separated from the glory of the members. It is the scope of the Apostle, to show that God exerts the

same energy towards us, which he exerted in placing Christ at his right hand. And indeed, the eighth Psalm leads us to this interpretation. What is there said respecting the Son of man, must be understood not only of Christ, but also of the Church; that is, of Christ as the Head, and of the Church as the body. Of the man respecting whom it might be said, that he was unworthy that God should visit him, it may be affirmed also, after it has pleased God to visit him, that he is crowned with glory and honour. Now this belongs to the body, as well as to the Head. As all things, therefore, must be subjected to the Son of man, the Head; so must all things be subjected likewise to the Son of man, the body. To the same effect is the following expression of Christ in the Apocalypse: "To him that overcometh, will I grant, to sit with me in my throne, &c."e An observation of Ludovicus de Dieu throws no small light on this passage. He remarks, that in Eastern countries the throne of a King is large and broad, like a splendid couch, elevated somewhat above the ground by supports, and adorned with tapestry; so that, beside the seat appropriated to the King, there are seats in the same throne, to be occupied by others, whom the King is desirous to honour. With this may be compared the curious remarks of John Baptist Tavernier, an eye-witness, regarding the seven thrones of the Great Mogul, and, in particular, that exceedingly large one, which was erected by Tamerlane.*

XXXIV. 2dly, Amidst the glory to which he is advanced, he makes continual intercession for us; nor is it doubtful, that he is always heard. Solomon, after having caused his mother to sit at his right hand, assured her that none of her requests should be fruitless. And it is far more impossible that the prayers of Christ, who sits at the right hand of the Father, can prove ineffectual; for he upholdeth all things by the word of his power, and having, in the first place, by himself purged our sins, he then sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.g The Apostle nobly inculcates this consolatory truth, in the eighth chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

XXXV. 3dly, From his throne of glory, he will maintain the right of his people, and powerfully and succesfully defend their cause against all their enemies. "He rules in the midst of his enemies." "And in mercy shall the throne be established; and he shall sit upon it in truth, in the tabernacle of David, judging, and seeking judgment, and hasting righteousness."j Vain are the detestable machinations of ungodly men, and of infernal demons, against the Church. "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision." In spite of the impotent fury of sinners, and of devils, Jesus reigns, and shall reign for ever: he shall "put down all rule, and all authority, and power."l The Church also reigns in and with Christ; and sitting together with him in heavenly places, she looks down from on high with scorn, upon the vain wrath of her adversaries; and,

Superior to their rage in every form,

Treads on the clouds, contemns the bursting storm;

Hears tempests rush, and dreadful thunders roll,

With smiling count'nance, with undaunted soul.*

"The LORD reigneth; he is clothed with majesty; the LORD is clothed with strength, wherewith he hath girded himself: the world also is stablished, that it cannot be moved. Thy throne is established of old; thou art from everlasting. The floods have lifted up, O LORD, the floods have lifted up their voice," &c.

XXXVI. The consideration of this glory, by which our Lord Jesus Christ is now exalted far above all creatures, is also of great efficacy for striking **TERROR** into the hearts of the **WICKED**. Accordingly, it was announced by himself for this purpose, to the Jewish Council. "The LORD reigneth," says the Psalmist; ... Clouds and darkness are round about him.... "Fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies round about. His lightnings enlightened the world, &c." Open your eyes then, at last, ye infatuated men, and shake off that

torpor which has hitherto enchained you. This is that very Jesus, whom you have so basely neglected and contemned; whose word you have despised; whose servants you have derided, and affronted; whose subjects you have oppressed; whose grace you have wantonly rejected; and of whom you have said, "We will not have this man to reign over us." This same Jesus sits on the magnificent throne of the Divine Majesty; and, having taken possession of an eternal kingdom, holds in his hand an iron rod, with which he will consume the whole earth. How strong soever with brass and iron, how splendid soever with gold and silver, he will break it in pieces like a potter's vessel; he will beat it like dust before the wind, and reduce it to powder like the mire of the streets. Acknowledge and adore the majesty of so great a King, and be afraid out of your close places. "Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little."

XXXVII. As for us, in fine, who believe with the heart, that Christ sits at the right hand of the Father, the glory of so illustrious a King ought to generate the following sentiments in each of our breasts. 1. Holy reverence. If some faint rays of this splendour, shining, so to speak, through inconsiderable chinks, struck pious beholders with so much amazement; what profound reverence may we be expected to feel, who are in a manner surrounded with that inaccessible light in all its brightness! If, with a steady eye of faith, we behold him as clothed with that majesty, in which he appeared to John, it will be strange, if we too do not fall down at his feet, full of sacred dread. 2. An earnest concern that he who reigns so gloriously in heaven, may also reign in our hearts. O with what alacrity ought the gates of our cities, of our houses, of our souls, to be opened to him! 3. A contempt of earthly, and a desire of heavenly objects. We see in Christ our Head, "what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints," &c. Is it right that a man who has so great rewards set before him, and who, in that Spirit of glory which is given him, has now the pledge and the first-fruits of those rewards—is it right that such a man should childishly employ himself about the paltry trifles and delusive shadows of this world? Ought we

not rather, with a noble elevation of mind, to despise the unsubstantial and transitory equipage of a present world, as exhibiting nothing worthy our ambition; and to aspire and pant after that celestial prize, that unfading crown of glory, which will encircle our heads, whilst we shall sit together at the right hand of Jesus our King, in a state of everlasting rest and triumph? Ought we not also, by our prayers, to anticipate and accelerate that glorious manifestation of the reign of Christ, so often promised in the sacred oracles, and those happy times, in which,

The golden age, the age of peace, returns;

Each heart, with gen'rous zeal for virtue, burns;

Religion pure, and love for human kind,

Lift high their head, and rule in every mind.*

Or, rather, to adopt the language of a sacred poet—times, in which "The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills by righteousness;" when "He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass, as the showers that water the earth;" when, in fine, "the righteous shall flourish, and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth."

DISSERTATION XXII: ON CHRIST'S COMING AGAIN TO JUDGMENT

I. ETERNAL JUDGMENT is numbered by the Apostle among the first principles and fundamental articles of our holy Religion. And since this is the last act of the reign of Christ, the brightest manifestation of his Divine glory, the anchor of Christian hope, a powerful antidote against carnal security, a check to raging lusts, and an incentive to conscientious piety,—we ought surely to examine it with no less care and diligence than all the other articles of the Christian faith.

II. There are four public and universal judgments of the human race, mentioned in Scripture. The First took place in paradise, when the common parents of mankind were judged; the Second was passed on the antediluvian world; the Third, on the nations assembled in the plains of Shinar, to carry into effect the daring enterprise of the tower of Babel. The Fourth, is the last Judgment, of which we now speak; which will be the most universal, extending to all men without exception, to the dead as well as to the living.

III. That God will at last judge all mankind and every individual, may be collected, 1st, From the book of common Providence. The fortunes of good and bad are here blended together, and similar events befall them. Nay, whilst wickedness reigns and flourishes, virtue not only misses her rewards, but is even trampled under foot by the profane, and suffers the punishments due to vice.g

Those mis'ries dire, which guilt alone should share,

The guiltless often are condemned to bear.

Vice sits triumphant on a lofty seat,

And treads on Virtue, prostrate at her feet.

Worth, that in public view might well have shone,

In darkest shades immers'd, remains unknown.

What strange confusion marks the present state!

The just man suffers the vile sinner's fate.*

It is necessary, therefore, to the vindication of Divine justice, that sooner or later the state of things should be altered, and that a day should arrive which will demonstrate, in a light clearer than liquid fire, the vast difference betwixt the godly and the wicked. "Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another; and the LORD hearkened, and heard it; and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then shall ye return and discern between the righteous and the wicked; between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not." 2dly, From the book of Conscience; which not only discharges its office of judging the guilty here, but also summons all of them to the tribunal of God, there to undergo another and a more severe and impartial judgment. 3dly, From the book of Scripture; which exhibits the entire scene of the judgment, with its whole apparatus, prepared with a magnificence corresponding to the majesty of the Supreme Judge. Scripture discovers many circumstances of which nature is utterly ignorant, and others which it teaches but imperfectly and indistinctly.

IV. In treating this subject, the four following points demand our attention. First, The JUDGE. Secondly, Those that are TO BE JUDGED. Thirdly, The SENTENCE. Fourthly, The circumstances of PLACE and TIME.

V. With regard to the JUDGE, we may consider, 1st, His PERSON. 2dly, His GLORY. 3dly, His ATTENDANTS.

VI. GOD is the JUDGE—none of the Divine persons being excluded; whose knowledge, will, authority, and sentence, is one. "Know thou," says Solomon, "that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment:" and, "God will bring every work into judgment." Paul, too, mentions "the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;"¹ and speaks of "God the Judge of all."—God, for the precise reason that he is God, that is, a Being infinitely perfect, is the King and Lawgiver of rational creatures. He is, therefore, also the Judge, to take cognizance of the actions of men according to the law, and to distribute rewards or punishments conformably to its sanction. He "will render to every man according to his deeds."

VII. But by special economy, judgment is attributed to CHRIST; which appears from numerous and striking testimonies both in the Old and New Testament. In Isaiah, the Messiah is described as "judging, and seeking judgment, and hasting righteousness." To him I would refer also the following words: "The LORD is our Judge, the LORD is our Lawgiver, the LORD is our King; he will save us;" for all these characters pertain to Messiah the Saviour, who was anointed by God to be King of Zion, and who delivered in the audience of the whole congregation of Israel, that law, according to which he will judge Israel, and the whole world. In the book of Ezekiel, it is promised that he shall come "whose right it is," or "whose is the judgment;"^r—who has a right to the incorruptible and inalienable crown promised to the house of David, and being King, has also authority to exercise judgment upon all. The following expression in Micah, too, relates to no other person: "They shall smite the Judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek." It appears from the Gospel history, that Christ was in fact insulted in this manner; and who but he can be called the Judge of Israel that was smitten by the Jews, and for the avenging of whom, the destructive legions of Rome, referred to in this verse, subverted their polity? To him also these words in the Psalms must be applied; "Give the King thy judgments, O God, and

thy righteousness unto the King's Son."t Here the Chaldee Paraphrast, not altogether improperly, makes the following comment; To King Messiah, the Son of King David.* But it is better to refer the expression to a more excellent name, so as peculiarly and eminently to indicate him to be King, who is not the heir of any man in his kingdom, but the Son of the true King, namely, God the Father. The same truth is very frequently inculcated in the New Testament Scriptures.

VIII. The following declaration of Christ is particularly memorable: "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son." With this, however, these other expressions of our Lord seem not to agree; "I judge no man;"w and, "There is one that seeketh and judgeth," that is, the Father. This seeming contradiction is thus reconciled. The Father judgeth no man, 1. Separately from the Son. 2. In a visible form. 3. As, according to the economy of redemption, King of the Church. The Father, nevertheless, has not abdicated the whole power, of the whole exercise, of judgment; for the Son is come "in the name" of the Father; nor can he do any thing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do.z The Father, therefore, judges by the Son; "He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained," and "God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ."b

When Christ says of himself, that he judges no man, the expression must be thus understood. 1. He is not a minister of condemnation, such as Moses was; for "God sent not his Son into the world, to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved."d 2. He doth not judge separately from the Father,—which is intimated by the words immediately succeeding; "And yet if I judge, my judgment is true, for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me." Compare also what he adds in a subsequent verse; "I do nothing of myself, but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things."f

IX. It is necessary, also, to explain the reason why it pleased the Father to transfer the whole power of judging to the Son; which is expressed in these words: "And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, BECAUSE he is the Son of man." The following remarks will serve to illustrate the force of this reason. 1. Because the Son of God, by a voluntary humiliation, became man, that by his obedience and sufferings in the human nature he assumed, he might destroy the enemies of God's kingdom, and obtain salvation for his people; it was consonant to reason and equity, that he should likewise judge those conquered enemies, and award to his people that salvation which he had purchased for them. Hence his conquering and his judging are mentioned together. 2. Because the Son of God in the form of the Son of man, became subject to the law, and presented himself before wicked men to be judged and condemned, as guilty of having presumptuously arrogated to himself the Divine majesty; it is expedient that, by a wonderful reverse, he should be manifested to be the Lord of the law, and the Judge of his unjust judges—the glory of that Deity, his pretensions to which were by no means false, being vindicated and declared. Hence his challenge to his enemies, when he stood at the bar of the Jewish council, arraigned, and clothed with an humble garb.ⁱ "He who stood under a judge," says Augustine, "will sit as Judge. He who was himself falsely pronounced guilty, will condemn the truly guilty."* 3. Because he is the Son of man, it will be possible for him to be beheld in that nature by all, and to administer judgment visibly and audibly. "Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him."^j "We read," says Augustine, "that the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son: as if it were said; none will see the Father in the judgment of the quick and the dead; but all shall see the Son, because he is also the Son of man, so that he may be seen by the wicked."*

X. Christ will exercise judgment according to both natures: the Divine nature displaying infinite majesty, knowledge, and power; the Human, performing the acts of judgment in a visible and audible manner.

XI. Christ will accomplish this work, not by a borrowed and delegated authority, as if he were the mere officer and interpreter of another; but by an authority belonging to himself, supreme, and independent. He doth all things indeed, as we have shown in the eighth Section, in the name of the Father; partly because he is the Son, and doth not work but from the Father, and principally because he has undertaken the discharge of the mediatorial office according to the united counsel of the Trinity—a counsel which has its origin from the Father, as the first person. Yet since the will, as well as the Deity of Christ, is the same with that of the Father, whatever Christ doth in the exercise of his office, is done also by his own authority, namely, that divine and supreme authority which he possesses in common with the Father. And certainly the work of which we now treat, implies or supposes Divine majesty; and can be performed by none that is not God. The inalienable glory of God is, without doubt, asserted in the following words in Isaiah: "I have sworn by myself; the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return; that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear." But in the Epistle to the Romans, the Apostle applies these words to Christ, and to the judgment which Christ is to administer. "The Son of man is to judge," says Augustine, "yet not by human authority, but by that of which he is possessed as the Son of God." And again, "The Son of God is to judge, not however appearing in that form which belongs to him as God, equal to the Father; but in that which belongs to him as the Son of man."*

XII. The GLORY of Christ when he comes to judgment, will be transcendantly great. It was great when he promulgated the law on mount Sinai. But it will be greater, when he appears to judge according to that law. "Whose voice then shook the earth; but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven."n

XIII. This glory consists, First, In the splendour of the Divine Majesty, shining forth with the brightest effulgence even in the human nature. "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, ... then

shall he sit upon the throne of his glory." And that none may imagine that his glory is inferior to that which is Divine and infinite, it is affirmed that Christ "shall come in the glory of his Father."p Not as if this glory were not his own, and were borrowed by him for a time from the Father; but it is a glory, which, owing to his having the same essence, he possesses in common with the Father, not thinking it robbery to be equal with God. Hence it is called his own glory and the Farther's; that is, the Father's glory, so that it is his own also by an equal right. But that Divine glory "is to be revealed," in the body which he has assumed; for it will be seen by every eye. "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." "All the tribes of the earth ... shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory."

XIV. Secondly, In the magnificence of the voice and trumpet, which will accompany his advent. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven WITH A SHOUT,"—by which he will at once command and oblige the living to attend, and prepare himself for the judgment.—WITH THE VOICE OF THE ARCHANGEL, that is, with an energy enforcing his command, by which he will show himself to be the Prince of Angels, and bring Angels as his retinue. The Scripture speaks of no more than one Archangel; who is Christ, "the Messenger, the Angel, the Lord;" "the Head of all principality and power;"w "by whom Angels were created;" of whom it is said, "Let all the Angels of God worship him;"y and to whom, in fine, "Angels, and authorities, and powers, are made subject."47—WITH THE TRUMP OF GOD; by which, as God, he will raise the dead.

XV. This Trump is mentioned also in other passages. What we are to understand by it, is explained in different ways by men of profound erudition. Some view it in a proper and literal sense; in support of which they assign the following reasons. 1. We ought not to depart from the literal meaning without necessity. 2. The noise of a trumpet sounding "exceeding loud" was heard at the promulgation of the law. Why may we not suppose that the same circumstance is to take place,

when judgment is to be passed according to the law? 3. The sound of the trumpet, agreeably to the Divine command, was heard at the destruction of Jericho.^d From this it is inferred as not improbable, that the same thing will happen, when the Jericho of this world shall be overthrown. Others are inclined to consider the expression metaphorical; while, however, they expound the figure variously. Some understand it of thunders, such as those heard when God speaks in the audience of a multitude; others, of an articulate voice to be formed by Angels in the air, resembling that which we have in the parable of the virgins; "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him."^f

To us it appears most simple and most consonant to the style of holy writ, to understand this expression of the command of Christ, which will be most efficacious, pervading all, and displaying its energy in all. In the book of Revelation, a manifestation of the Divine attributes in works of judgment, to which men are obliged to attend with astonishment, is designated by the sound of a trumpet. Now the command of Christ is compared to a trumpet: 1. Because, as the sound of a trumpet, when blown by a powerful breath, is remarkably loud, so this command of our Lord will exert its efficacy far and wide, penetrating not merely through the whole extent of the world, but even to the receptacles of the dead, and the most inaccessible caverns of the grave. Hence, too, it is termed "the sound of a great trumpet." 2. Because the whole assembly of Israel were accustomed to be called together by a trumpet; and all the inhabitants of the earth shall then be summoned. 3. Festival days also were proclaimed by a trumpet; and this will be an exceedingly joyful festival to the whole Church.

XVI. Thirdly, This glory of Christ will also include a numerous train of Angels. Accordingly, Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, "Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints;" and Paul speaks of the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven "with his mighty Angels."^j That this illustrious retinue which shall surround our Lord, consisting of so many attendants of the heavenly court, will signally contribute to his glory, who can doubt? Our Lord

himself, at least, would have us to think so. "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory." "The Son of man shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels."1

XVII. But they will also perform other services to Christ. 1st, In gathering together those that are to be judged. "He shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Hence "the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," and "our gathering together unto him," which is to be effected by the ministry of angels, are joined together. 2dly, In making a separation betwixt them when assembled.—"So shall it be at the end of the world; the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just."p 3dly, In casting down the ungodly to the place of punishment. "The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire." 4thly, In conveying the godly to heaven. "We, who are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we be ever with the Lord."r That the bringing of the godly to the welcome tribunal of Christ in order to be judged, and to heaven after the judgment is over, is to be done by the ministry of angels, we collect from this consideration, that angels convey the souls of the godly to heaven, when separated from their bodies by death. Why may we not conclude, that they perform a similar office towards their entire persons?

XVIII. It deserves inquiry, whether holy men shall be assessors with Christ in this final judgment. Many are of opinion that they shall be so, because Paul has the following expressions: "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? Know ye not that we shall judge Angels?" But we may be allowed to question the justness of the conclusion deduced from these words. I am far from wishing to have any controversy with those who affirm, that the saints shall judge the world, in a certain improper sense of the expression. It may be

admitted, that they shall judge the world, 1. In Christ their Head; to whom they are united by the spirit and by faith; and whose glory is communicated, as far as possible, to the members. 2. By their approbation of Christ's sentence.^v 3. By the example of their virtues; —in which way even the less guilty are to condemn such as are more wicked than themselves. 4. By their own justification; for the acquittal of the pious will be the condemnation of the ungodly.^x The Scriptures, nevertheless, represent the saints, rather as persons whom Christ is to judge, than as his assessors in the judgment, or subordinate judges. It is often promised that they shall reign with Christ, but nowhere that they shall judge with him in the day of judgment.

XIX. It is not necessary to expound the passage just quoted from Paul, as referring to the last day, or the world to come. The saints judged the world, when Christians were appointed magistrates and judges during the reign of Constantine the Great, and in subsequent times. Since, at the period of the Apostle's writing, this honour was reserved for the saints, it was unworthy of them to contend about frivolous matters before unbelievers. The Apostle, too, might speak of this future judging of the saints as well known, because Daniel had prophesied long before, that after the destruction of the four empires which oppressed the Church and the world by their grievous tyranny, "the judgment shall sit, and the dominion which is taken away from the last of the kings, with the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High." At what time this prediction may have been fulfilled, or is yet to be fulfilled, it is of no consequence to our present purpose to determine. It may suffice to observe, that a time is specified, in which the saints, under Christ their king and leader, are, in this world and under heaven, to judge, and to possess an extensive dominion. And most probably, the Apostle, when he wrote the passage in question, referred to this prophecy of Daniel.

But the saints judge Angels also. This they do, 1. When they demonstrate that those whom the nations had hitherto served, are

neither Gods, nor good Angels; but malignant spirits, or mischievous demons. 2. When, by their testimony, and their blood, they overcome them, and restrain their power. 3. When, by their prayers, they expel them from the bodies of those whom they possessed.^a That this miracle continued in the Church long after the age of the Apostles, we have shown elsewhere.*

XX. But is not the dignity of being assessors with Christ in the last judgment to be attributed at least to the Apostles; since our Lord himself says,—“In the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel?” But even here the expression seems not to refer to the general judgment, since only the tribes of Israel are mentioned. Ever since his ascension to heaven, too, our Lord has already sat on the throne of his glory at the right hand of the Father; and the time of his taking possession of the kingdom and pouring out the Spirit, is justly styled “the regeneration,” as it is the beginning of a new age in which “new heavens and a new earth are created,” and “all things are made new.”^d Nor is it necessary to take the word judge in the most strict and proper sense; for by the figure termed *metalepsis*, it has often the same meaning with govern; because governors are generally occupied in the administration of justice: and hence, as Grotius has learnedly observed, a government is called *Medinah** by the Hebrews. The meaning, therefore, is, ye shall possess the honour next to me who am King. There is an allusion to the ancient state of the kingdom of Israel, in which the chiefs of the tribes were nearest in dignity to the royal majesty, and in public assemblies sat in chairs of state hard by the throne; whilst the first places were allotted to the princes of Judah and Joseph; to which Zebedee's wife very probably alluded, when she solicited those places for her sons. Compare the parallel passage in Luke,^e where another circumstance is added, namely, that they are to sit at the royal table—a privilege which was usually reserved for the most distinguished nobles. The dignity of the Apostles, therefore, as surpassing all other Israelites, both in the kingdom of grace and in the kingdom of glory, is here figuratively described. See Moulin,* and Hammond,† who

have many learned observations to this effect. If you are disposed, however, to urge the proper sense of the term judge, I will not deny that the expression denotes the powerful efficacy of the apostolical ministry, for the full conviction of the unbelieving and refractory. For as, according to the doctrine of the Apostles preached in the name of Christ, judgment was executed on the rebellious nation of the Jews, which seems here to be intended; so, according to the same Gospel, all mankind shall be judged at the last day.⁴⁸

XXI. Let us now pass on to the second head, which relates to THOSE THAT ARE TO BE JUDGED. Here both persons and works must be considered. The persons are rational creatures, Angels and Men. Some of the Angels being good and others of them bad, it is inquired with regard to the former, whether or not they are to be judged at the last day. Now, I dare not affirm that they are to be judged. 1. This is nowhere taught in Scripture. 2. They are every where represented as the attendants and servants of the Judge. 3. They are already judged, and confirmed in a state of consummate blessedness; which, with respect to themselves, seems incapable of increase; except in so far as they shall behold the glory of God more illustriously displayed in the works of glory, than it had previously been in the works of nature or of grace.

XXII. As to bad Angels, it is evident from Scripture that they will be judged. Having been cast down from heaven for their rebellion, and shut up in hell as in a prison, they are even now "reserved in everlasting chains of darkness." These chains may be fitly understood to denote, not only the power of an angry God, by which they are kept bound so that they cannot escape his wrath; but also the wretched necessity they are under of acting wickedly, arising from their vehement love of falsehood and unrighteousness, and from their invincible hatred of God and man; to which is added, their continual horror of conscience, trembling at the scourge of God. The chains are called everlasting, because wherever they are, they miserably press them at all times and on every side, and because they will last till the day of final judgment, not to be taken away in that

day, but rendered still more intolerable. They are denominated chains of darkness, because there is no light in them—not the smallest spark of probity or happiness. But whereas they still continue to set no bound or measure to their crimes, they will at last be summoned to the tremendous tribunal of a rigorous Judge, and doomed to suffer a most righteous punishment. And after sentence is pronounced, they shall be constantly confined to hell, from which, by the singular forbearance of God, they are now suffered to escape for a time; and, deprived of that frantic pleasure which they derive from injuring the saints, and from creating disorder amongst the works of God, they shall, without intermission, through eternity, experience and most acutely feel the incredible severity of the Divine wrath. They are not ignorant that this awaits them; and hence that complaint: "What have we to do with thee, Jesus thou Son of God; Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?" Consider also what we read in the Apocalypse: "And the Devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."k

XXIII. Beside angels, men, even all men, are to be judged. This appears, 1. From the note of universality. "We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ" 2. From the use of collective nouns—"all the earth,"m "the world." 3. From the distribution of mankind into particular classes. God shall judge "the righteous and the wicked,"o "the small and great," "the quick and the dead."q

XXIV. The things respecting which they shall be judged are, in general, all the actions of all. DEEDS—WORDS; "idle words,"u that is, words utterly unprofitable, having no tendency to promote either the glory of God or the edification of our neighbour; as well as "hard speeches," that is, arrogant and severe expressions,w whether against God, or against our neighbour.y Finally,—THOUGHTS.

XXV. Some think proper here to inquire, whether the sins of the godly, who shall inherit eternal life, are to be published in the

judgment, as well as the sins of the wicked. But truly it is easier for us to propose than to decide this question. Plausible arguments are not wanting on each side. On the affirmative, the following proofs are adduced. 1st, The expressions of Scripture to which we have just referred are general, extending to all the works of all men. 2dly, The justice of the Judge seems to require the examination of all circumstances relating to the cause—of those that make against them, no less than of such as tend to their advantage. 3dly, The memory of the sins of the godly is perpetuated in the records of the Sacred Volume: why may they not also be mentioned again in the last judgment? 4thly, Let it be considered in particular, that the publication of their sins will tend the more abundantly to celebrate the mercy of God and the merits of Christ, to the virtue of which it is owing that persons who were polluted with the stain of crimes so numerous and so great, are not merely admitted to favour, but also made partakers of the kingdom. 5thly, Nor will this tend to the disgrace of the godly, who cheerfully ascribe their salvation to the Divine mercy, and esteem nothing glorious to themselves, which is separated from the glory of God, in which all their ambition is entirely absorbed. 6thly, As this opinion, in fine, powerfully stimulates to piety, and deters from sin; so the contrary seems, at least indirectly, to afford encouragement to carnal security.

XXVI. The other side of the question, however, is not unsupported by arguments. The following things make for it. 1st, The account of the judicial procedure in Matth. 25 where no mention is made of the evil deeds of the saints, but only of the good works which they have performed. 2dly, The promise of God that he "will remember our sins no more," and will "cast them behind his back,"^b and "cast them into the depths of the sea." Now if he has removed them out of his own sight, how is it possible that he can choose to expose them to the view of angels and men, of friends and enemies? Or, after having once been pleased to bury them under all the waters of the ocean, with what appearance of propriety can he draw them up thence, and proclaim them to all in a most numerous and solemn assembly of the whole universe? 3dly, The office of Christ. He is the "propitiation,"^d

the mercy-seat or covering; he will not then expose their sins. He is their "Advocate;" and doth not unveil the crimes of his clients. He is the "Friend" of his people; and it is the office of love to cover sins.f
4thly, The rule of judgment will not be the Law, which discovers sins; but the Gospel, which covers them. 5thly, It can hardly be conceived, how such a publication of their sins, should not overwhelm the saints with shame; or in what way it can suit that glorious state of the Church, in which she shall be presented to God, holy, and without blemish, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.

XXVII. Thus the reasoning on both sides is ingenious and plausible. Yet, as considerations are not wanting to diminish the force of the arguments of each, it appears safest and most consistent with Christian humility and modesty, to defer the determination of this question, till that day which will make all things manifest.

XXVIII. We proposed, in the third place, to speak of the SENTENCE. In relation to this, three things fall to be considered. First, The examination of the cause. Secondly, The pronouncing of the sentence. Thirdly, Its execution.

XXIX. The examination of the cause will not be difficult or laborious; owing, 1st, To the omniscience of the Judge. 2dly, To the light of conscience, which will suffer nothing to be hid from men. By these means, "God will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts."i

XXX. The pronouncing of the sentence is two-fold, including the sentence of absolution, and that of condemnation. The former is mentioned as that which is to be first in order. 1st, To show that the Judge is more inclined to acquit than to condemn. 2dly, To heighten the joy of the elect, who, after having been themselves absolved, will behold the remaining transactions with the greater security and pleasure. 3dly, To sharpen the anguish of the wicked.—Each sentence will contain a public commemoration of the works, whether good or bad, as well as an assignation of the reward or the punishment.

XXXI. The sentence of absolution will be entirely gracious according to the Gospel strictly so called. "The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day." This is manifest, 1st, From the consideration of the works,—which, though stained by numerous blemishes, will receive so high a commendation from the Judge, that the saints themselves will not hear it without being astonished, that God should put so great a value on services which to themselves appeared so very inconsiderable. 2dly, From the consideration of the reward,—which is not founded on any worthiness either of the works or the persons, but on election, the love of the Father, and adoption, which are all gratuitous. 3dly, From the consideration of the connexion betwixt the good works of believers and the reward. Their good works will be mentioned, 1. As proofs of the faith of believers, their union to Christ, their adoption, their friendship with God, and of that holiness without which no man shall see the Lord. 2. As evidences of that activity and earnestness with which, undervaluing the advantages of this world, and despising the pleasures of the flesh, they have sought the kingdom of God and his righteousness. A pursuit so worthy of God, it is not worthy of God to disappoint 3. As effects of Divine grace, with which, according to a proportion most wisely adjusted, the communication of Divine glory will correspond, when he shall come to crown his own gifts.

XXXII. The sentence of condemnation will be pronounced in conformity to the exact justice of the law. "For as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law."

XXXIII. It is inquired, and not without reason, why no works are mentioned here but those of compassion towards Christ, whilst many thousands of men have never heard any thing of Christ, and never had opportunity of doing offices of kindness to him in his members; to whom, consequently, it seems impossible that either the performance of such works can be ascribed to their honour, or the neglect of them imputed to their shame. To several, both of the ancients and moderns, this difficulty has appeared so great, that they

have thought proper to deny that this discourse of Christ contains a delineation of the general judgment. Our opinion is as follows. The express words of the thirty-second verse evince, that the general judgment is here described: "And before him shall be gathered all nations." The Scripture, besides, mentions only one judgment to be transacted at the last coming of Christ; and that this judgment will be completely universal, we have proved above by incontrovertible evidence. We are no where taught, that one tribunal is to be erected for those to whom the Gospel was preached, and another for those to whom it was not preached. On the same day of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God, a recompence will be rendered to every one according to his works,—to those that have sinned without law, as well as to those that have sinned in the law. Yet every thing relative to the general judgment cannot be learned from this single discourse of Christ. Other testimonies of Scripture must be compared with it, and from all of them taken together, we are to collect the whole of that information which the Spirit of God has been pleased to give us regarding this topic. The things noticed by our Lord in this passage are probably specified merely for the sake of example. For who can suppose that in the general judgment nothing is to be inquired into even amongst those to whom the Gospel was preached, except the performance or neglect of offices of charity towards afflicted saints? Christ's giving so prominent a place to duties and omissions of that sort, appears to take its rise from the forms of instruction which were in use amongst the ancient Hebrews; of which some traces remain in the Chaldee Paraphrase on Ecclesiastes, chap. 9 verse 7th. "It shall come to pass," said Solomon, by the Spirit of prophecy from the presence of the Lord, "that the Sovereign of the universe will say to each of the righteous before an assembled world; Go thy way, eat with joy thy bread which is reserved for thee, for thy bread that thou gavest to the poor and afflicted who were hungry; and drink with a merry heart thy wine which is reserved for thee in paradise, in place of thy wine that thou didst mingle for the poor and afflicted who were thirsty." Our Lord delighted, as learned men have proved by a copious induction of instances,—to make use in his discourses of those formularies which

the lovers of piety had long before received from the lips of their wise men.

XXXIV. The Execution will immediately follow the pronouncing of the sentence. "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal." According to the order of the words of Christ, the execution of the sentence will begin with the ungodly; the pronouncing, with the godly. As the latter will augment the terror of the wicked, so the former will increase the joy of the righteous. "The righteous shall rejoice, when he seeth the vengeance." Eternity is attributed to each; on the one side, an eternity of punishment; on the other, an eternity of life, which is truly life. The punishment will not only include the punishment of loss, but also of sense; for they shall "depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."o The life will consist in the most perfect knowledge, love, and fruition of God, and in the joy arising from these. Both will be eternal; the one, without hope of intermission or abatement; the other, without fear of loss.

XXXV. The Circumstances to be considered, are those of PLACE and TIME. The PLACE is generally designated by the air and the clouds. And why is the judgment to be transacted there? 1st, That place, being exposed to the view all, will form a spacious amphitheatre for the display of the Divine magnificence. "Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him."q 2dly, The clouds are more than once represented as God's royal throne, and the chariot in which he rides. Christ, therefore, when he comes in the clouds, will demonstrate, by that very circumstance, that he is the Lord of glory;s —of which glory there was a prelude at his transfiguration, when "a bright cloud overshadowed him." 3dly, The Son of God came in a cloud when he published the law. What then more fit and proper than that he should come again in a cloud, when he shall appear to pronounce sentence according to that law?

XXXVI. Not satisfied with this general designation of the place, human curiosity inquires farther, in what region of the earth all

mankind are to be assembled for the last judgment, and presumes to point out as the spot chosen for that purpose, the valley of Jehoshaphat, which mount Olivet overhangs, whence our Lord ascended into heaven. The Papists have borrowed this conceit from the Jews, whose account of the matter they have somewhat embellished. The foundation of this opinion is the following prophecy of Joel: "I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there." And again: "Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat; for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about."w To this Christophorus a Castro adds the words of the angels to the disciples: "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." But Cornelius a Lapide appeals also to reason, and alleges it is just that Christ should display the majesty of his glory in the same place where he sustained the greatest ignominy, and judge on the very spot where himself was judged.

XXXVII. But none of these arguments is well-founded. To begin with the reasoning of Cornelius;—although it is our duty to attend to the procedure of Divine wisdom, so far as she unveils to us her counsels, in adjusting all things in such a manner that the last correspond to the first, yet it is altogether contrary to that modesty which becomes us to feign for ourselves certain resemblances and correspondences, according to which the works of God are to be conducted. Unless there be sufficient evidence regarding the will of God, it is an instance of temerity on our part, to have recourse to reasons of that sort. But nothing respecting the will of God as to this matter, can be concluded from the passages alleged. The words of the Angels in the Acts refer unquestionably, not to the place, but to the manner, of the coming of Christ.

XXXVIII. The inferences, deduced from the third Chapter of Joel, are also mere conjectures. 1st, It is uncertain whether the valley of Jehoshaphat be a proper name, or an appellative. The latter seems more consonant both to the subject, and to the enigmatic language of

prophecy. 2dly, If it is allowed to be a proper name, it still remains uncertain, what part of the world is so called. Many think that this designation is given to the valley in which the enemies of Jehoshaphat perished, where Jehoshaphat himself blessed the Lord, and where he had said; "O our God, wilt thou not judge them?" But that valley is called the valley of Berachah," that is, of Blessing. Nowhere in Scripture, or in the writings of Geographers, is it denominated the valley of Jehoshaphat. It was situated too, it is certain, at a considerable distance from Jerusalem: for it was near the place where the overthrow of the enemies happened, that were assembled at Hazazon-tamar, which is Engedi, whither the Israelites went forth through the wilderness of Tekoa, which, according to Jerome, is twelve miles distant from Jerusalem; as likewise, after having obtained the victory, and rendered thanks to God, they began their march to return to Jerusalem. It is quite incredible then, that this valley is adjacent to Olivet. Others therefore imagine that it is a place betwixt Jerusalem and the mount of Olives, which might be called the valley of Jehoshaphat, either from the sepulchre of that King being situated in it; or from some of his buildings, suppose a triumphal arch, erected there to commemorate his victory. But this last suggestion of those writers is uncertain, and supported by no authority; and the former is utterly false; for Jehoshaphat was buried in the city of David, and not in any valley without the precincts of Jerusalem. Cornelius a Lapide, besides, has committed a prodigious blunder,* in maintaining that the valley of Jehoshaphat is the valley of Kidron, and at the same time asserting that it contains Gehenna, or the valley of the sons of Hinnom. The valley of Kidron, it is clear, was on the east of Jerusalem, betwixt the temple and Olivet; whilst the valley of the sons of Hinnom lay on the south. 3dly, Wherever the valley of Jehoshaphat may be situated, and whatever may be the extent of the valley so called, it cannot be sufficient for the many thousands of myriads of mankind, that are to be summoned to judgment. As to the conjectures of Cornelius, that by means of levelling the places adjacent, that valley may be extended far and wide;—and then that the reprobate only are to be gathered together on the earth, and the saints to be assembled not on the earth, but in a

more elevated region and nearer the Judge, to wit, in the air; where they are to sit together as in an aerial scaffold, some higher and others lower according to their merits,—these are the dreams of men disordered by a fever, or the ravings of madmen, not the discoveries of the Gospel.

XXXIX. But what is of the greatest weight, the passage in Joel referred to, doth not relate to the last judgment. To omit other arguments, the truth of this assertion is evident from the consideration, that the judgment spoken of by the Prophet, is succeeded by a description, which begins at the seventeenth verse, of the glorious state of the Church on earth. What then? This prophecy contains an account of some signal display of the Divine vengeance on the enemies of the New Testament Church, not unlike that which happened in the time of Jehoshaphat; for there is an allusion to that history, which may be thus explained. The Moabites, the Ammonites, and the children of mount Seir, undertook an expedition against Judea in the reign of Jehoshaphat, and came to the valley of Blessing, where, at the singing of the Israelites, as if struck with a kind of supernatural rage, they rushed against each other with mutual violence, and wounded and destroyed one another, so as clearly to manifest that Jehovah is the Judge, and the avenger of his people. God, in his adorable providence, is, in like manner, so to govern the affairs of the world, that nations which are in the vicinity of the Church, and somewhat connected with her in several respects, may take counsel against the Church which is separated from their communion, invade her boundaries, and reduce her to such extremities, that, like Jehoshaphat when he knew not what to do, the Church may confess she is unable to cope with so vast a multitude of enemies. In this juncture, however, God will suddenly defeat the counsel and frustrate the efforts of the nations, and set them at variance with each other, that they may mutually attack one another, and thus exhaust their strength. By this means he will demonstrate that he is Judge in the quarrel into which they wantonly entered with the Church, and which he will decide in her favour, that she may celebrate his praises in joyful songs.

XL. With respect to the TIME of the judgment, the following things are to be observed. 1st, God has determined a certain day; namely, the last day of the world, the day in which the resurrection of the dead and the consummation of all things will take place.g 2dly, It is unknown to men, and should not be inquired into. Christ has prohibited inquiries respecting it. Paul did not deem it necessary to write of it.i It is not known even to the Angels in heaven; nor was it known to Christ himself, according to the human nature, in the state of humiliation. It has pleased God to conceal from us the day of judgment, that we might be always employed in devout and conscientious preparation for it.k

XLI. 3dly, The Apostles sometimes speak of the last day as if, even in their own time, it were already near at hand. Nay, in some passages the Apostle Paul seems to class himself amongst them whom that day shall find alive.m Those expressions, however, are not to be understood, according to the comments of Grotius, as if the Apostles imagined the day of the last judgment was so near, that it would come whilst themselves were living. This interpretation is inconsistent with the infallibility of the sacred writings, which the Apostles did not compose at random, from their own conjectures; but with absolute certainty, under inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The Apostles, besides, delivered many predictions which they knew could not be accomplished within the space of their own life. They spoke also of their own death, and of events that were to happen after it. Paul, too, gave explicit notice, that the day of the Lord was not so very near, and that his words were not to be understood in that sense;o although in his expressions he might sometimes personate those who shall be found alive in that day, and "in a figure transfer to himself," the events which are to happen to them. See another instance of the same figure in 1 Pet. 4:3. The Apostles' speaking of the day of the Lord as so near, if it ought not sometimes to be explained as referring to the judgment of God on the rebellious nation of the Jews, seems to be owing to this; that in the Divine estimation, and when time is compared with eternity, "a thousand years are as one day."52

XLII. 4thly, Christ has announced in Scripture certain signs of the times; and given notice of certain remarkable changes in the Church, which are either more remotely or more immediately, to precede his last coming. Such are, 1. The exhibition of Antichrist in his rise, progress, and destruction. 2. The happy restoration of the nation of Israel. 3. A conversion of nations and kindreds perhaps more extensive and signal than any that has hitherto been seen. 4. The holy and glorious condition of the whole Church on earth. But these and other such signs, we must not now stop to illustrate particularly.

XLIII. Let us proceed to the IMPROVEMENT. And, in the first place, the consideration of this article is useful to awaken men from their security, and to generate in their minds a salutary dread; that, trembling at the thought of so splendid and awful a day, they may turn with the whole heart unto God. Hear, and ponder these truths, ye secure sinners who have been hitherto asleep in your crimes, and caring only for the body, have emulated the profane manners of those Israelites, of whom we read in the book of Amos. The day will certainly come at last, in which your laughter shall be turned into mourning.^s Hear, ye profane mockers. Hear, ye carnal men, who refer these concerns to a distant season.^u Hear, ye unrighteous oppressors of the faithful. Hear, ye unprincipled hypocrites.^w Hear, ye slanderers of the brethren. Hear, ye unjust stewards.^y Hear, all ye, whoever you are, that have hitherto been disobedient to the Gospel. Hear, in fine, all ye wicked men, who have not made it your care to regulate your life according to the will of God. The day will at length come, in which you shall be obliged to render an account to God of all that you have done, and spoken, and thought. The Judge will be omniscient, the judgment exact, the condemnation terrible, the execution prompt. Be alarmed, therefore, be greatly afraid, tremble for fear.

XLIV. But as this day of judgment is dreadful to the ungodly, so to the godly it is no less desirable, and most devoutly to be wished. Here oppressed innocence sometimes languishes under the calumny of the wicked, but there it shall be brought forth into light. There they shall

see the wicked that once lived in luxury, now delivered up to a just destruction, and shall rejoice in the judgments of the Lord; but to them it will be a day of consummate felicity. The mouth of their accusers shall be stopped. The Judge is their Friend, and Advocate, and Bridegroom; who was himself unjustly condemned in their stead, that they might never be justly condemned. Their sentence will be at once gracious and glorious in the highest degree. COME, let no fear, no consciousness of your sins, deter you; draw near with boldness:—YE BLESSED OF MY FATHER, ye dear children of God, given to me by the Father, redeemed with my blood, and long ago enriched and adorned with numerous gifts of the Divine beneficence. —INHERIT THE KINGDOM PREPARED FOR YOU FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD: Rise from that low state of servitude to glorious liberty; and as the partners of my kingdom, not merely enjoy its blessings, but sit together with me on the throne, encircled with a crown of never-fading glory. Let the world see what solid joy I have prepared for you; let them see, and pine away because they have lost it. Possess now that full and perfect happiness competent to human nature, which your enemies have so often exerted themselves to prevent, and your own expectation of which was once shaken within you by the incursions of so many doubts. See with what solicitude I have preserved it for you, in spite of your unbelief and of your weakness. Now let all your tears be wiped away, let all your sorrows be forgotten.—ENTER YE INTO THE JOY OF YOUR LORD, a joy never again to be impaired by any mixture of grief. O delightful sentence, the mere anticipation of which by faith, produces "joy unspeakable."

XLV. The prospect of this day ought, in fine, to excite us to an assiduous cultivation of piety, and a careful attention to every part of our conduct. "The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming

of the day of God!" O were it continually present to our minds, that an account of all our actions must one day be rendered to God, with what solicitude should we guard against sin! With what diligence should we perform that which we shall at last wish we had done! With what conscientious care should we daily adjust our accounts, lest that day surprise us unprepared! "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day, nor the hour, wherein the Son of man cometh."

DISSERTATION XXIII: ON THE HOLY GHOST

I. THE HOLY SPIRIT of God is the Author of all human wisdom, and in particular, of that spiritual and saving knowledge, which makes us Christians;^b since we stand indebted to him both for the Scriptures, from which we know all things, and for the opening of the eyes of the mind, by which we know them.^d It would, therefore, be more than impious not rightly to know, and not devoutly to recognise the Spirit himself. He cannot be seen, however, but in his own light; he cannot be known or acknowledged, but by his own kind and gracious agency. It seems proper, then, to begin our present Dissertation with the same prayer with which Cyprian (or whoever is the Author of that Discourse) commences his Discourse on the Holy Spirit.

"Come, Holy Spirit, and descend from heaven upon us, who are looking up for thy benign influence. Sanctify the temple of our body, and consecrate it for a habitation to thyself; gladden, by thy presence, the souls that are longing for thee. Prepare a suitable abode for thyself; adorn thy chamber, and surround the place of thy rest with a sweet variety of virtues. Strew thy pavements with fair colours; let thy residence be beautified with sparkling carbuncles, and splendid jewels; and let the perfumes of all thy graces diffuse

their savour within. Let the juice of balsam richly imbue thy apartment with its fragrance. Avert from it whatever is corrupt, whatever tends to waste or to defile; render this our joy stable and permanent; and let thy new creation be confirmed for ever in unfading beauty."

II. It will be proper here to make some preliminary remarks, and then to prove distinctly several points. The preliminary remarks relate to three questions. First, In how many acceptations, with regard to Divine matters, the word Spirit occurs? Secondly, Why the third person is peculiarly called the SPIRIT? Thirdly, Why the epithet HOLY is particularly attributed to him?

III. The term Spirit, when used with respect to God, is taken either essentially, or personally, or metonymically. It is taken essentially, when it is ascribed to God, in reference to the essence common to all the persons;—personally, when it is attributed to some one person, whether the second, or the third;g—metonymically, when it denotes certain effects or gifts, as in John 7:39. where "the spirit" signifies those gifts, the effusion of which had been predicted by Joel and other Prophets. Thus also the Jews are accustomed to say, that there was no Holy Spirit under the second temple. In the same sense I would understand that expression of the disciples of John; "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost."

IV. When the third Person is peculiarly denominated the SPIRIT, he is not so called in reference to that which is common to him with the Father and the Son, to wit, a most simple essence, intelligent, and exempt from all corporeal imperfection; but, 1st, On account of the mode of his procession. The term Spirit* properly signifies a gale of wind;i and the procession of the Holy Ghost, which to us is ineffable and incomprehensible, is compared to a breathing. He is styled "the breath of God's mouth," and "the breath of the Almighty."k To this corresponds the symbol which Christ employed, when "he breathed on the disciples, and said to them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost." 2dly, On account of his operations. Operations are ascribed to him, similar

to those which ate proper to wind, and air; as to move, to quicken, to refresh; and to cause us also to become spirit.n

V. The epithet HOLY is not particularly given to the third Person, to the exclusion of the other Persons; for it is expressly attributed to the Father, and to the Son.p Nor doth he receive this designation even by way of eminence in any degree, as if the Spirit were more holy than the other persons; for it is equally ascribed to all of them; and the Divine holiness, being infinite, admits not of degrees of comparison. But the reason is, that, according to the economy of the Divine operations, the Sanctification of believers is usually attributed to the Spirit.r Even this must not, however, be understood as if we are not sanctified both by the Father and the Son. Sanctification is in general, the work of God; and in particular, of the Father,t and of the Son. But such is the order of the operations of God, that although they are effected by the common counsel of the same will, and by the same energy of the same power, yet some of them are appropriated to each person respectively. And those operations which result from the merit of the Son, as our Regeneration and Sanctification, are particularly attributed to the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of the Son, and the third Person in the Godhead.

VI. These observations being premised, there are three positions regarding the Holy Ghost, which must be distinctly proved. First, That he is a PERSON. Secondly,—A DIVINE PERSON. Thirdly,—A Divine person, DISTINCT FROM THE FATHER AND THE SON.

VII. That the Holy Spirit is a PERSON, is proved, 1st, From the personal properties ascribed to him, namely, understanding and will. Paul attributes Understanding to the Holy Spirit in the following words: "The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God;" "The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." The interpretation of the heretics, who transfer these expressions to a man endowed with the Spirit of God, is utterly unsound. For, as in other passages, the Spirit of God is distinguished from men endowed with him,w so likewise here; "God hath revealed them UNTO US BY

HIS SPIRIT." The Spirit of God, besides, is represented as having an access to the secrets of God, similar to that which the spirit of a man has to the thoughts of a man. But where is the exactness of the analogy, if we say, that what holds of a man with respect to the things of God, holds in the same manner of the spirit of a man with regard to the things of a man? Add to this, that, as we shall immediately prove in the proper place, so intimate and profound a knowledge of the deep things of God is too exalted a privilege to fall to the share of any mortal. In the same epistle to the Corinthians, notice is taken also of the Will of the Spirit: "All these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally, as he will." Let it be noted, that in the chapter containing these words, the Spirit is distinguished as a Giver from his gifts,^z in the same way, doubtless, as the Lord is distinguished from his administrations, and God who worketh all in all, from his operations.^b For we have here a clear intimation of a Trinity of persons, to wit, the Father, who is usually denominated God absolutely; the Son, who is called Lord; and the Holy Spirit.

VIII. 2dly, From his personal appearances. Jesus "saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him." "The Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape, like a dove, upon him."^e Now, who can suppose that what comes from heaven, and appears in a bodily shape, is not a person? We often read in holy writ, that spiritual persons, namely, Angels, descended in this manner, and were seen in a mortal form. But nowhere do we find that any spiritual quality descended, or assumed a visible appearance. It has been objected, that things which are not persons are sometimes figuratively said to come down from heaven, and that such things may be adumbrated by some external appearance; as was done at that happy Pentecost, when the gift of speaking in various languages, and with powerful utterance, with which the Apostles were endowed, was shadowed forth by the appearance of cloven and fiery tongues.^g But this by no means weakens the force of our reasoning. For truly we do not deny that the gifts of God, which are not always persons, descend from heaven: we only urge, that nothing which is not a

person, ever came from above clothed with a bodily shape. The divided tongues which sat on the Apostles like fire, did not directly and immediately denote the gift of tongues, but the person of the Holy Spirit, the Author of that gift, "who gave them utterance," as it is explained in the fourth verse.

IX. 3dly, From personal operations attributed to him; of which we have numerous instances in Scripture. There is no weight in the exception of adversaries, that it is by the mere fiction of a person that such acts are ascribed to the Holy Spirit; is personal acts are elsewhere attributed to charity, to sin, or to the letter of the law. Not to mention, that those indications of that figure of speech which are obvious elsewhere, are not to be found in the passages relating to the Spirit;—God is sometimes at particular pains, so to speak, to guard us against imagining that there is any such fiction of a person, where the Holy Spirit is spoken of. Thus in 1 Cor. 12 Paul, after having in the ninth verse designated certain gifts by the term Spirits, yet straightway, verse eleventh, refers all to one Spirit, the distributor of those gifts, as to a real person. Nor, as I apprehend, will our antagonists ever be able to show, that operations of the kind mentioned in the places to which we have referred, as catching away a man;—saying, Separate me men for the work whereunto I have called them; and interceding for one,—are not characteristical of persons.

X. 4thly, From his being joined in the same place and order with persons, without any mark of difference. Thus in Mat. 28:19. the Apostles are enjoined to baptize in the name of the Holy Ghost, no less than of the Father and the Son. Now what is it to perform a deed in the name of any one, but to do it by his authority and command? The authority, too, of these three is here propounded as equal, or rather as one. As therefore the Father and the Son are, by this expression, declared to be the authors of baptism, the Holy Spirit is in the same manner designated the author of that institution. But if he were not a person, how could the ordinance of baptism be ascribed to him? Objectors indeed allege, that things which are not persons, are

connected with persons in the same sentence, as in the passage where Paul commends the Church "to God, and to the word of his grace," that is, the Gospel. They add, that even the names of what are not persons, are joined to the name of a person;—"I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God."m But we reply, 1. Nowhere is any thing said to be done in the name of that which is not a person. 2. Although "the word of his grace" elsewhere signifies the Gospel, it doth not necessarily follow, that the expression has the same meaning in Acts 20:32. The signification of words often varies according to the variety of circumstances, and the diversified exigencies of the subject. We are not displeas'd with the observation of Francis Gomar, that the Word of the grace of God here refers to Christ, who, agreeably to the forms of instruction used by the ancient Hebrews, is in the writings of John denominated the Word; and who may be called the Word of grace from the effects which he produces, just as he is styled "the Word of life." In the same manner, he adds, Peter speaks of "the God of all grace,"o and Paul of "the Spirit of grace." Christ may be called, in fine, says that writer, "the Word of the grace of God," because, as Mediator, he has obtained and announced the favour of God towards us. The propriety and concinnity of the Apostolical diction lead us thus to understand these expressions of Christ, rather than of the Gospel. It appears far more proper for the Church to be commended to Christ, than to the Gospel; which is usually commended to the Church. If you wish, however, by all means to explain it of the Gospel, the meaning of this improper phrase will be, that believers are commended to God, in order that he may instruct and console them by the doctrine of grace. And thus the Gospel will be associated with God, as the instrumental with the principal cause;—to which there is nothing similar in the passage from which we are now reasoning.55 3. We do not urge, that every thing is a person, to which a name is attributed, or whose name is joined with the name of a person; but merely maintain the personality of that in whose name something is said to be done, and done in the same manner in which it is performed in the name of those who are undoubtedly persons.

XI. You may urge perhaps, 'If that in whose name we are baptized, appear to be a person, that with which we are baptized cannot be a person; just as the water with which we are baptized cannot be affirmed to be a person. Since, it is said, therefore, that believers are "baptized with the Holy Ghost," is it not sufficiently clear that the Holy Spirit is not a person?' I reply, if there is any force in this argument, it will follow by parity of reason, that as the garment with which we are clothed, or the bread on which we subsist, is not a person, so neither is Christ a person, because we are commanded to put him on,^s and are nourished by him as the bread of life. What else is it to be baptized with the Holy Spirit, if we intend to express ourselves in proper terms, than to be enriched with the grace and the gifts of the Holy Spirit? And what should hinder us from esteeming him a person, whose grace and gifts are conferred on us? We do not even hold, besides, that whenever the term Holy Spirit occurs in the sacred volume, it always designates a person; since we readily confess, that it is sometimes used metonymically, to denote the gifts of the Spirit. If then we admit that such is the case here, when we are said to be baptized with the Holy Spirit, on what pretext will you thence conclude, that the same thing ought to be understood, when we are said to be baptized in his name, whilst the expressions are so very different?

XII. Adversaries object, that in the Sacred Scriptures the Holy Ghost is frequently called the power of God; as instances of which they produce Luke 1:35. 24:49. compared with Acts 1:4, 5, 8. Chap. 10:38. and thence infer that he is not a person. But this reasoning is utterly inconclusive. Simon Magus was termed by his followers, "the great power of God;" and Christ is denominated "the power of God."^v Nay, the Hebrews consider a word* which signifies power, as one of the titles of God. Hence the following expression, "What did Moses answer in the presence of "the Power,"[†] that is, God? On this point Elias[‡] and Buxtorf[§] may be consulted. Some are of opinion, that the following phrase in the Gospel of Mark, is conformable to the same mode of speaking; "Ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power."^w It could furnish no solid objection, therefore, to

the personality of the Holy Spirit, that he were sometimes called the power of God. But adversaries cannot even prove that he is so called. For if we mistake not, we shall see that in all the places alleged, the Holy Ghost and power are distinguished from each other. In Luke 1:35, we find ascribed to the Holy Ghost as a Divine person, "the power of the Highest," as a property by which, and according to which he operates; for it is "the power of the Spirit." So also in Luke 24:49, "power from on high" doth not immediately denote the Holy Spirit, but that greatness of soul with which the Apostles were endowed; of which it is intimated that the Holy Spirit is the author, when it is said to come from on high. To this interpretation we are naturally led by what we read elsewhere: "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you;" that is, the power you shall obtain, is from the Holy Ghost descending on you. In like manner, in Acts 10:38, there is an intimation, first, of the cause, "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost;" then, of the effect, "and with power."

XIII. Nor is there greater weight in the cavil against the personality of the Holy Spirit, founded on the passages where he is said to be given to men, or to be received by them; for, 1st, Even God gives himself to us, as "an exceeding great reward;"^a and he is the "portion" or "inheritance" of believers. 2dly, Christ is also said to be given by God, and received by believers;^d and even so as to "dwell in their hearts," in exact conformity with what we read of the Holy Spirit. 3dly, In those very places where the Holy Spirit is spoken of as a gift, he is sometimes described as a person, and distinguished from his effects. Of this we have an instance in Rom. 5:5.—"The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, who is given unto us." The meaning of which expression is as follows. The Holy Ghost is given unto us, that he may be no less our's than the Father or the Son is our's, and that thus we may be rendered happy by the communion of the whole undivided Trinity. By the Holy Ghost, that is, by his influence and operation, we have "in our hearts," or we feel and actually experience, "the love of God," particularly his amazing love towards us, "shed abroad," or most abundantly imparted. For it

is the chief part of the consolation from which the Holy Spirit receives the title of the Comforter, that he causes us to taste and feel the love of God. In like manner in Gal. 4:6, it is said of the person of the Holy Spirit, "God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son;" as, in verse fourth it is said of the person of the Son, "God sent forth his Son." Besides, the Spirit whom God sends to dwell and to operate in our hearts, crieth; that is, so causeth us to cry, that our crying is his voice. He is here so evidently described as a person, that Crellius is obliged to betake himself to a personification; a parallel instance of which he alleges we have in Chap. 3:8. "The Scripture foreseeing, &c." But that passage bears no resemblance to this. The Scripture is said to foresee, because the Spirit, who dictates the Scripture, foresees. The figure there is a metonymy, not a personification.

XIV. It exceeds all absurdity, that they would have the Holy Spirit to mean the Doctrine of the Gospel, to which, by a prosopopœia, personal operations are attributed. They thus explain the following words of Paul: "Who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament; not of the letter, but of the Spirit; for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life." To the same sense they pervert also that other expression; "No man can say, that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost."g As if the meaning of the Apostle were, that no man can rightly acknowledge Jesus as Lord, unless that truth be revealed to him by the Gospel; as likewise they who receive the Gospel, are said to be "in the Spirit." But if we are disposed to speak the truth, what is it wantonly to wrest the Scriptures, if this is not an instance of such conduct? Let us examine each of the passages alleged. Were we to grant that in the former, the Spirit, by a metonymy, denotes the doctrine of the Gospel; what is improperly ascribed there to the Gospel as an exemplary cause, is properly to be attributed to the person of the Holy Spirit, as the principal efficient cause. Thus also that which is elsewhere ascribed to the letter of the law, is, by the same analogy, to be attributed to the person of the Lawgiver. But it does not seem necessary for us to make such a concession. The Apostle does not call the law "the letter;" or the Gospel "the Spirit:" but teaches that the letter is in the law, and the Spirit in the Gospel,

so that they who minister to the law, minister to the letter; they who minister to the Gospel, to the Spirit. He calls that the letter, which is unable, at first, and by itself, to convert a man; or to give a sinner the hope of life, much less to quicken him. By the Spirit, he understands both the person of the Spirit, and his quickening grace; which is clearly disclosed, and rendered efficacious, by means of the Gospel. In a preceding verse, the Apostle undoubtedly distinguishes the Spirit from the doctrine, when he calls the Corinthians "the epistle of Christ, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God."

As to the interpretation which they obtrude upon the third verse of 1 Cor. 12, it is a daring perversion. To speak by the Spirit, is to speak as the Spirit instructs and moves. In the whole of this Chapter, too, the Spirit denotes, not the doctrine of the Gospel, but Him by whom the word of wisdom, and the word of knowledge is given, and who is the Author of faith. And we are said to "live in the Spirit," when, by the efficacious operation of the person of the Holy Spirit, we live a new and spiritual life. The form of expression is similar to that which is used with regard to the common blessing of nature, when we are said to live in God, because he giveth unto all life, and breath, and all things.

XV. Having thus proved the PERSONALITY of the Holy Spirit, let us now proceed to show that he is a DIVINE Person, the true Jehovah, and the Most High God. And why should we not employ the same series of arguments by which divine truth has hitherto been nobly and successfully defended? It is the will of God himself, that we should acknowledge as the true God, one to whom Divine Names, Attributes, Works, and Divine Honour and Worship, are ascribed in the sacred volume. The Almighty is not so prodigal of his glory, as to share all the characters of divinity now mentioned with one that is not God. Nor indeed is it possible for him so to share them: For the attributes of God are not, in reality, distinct from his essence; his works are a kind of emanations, and living proofs of those attributes; and what is honour and worship but a devout recognition of that divine excellence which is displayed in such stupendous works? The

name of God, in fine, and in particular the name Jehovah, comprises all these in its extensive import. Now there is none of these characteristics of Divinity, that doth not belong to the Holy Ghost.

XVI. To begin with NAMES: It is nowhere, we confess, said expressly and in so many words, "The Holy Spirit is the Most High God." From a diligent comparing of the Scriptures, however, we conclude incontestably, that he who is in one passage called the Holy Ghost, is in the same, or in a parallel place, denominated Jehovah and God; and that those things which are indisputably affirmed of Jehovah, and cannot be affirmed of any that is not Jehovah, are asserted concerning the Spirit. Nor is it necessary that every doctrine, or even all the most important mysteries of theology, be declared in express terms; since we ought to obtain our knowledge by "comparing spiritual things with spiritual."

XVII. Let us, in the first place, examine the mysteries of the Ninety-fifth Psalm. None, I apprehend, will deny that he is the Supreme God, who says, verses 9th, 10th, and 11th, that he was tempted and proved in the wilderness by the fathers of the Jews, after they had seen his work;—who was grieved with that generation, and who swore that they should not enter into his rest. Yet he is the same person who says, verses 7th and 8th, "To-day if ye will hear his voice," that is, the voice of the Son of God, who is our God, a great King above all gods, and the Chief Shepherd of souls,—"harden not your hearts." For what we read from the last member of the seventh verse to the end of the Psalm, is related as the continued discourse of the same person. I now add, that the Holy Spirit is the author of the whole of this discourse; as is evident from the Apostle's expression in the Epistle to the Hebrews: "Wherefore, as the HOLY GHOST saith, To-day, if ye will hear his voice," &c. And indeed it is the office of the Spirit to testify of Christ as King, and to glorify him. Hence it is inferred by inevitable consequence, that the Holy Ghost is that JEHOVAH whom the Israelites tempted in the desert, and who showed himself to be the God of Israel, by his magnificent works, and by the just punishments which he inflicted upon the rebellious.

As to the objection of adversaries, that these words are ascribed to the Holy Spirit, not as if they were pronounced by his person, but by the person of David under the impulse of the Spirit; it is refuted by the whole scope and connexion of the discourse. The things spoken are not applicable to David, but to God only. Nor could David have uttered these sacred expressions by an impulse of the Spirit, unless the Holy Spirit were Jehovah. The authority of what is spoken by the prophets is entirely founded on him by whose impulse they speak; and since that authority is Divine, it can be founded upon none but God. Consider by all means the reasoning of the Apostle Peter in his second Epistle, where he founds the whole strength and authority of prophecy, by which we are laid under obligations to faith and obedience, on this consideration, that holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

XVIII. Let us go on to another instance. Jehovah, and he alone, conducted the journey of Israel through the wilderness. "JEHOVAH alone did lead him, and there was no strange God with him." We here speak, it is manifest, of supreme and sovereign leading; and let none object that Moses, as the servant of God, under Him, conducted the people out of Egypt. The Israelites, too, provoked that Jehovah by their rebellion. Now Isaiah ascribes all this to the Holy Spirit: "As a beast goeth down into the valley, the Spirit of the Lord caused him to rest;" and again, "They rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit." What can we infer from this, but that the Holy Spirit is that very Jehovah to whom the Israelites rendered so ungrateful a return for their deliverance, and to whom, nevertheless, the whole glory of it was due.

XIX. No less conclusive is the observation which we shall now offer. None will deny that he is the true and supreme God, whom Isaiah beheld sitting on a lofty throne, whilst the seraphim were standing above it;—whom he calls "the King, Jehovah of hosts;"—and from whose mouth he heard those words, "Go and tell this people, hear ye indeed, but understand not, ... make the heart of this people fat," &c. If therefore it shall be shown, that the Holy Spirit is the person who

spoke these words to Isaiah, nothing further seems to be wanting to establish his Divinity. Now of this we are assured by Paul; "Well SPAKE THE HOLY GHOST by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, saying, Go unto this people and say, Hearing ye shall hear," &c. Could any thing be spoken more expressly? Yes, say our adversaries; for Paul does not affirm that the Holy Ghost spoke these words to Isaiah, but by Isaiah to the fathers. But he could not have spoken these words by Isaiah, unless he had first spoken them to Isaiah. Nay, the expressions which the Apostle attributes to the Holy Spirit, "Go unto this people and say," &c. were not addressed directly or immediately to the fathers, but to Isaiah. We have another instance of the same sophistry, when they allege, that by this manner of reasoning it is possible to show that the Holy Spirit is Christ, since, according to our interpretation, the same words are elsewhere attributed to him.^z Truly reason here abandons them entirely. By comparing these passages it may and ought to be shown, that the Holy Spirit is one and the same God with Christ: it cannot be proved, that he is the same parson. What is here said, is of such a nature, that it cannot be affirmed of one that is not God; not such as can apply only to one person. Nay, that these are the words of a plurality of persons, who, nevertheless, are one God, is intimated by the very expression which the Lord uses in Isaiah; "Whom shall I SEND? and who will go for US?"

XX. It is usual to adduce for the same purpose the last words of David: "The Spirit of Jehovah spake by me, and his word was in my tongue. The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, &c." Here, according to the opinion of many, the same person who is first called the Spirit of Jehovah, is styled the God of Israel, and the Rock of Israel. We choose rather to expound this passage, however, in a manner somewhat different; which we may certainly do without offence. We do not think that the God and the Rock of Israel, mentioned in the third verse, are intended to denote the same person who is previously called the Spirit of Jehovah, in the second verse. It seems more proper to understand by the God of Israel, the Father;— by the Rock of Israel, Christ who upholds Israel, and who has

undertaken that the Church shall be built on himself as the foundation;—by the Spirit of Jehovah, the third person. Thus we find the whole Trinity here, and something also relative to the Holy Spirit, which irrefragably proves his Deity. When David says, The Spirit of Jehovah spake to me, or in me, or by me, in whichever way you choose to render it, he shows that he has for the foundation of his confidence, not the words of Samuel, or of Nathan, or of Gad, who were employed as instruments, but the words of the Holy Spirit, who had not only spoken to him by them, but had also, with greater and truly divine power, entered into the recesses of his own mind, and caused him to speak to others from the full assurance of faith. Hence arises an argument as follows. He who principally spoke to David, in David, and by David, is the true and the Most High God. But the Holy Spirit so spoke. Therefore, the Holy Spirit is the true and the Most High God. Crellius himself has furnished us with the major proposition. The assumption is proved from David's confessing that himself and his tongue were the instruments of the Spirit; and he whose instruments the prophets are, is himself the chief cause of divine revelations.

XXI. Peter supplies us with a very powerful argument for the Divinity of the Holy Spirit in Acts 5:3, 4; where he uses an expression relating to the Holy Spirit, which served to show that the lie told by Ananias was a most abominable and heinous sin. Now, nothing tends more to aggravate that sin, than to observe, that it was not committed against mere men, such as the Apostles were, but against the Holy Ghost. Nothing, besides, is more adapted to prove that the lie told to the Holy Ghost is a most heinous sin, than this other observation, that he who lies to the Holy Ghost, lies to God himself. This reasoning of the Apostle, however, would not hold, if the Holy Spirit were not God. Adversaries urge two exceptions here. First, they allege "that it is said to Ananias, that he lied to God; it is not said that he lied to the Holy Ghost, but that he pretended to the Holy Ghost."* The words in the Greek,† they add, may signify either to pretend to the Holy Spirit, as Erasmus and others render them, or to deceive the Holy Spirit, according to Piscator and others. And the change of the case in the

original language, say they, is not accidental but intended, lest any should imagine that he who had just been styled the Holy Ghost, is called God. Their other objection is, that although our interpretation were admitted, it could no more follow from it, that the Holy Spirit is God, than it can be inferred that the Apostles are God, from the parallel reasoning of Paul in the first Epistle to the Thessalonians: "He, therefore, that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God." To these objections we reply, 1st, The Greeks construe the word $\psiευσασθαι$ with a Dative or an Accusative indiscriminately.* 2dly, The exposition of Erasmus is quite foreign. Ananias, by keeping back part of the price, which is the matter referred to, could not pretend that he had the Holy Ghost. Peter himself, too, gives a different account of the matter, when he says, "How is it that ye have agreed together, to tempt the Spirit of the Lord?"—To deceive the Holy Ghost, as Piscator chooses to interpret the expression, that is, to attempt to deceive, is either nothing else than to lie to him, or even something more. The scope of the Apostle's argument, then, is as follows: Whoever attempts to deceive the Holy Ghost by lies, as thou Ananias art doing, is guilty of a most atrocious and truly diabolical sin; for he lies not to men, but to God. 3dly, It doth not indeed follow from the words of Paul to the Thessalonians, cited above, that the Apostles are God: but it is shown, that the contempt of the discourses which Apostles preached by inspiration of the Spirit of God, recoils upon God himself. So here, the lie of Ananias, by which he endeavoured to impose on the Apostles, ultimately redounded against the Holy Spirit, who, by consequence, is God. If Peter had intended to say that Ananias lied to the Apostles, through the Apostles to the Holy Ghost, and through the Holy Ghost to God—distinguishing the Spirit as a kind of medium or middle person, between God and the Apostles,—he would have said, Thou hast not lied unto men, nor unto the Holy Ghost, but unto God.

XXII. Let us also notice briefly a few of the Divine ATTRIBUTES, which the Scripture ascribes to the Holy Spirit of God. Here the first that falls to be mentioned is ETERNITY, of which Paul speaks in the following words; "Christ through the ETERNAL SPIRIT offered up

himself without spot unto God." To me it appears far more proper to explain the term Spirit here of the third person of the Godhead, than of the Divine nature of the Son.* In this passage is distinctly designated, first, the Priest, who is Christ, principally according to the divine nature, or, to use the expression of our Apostle, "according to the power "of an endless life;"—then the victim, which also is Christ, principally according to the human nature in which he suffered and died;—and in fine, the mystical fire, which is the Holy Spirit, by whom the victim is sanctified and rendered acceptable to God. On the sacred fire which descended from heaven, see Leviticus 9:23, 24. It was the constant care of the priests, to preserve that fire burning on the altar, and to prevent it from being extinguished; and in this sense it might be called eternal, just as the Romans styled the fires of their Vesta eternal. Now, that sacred fire was a symbol of the Holy Spirit, who is called "fire;" who excites the flames of divine love; and, what chiefly merits attention here, who also renders all sacrifices acceptable to God. "That the offering up of the Gentiles," says the Apostle, "might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost." The eternity, too, which in the sacred fire was merely symbolical, is true and substantial in its antitype the Holy Spirit; not only because it is impious to quench him as to the operations of his grace, but principally because he is spoken of by Moses, as existing in the beginning.

XXIII. After eternity, the attribute which comes next to be mentioned is IMMENSITY. "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit?" says the Psalmist, "or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" I dare not explode the observation of the Anonymous Greek writer on this Psalm, "that by his Spirit is intended the "Holy Spirit, and by his presence, or face, the only-begotten Son."* Let us see what can be said in support of this remark. That the presence of God sometimes denotes the Son, is abundantly evident. God had promised that he would give to the Israelites a Guide to keep them in the way, an "Angel in whom his name was." Being afterwards provoked, however, by the base idolatry of the Israelites in making the golden calf, he refuses to go himself with them, and says that he will send an

Angel, who should expel their enemies, the inhabitants of the promised land. But, in consequence of the earnest entreaties of Moses, he promises a second time that his presence shall go before them. And what else is the presence of God now promised, than the same Angel in whom is the name of God? Consider also the following passage in Malachi: "Behold, I will send my messenger," that is, John the Baptist, "and he shall prepare the way for my presence." But what is the presence or face of God, which is to succeed the forerunner? "The Lord whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant whom ye delight in." For the sake of brevity, I omit other examples. With regard to the reason of this designation; it is evident that our Lord is so called, because that glory and beauty of God which are amiable in the eyes of a sinner, are clearly beheld only in Christ, agreeably to his own words, "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father." Now this observation is not impertinent: for if the presence of God is here to be taken personally, his Spirit ought surely to be understood in a similar manner. And so we are instructed concerning the immensity of the whole adorable Trinity, with regard to essence,—knowledge,—power, and effectual operation.

XXIV. To these attributes add OMNISCIENCE. "The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man, which is in him. Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." Observe, 1st, That the Spirit of God knows "all things" absolutely. 2dly, That he knows even "the deep things of God," the most hidden mysteries of his essence and perfections, and the secrets of the divine counsels. 3dly, That he knows them as exactly as if he had searched them with great care. 4thly, That he knows the most secret counsels of God as his own counsels, just as the mind of a man knows the things of a man. 5thly, That all these are evidences of a knowledge entirely Divine. It is the prerogative of God only to know the deep things of the human heart; how much more to know the deep things of God?

In fine, the Apostle, in a passage which we have explained above, attributes to the Spirit, the most SOVEREIGN WILL, and OMNIPOTENT POWER.

XXV. From Divine attributes, let us proceed to Divine WORKS. Of these, the first that demands our notice, is CREATION. Creation doth truly claim God as its Author, since it is the work of God alone, and even his immediate work. It is ascribed, however, to the Holy Spirit, and that in reference both to the world in general, and to man in particular. With respect to the world in general, we find it written: "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." The metaphor is taken from birds, which brood upon their nests, and hatch their young by the genial heat they communicate. The Spirit of God thus brooded on the shapeless mass, and by his influence rendered it productive of so vast a multitude of beautiful creatures. "He warmed and quickened the face of the waters," says Basil,* "in a manner resembling that of a bird brooding on its nest." The Talmudists express the same thing in the following terms:—"Like a dove which sits upon her young, nor injures, whilst she touches them."† Solomon Jarchi, too, has similar expressions on this passage. And the symbolical Theology of the Egyptians, which represents the world as proceeding from God, like an egg, perhaps took its rise from this metaphor. We read also in Job; "By his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens."

The creation of man, who has been termed the little world in contradistinction to the great world around him, is likewise ascribed to the Holy Spirit. "The Spirit of God hath made me," says Elihu, "and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life."

XXVI. REGENERATION is also the work of God only. It is a new creation accomplished by the command of his will; and as to real efficiency, it is likewise an immediate operation of God; for the means employed have only a moral influence. But this also is the work of the Divine Spirit. "Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Here "water" either

denotes the same thing with the Spirit of God,^h or baptism, which the Apostle calls "the washing, the laver, of regeneration;" and which, however, as its operation is only moral, derives all its virtue from the Spirit of God. Or perhaps "water" refers to natural generation, as in the following passage: "Hear ye this, O house of Jacob, which ... are come forth out of the waters of Judah."^j Beside that natural generation by which a man is born of water, another is necessary, namely, that supernatural one, by which a spiritual man is born of the Spirit. The scope of all these interpretations is the same. They all tend to show that the Spirit of God is the author of our regeneration. We read also of "the renewing of the Holy Ghost;" and it is said, "The Spirit giveth life."^l

XXVII. SANCTIFICATION, in like manner, is the work of God only. But this work also is ascribed to the Spirit: "And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them."ⁿ "Ye are sanctified," says the Apostle, "by the Spirit of our God:" and again, "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit."^p And that none may imagine that the Spirit, like the word, is merely an instrumental cause of sanctification, let it be observed, that the Spirit sanctifies us in one respect, and the word in another; for the moral efficacy of the word depends entirely on the supernatural and efficacious operation of the Spirit. Hence the Spirit with his operations, is joined with the word, and yet distinguished from the word.

XXVIII. In fine, to perform MIRACLES by his own power, is the work of God only: "Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things." But the Holy Spirit doeth such things by his own power; for the Apostle speaks of "mighty signs, and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God."^s Nay, whatever works of this sort Christ performed, he performed by the power of the Spirit, which is also his own power. "I cast out devils," says he, "by the Spirit of God."

XXIX. We come next to treat of that Divine HONOUR and worship which is due to the Holy Spirit. And, first, let us take notice of that religious adoration of the Spirit, which, whatever may be alleged by others to the contrary, we find both enjoined and exemplified in the sacred volume. Accordingly the following precept occurs in the Gospel of Matthew: "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest." The Lord of the harvest, who thrusts forth labourers, is the Spirit of God, as we learn from Acts 13:2. where we find an instance of obedience to this precept. "As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." An answer is returned by the Spirit to the prayers of the prophets and teachers of the Church of Antioch; and why so, but because he was invocated by them? The Spirit also, as Lord, declares by his own authority, what he would have Barnabas and Saul to do; and asserts that it is himself who has called them to the ministry.

XXX. Nor are examples wanting. That of Paul is well known, where he solicits grace from the Lord Jesus Christ, and love from God the Father, and in like manner, his own communications from the Holy Ghost. To the same effect is the prayer of John: "John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne; and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness," &c. In order to illustrate this passage, we must show, first, what the seven Spirits denote; and secondly, in what manner John calls upon them. By the seven Spirits are not here intended any created spirits, either angelical or human, but the third person of the Godhead; which we infer from the consideration of the ancient symbol alluded to, as well as from the style of the sacred book of the Apocalypse. There is an allusion to the golden candlestick with its seven lamps in the tabernacle of Moses. This is plainly suggested by the following words; "There were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God." The tabernacle, be it observed, was a figure of the Church; and the candlestick, of the Holy Spirit, to whom the Church is indebted for all

her light. The candlestick, though one in itself, had seven distinct lamps. The person of the Holy Spirit, too, is one; but his grace is most abundant and most perfect; for the number seven is a symbol of multitude and of perfection. The seven lamps were formed of one continued beaten work, proceeding from the candlestick itself. And the graces of the Holy Spirit are, so to speak, essential to him, and proceed from the all-sufficiency of his godhead. For this reason he is denominated from them, "The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might," &c.^z But the very style of the Apocalypse leads us also to this interpretation. These seven Spirits are called the "Spirits of God;" and I can recollect no passage in holy writ, where any created Spirit is called by this name. The seven Spirits are placed betwixt the Father and the Son, as of the same dignity. They are also called the horns and the eyes of Christ.^b The Holy Spirit, to wit, is "the Spirit of Christ." He is exhibited under the emblem of horns, because of the power of the Spirit which is often celebrated; and under the emblem of eyes, either on account of his knowledge, or because the look of Christ is a look of love, and his love appears in the gift of the Spirit.^d In fine, we nowhere read that these seven Spirits worship God, which is done by the living creatures, and the elders. But on the contrary, they are invocated by John—an honour which doth not belong to created spirits. And in what manner doth John call upon them? In the same manner, with the same worship, as that with which he calls upon the Father and the Son, adoring the Spirit without any mark of distinction, as equally with the Father and the Son, the Author of grace and peace.

XXXI. Another instance of the ascription of Divine honour to the Spirit, is that we are baptized in his name. This is clearly a Divine honour; for, 1st, He in whose name we are baptized is recognised as the true God, the author of the sacraments, the Lord and Lawgiver of the Church,—characters which are peculiar to Jehovah.^g 2^{dly}, We confide in him as one able to impart and perform the thing signified by the sign. This also is competent to God only; for who that is not God, can afford us the grace, the fellowship, the enjoyment of God, which are sealed by the sacraments? 3^{dly}, In this sacrament we

surrender ourselves to him in whose name we are baptized, to serve and obey him; for in baptism there is "the answer of a good conscience towards God," This again is an honour too high to fall to the share of any creature. And hence Paul disclaims it with great warmth; "Were ye baptized in the name of Paul?"ⁱ

XXXII. Add to this, that we are consecrated as a Temple to the Holy Spirit. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you?"^k Now a temple is the house of God only, "an house built unto the name of Jehovah," "the sanctuary of Jehovah,"^m "a glorious high throne;" and in a temple religious worship is performed to God alone.^o Nor is there any ground for the objection, that it is only metaphorically that believers are called a temple; for although that were true, the analogy must still be preserved. As therefore the house erected by Solomon was a temple on account of the indwelling of the Divinity, which the Hebrews call Shechinah,* so believers are the temple of the Spirit, because he is in them and inhabits them as God. But in truth, believers are a temple in a far more strict and proper sense than the temple of Jerusalem; as that was merely a figure, of which the substance is primarily in Christ, and secondarily in believers.^p

XXXIII. We must not overlook, in fine, the religious obedience which the Apostle urges us to render to the Holy Spirit. "Wherefore, as the Holy Ghost saith, To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness, when your fathers tempted me," &c. The Spirit of God was justly offended, because that sacred obedience which was an honour due to his Majesty, had not been rendered to him. But we find also that a certain sin is mentioned in sacred writ, which is in a peculiar manner committed against the Spirit and his office, and which is so heinous in the sight of God that it is declared unpardonable above every other sin.^r Now, if the Holy Spirit be not the Supreme God, what reason can be assigned why a sin committed against him should be held so dreadful and atrocious? From this,

however, we are not to infer, that the Holy Spirit is a greater Divine person, or entitled to higher honour, than the Father or the Son. That he is truly God, we justly conclude, because it is possible to sin against him peculiarly and signally. That he is greater than the Father or the Son, we cannot infer, as the infinitude of the godhead excludes all disparity. That the sin committed against him is never forgiven, is not owing to his being worthy of higher honour than the Father or the Son, but to the nature of the sin, by which that grace of God without which there is no salvation, although exhibited, known, and acknowledged, is wantonly and pertinaciously rejected; and resistance is maliciously given to those operations of the Holy Spirit, by which only he brings sinners into a state of saving relation to God.

XXXIV. And thus, we think, we have abundantly confirmed the Supreme Deity of the Holy Ghost. It now remains to show, that he is a Divine person, DISTINCT from the Father and the Son. This appears, 1st, From the distinct mention of these adorable persons. Haggai 2:4, 5, "I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts, with the WORD,—and my SPIRIT remaineth among you.⁵⁸ 2dly, From the enumeration of Three that bear record in heaven. 3dly, From an express term of distinction: "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you ANOTHER Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth." To this learned men refer also an expression in Zechariah, which they thus render; Even to-day will I restore unto thee another Teacher or Revealer. The Holy Spirit may be called a Revealer, because it is his office to disclose deep mysteries; and another Revealer, to distinguish him from Christ, who was sent before him, and who is mentioned in a preceding verse. He may be said to be restored, partly because the extraordinary mission of the Holy Spirit was suspended from the times of Zechariah to Christ; partly because he was to be given in the room of Christ, who is gone to the Father.

The distinguishing properties of the Holy Spirit, are as follows. 1st, Passive procession from the Father and the Son. 2dly, The third place in the order of subsistence. 3dly, The third place in the order of

operation. Compare what is said on this topic in the Seventh Dissertation.

XXXV. These truths relating to the Spirit ought to be rightly known, and most devoutly acknowledged. Something more, however, is included in that faith in the Holy Ghost of which we make a profession in the Creed. This faith doth not rest satisfied with a frigid contemplation of his Divine Person, but goes forward to consider his mysterious indwelling in believers, and the secret efficacy which he exerts in their hearts. It will now be proper for us to discourse a little further on these points, that we may penetrate to the marrow and the kernel of the doctrine before us. It is the privilege of believers, then, that they have received the Spirit from God, and enjoy his presence as a much loved Inhabitant in the innermost chambers of their souls. "Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things which are freely given to us of God." And so universally doth this hold, that, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."z As many of us, too, as are made partakers of the Spirit, should be solicitous to know that he dwelleth in us. "What! Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God?" Whilst we remain ignorant of this, it is impossible for us to be sure that we have that union with God and Christ, which is the hinge on which the whole of our salvation turns. "Hereby know we that we dwell in him and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit."b Now there is no way in which this can be known with greater certainty, than by carefully observing those operations, by which the Spirit manifests himself to the conscience, as the Spirit of grace, and the Spirit of Christ. Thus also we shall learn the unspeakable excellence and value of this gift of God.

XXXVI. Those operations of the Spirit to which we have alluded, are chiefly the following. As by moving on the waters at the beginning of the world, he infused into them the principles of a new life, whence the regular vicissitudes of nature, and the diversified species of creatures proceeded; so, after having entered the minds of the elect,

he becomes in them the author of a new, spiritual, and divine life. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth." The beginning of this life seems to be a new light kindled the Spirit in the mind, by which we know ourselves with all the atrocity of our sins and the guilt which they involve,—the vanity of the world lying in wickedness, and the insufficiency of all creatures to make us happy,—the divine certainty of the truths revealed by the Gospel,—and what is of the first importance, the universal sufficiency of the Lord Jesus Christ to perfect our salvation,—the amiableness of God in Christ,—and in fine, the inexpressible beauty of holiness, which is the image of God. But as there is a very intimate connexion betwixt the understanding and the will, the same Spirit by his gracious agency excites motions in the will corresponding to those ideas of the understanding. He excites, in particular, deep self-abasement before God, sorrow for the offences we have done as opposite to the divine holiness, contempt of the world, a holy despair of happiness from ourselves and from all creatures, a living faith of the Gospel, hunger and thirst after Christ and that grace which is in Christ alone, a vehement love to God in Christ, and an ardent desire of holiness, that we may as closely as possible resemble God. All these fruits of the Spirit, too, while they exert their influence in the mind, cannot fail to communicate their virtue even to the members of the body; which present themselves as instruments and servants of righteousness unto holiness. And thus, so to speak, a new world of grace is produced by the Holy Spirit in the man, who, henceforth governed by more excellent rules of conduct, and full of vital vigour, discovers by his pure and heavenly deportment, that he is led by the Spirit of God.

XXXVII. Further, the Spirit produces also this effect, that believers are not only one amongst themselves, but one with Christ. "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body," namely, that body which the Apostle had just affirmed to be Christ. The Spirit of Christ, by his sweet and yet invincible, or, to express it more precisely, will-conquering power, draws our Spirit towards Christ, to apprehend and embrace him. Christ also comes down to us by the communication of his grace; and by this delightful reciprocation of

mutual love, a mystical and spiritual union and conjunction takes place, so that the believing soul, in a manner, dissolves and melts in the Lord Jesus, and becomes "one Spirit" with him.^h The Spouse boasted of old that she was her beloved's, and that her beloved was her's.ⁱ But, behold something greater here than mine or thine. Through the medium of the Spirit there is not only a union, but even a unity—a unity so joining us to Christ, that it bears some resemblance to the most perfect unity of the Three persons in the same Divine essence. "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." O stupendous miracle of Divine love, shining forth in this operation of the Holy Spirit!

XXXVIII. Hence also it follows, that being made partakers of Christ, we are at the same time partakers of all his benefits. If through the Spirit we are Christ's, whatever belongs to Christ, belongs also to us. He took upon himself what was our's, while we had nothing but sin and misery,^l that he might make us sharers of what is his, to be conferred on us by the Spirit, who takes of the things that are Christ's and gives them to us. Christ says to us, as the father said to the son in the parable, "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine,"ⁿ Lord Jesus! All thine our's! Shall we poor insignificant men become partakers of all thy treasures, and of the unbounded riches of thy grace! Why not, Lord? If through thy Spirit, thou thyself art our's, why not also the things which are thine?

XXXIX. The Spirit, too, is the Comforter of believers, and that in various respects. 1st, As he is the seal of the divine love to them. "After that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise." He is called "the Spirit of promise" with a peculiar emphasis, not merely because himself is the subject of promise, but principally because it is his province to intimate the promises of the Gospel to believers, and to inscribe and seal them on their hearts. And as sealing is the stamping of the likeness that is in the seal on the thing sealed, by which it may be distinguished as the property of him whose mark it bears, or by which ample credit may be secured to

an instrument,—what else shall we understand by the sealing here mentioned, than the effectual communication of that divine light, purity, holiness, righteousness, goodness, and joy, which are in the Holy Spirit; by which it is evinced that certain persons are the property of God, whom he will preserve sacred and inviolable for himself; and by which they are assured of the performance of the other divine promises, whether of grace or of glory. "Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." 2dly, And this is another way in which the Spirit comforts us, that he is "the earnest of our inheritance." An earnest is a part of the price given beforehand, as a token that the whole is to follow. There is here an allusion, probably, to the rite of betrothing, in which the Bridegroom gives a piece of money or a ring to the bride, in testimony of her common interest with him in all his goods. In the Holy Spirit, we have, then, not only the "seal," but also "the first fruits;"^r which exhibit not merely the hope, but the foretaste of the full harvest. 3dly, The Spirit cheers us also in another form, by causing us to "know the things that are freely given us of God." This he doth by secretly witnessing to our spirit, and with our spirit.^t And truly it is the voice of the Spirit only, that is able to raise up the soul bowed down under the weight of its sorrows. Although a person should speak with the tongues of men and of angels, whilst the internal operation of the Spirit doth not concur, he will prove a miserable comforter. But a single word of the Spirit has greater efficacy than a thousand discourses addressed to the outward ear by all the Prophets, Evangelists, and Apostles, nay, by the Lord Jesus himself, unaccompanied by the inward teaching of the Spirit. 4thly, In fine, as deeds are far better and more powerful than words, the Spirit of God doth not leave himself without witness from them also. He takes hold of believers as if by the hand, and introduces them to the chambers and embraces of the King, or even to the banqueting-house, where the banner over them is love; and soothes them with sweet celestial delights, such as earthly minds neither relish nor receive, and which are elegantly represented as hidden manna, for

this among other reasons, that no man knows them but he by whom they are tasted.

XL. Nor is it very difficult for believers, provided they give due attention and diligence, to distinguish these operations of the Spirit from the illusions of the flesh or of a malignant demon, or even from those common operations of the Spirit which are unproductive of holiness. This appears from the words of our Lord: "Even the Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." These operations are discerned, both from their very nature, when separately considered; and from the order in which they are wisely connected, and the relation which they bear to one another. In each of them there is a brightness, majesty, and efficacy, so conspicuous and striking, that the light of noon-day doth not more clearly discover the sun, than these operations discover the Spirit as their author. Whilst he sanctifies believers, he inspires them with the desire of a purer virtue than any probity known amongst the heathen, or than that pretended sanctity which characterised the Pharisees. Pagan probity and pharisaical sanctity, having self-love for their principle, meanly terminate on man himself. The Spirit so actuates the souls of believers, on the contrary, that they no longer wish to be their own; but denying the lusts of the deceitful flesh, they remember that they belong to God, and desire that every part of their conduct may be regulated according to his will and example, and redound to his glory. Whilst the Spirit comforts believers, too, he enters into their minds with a certain sweetness, which, as it is incomparably delightful, so is free from the smallest mixture of earthly dregs, and instead of loading or enervating the mind, renders it more clear and alert, and prepares it for serving God with the utmost alacrity. Even when the soul becomes most languid and remiss, the Spirit still protects and sustains the spiritual life amidst the numberless snares of malignant spirits and the deadly poison of sin; and supplies such vital influence to believers, that even in the greatest weakness they do not yield the victory to the enemy, but though cast down, renew the contest on their knees. Such is the

efficacy of the Spirit, in short, in all these operations, that he gives a noble elevation to their mental faculties, and makes them capable of views, desires, efforts, and achievements, which evidently exceed the capacity of those who are destitute of the Spirit. The order in which he operates, too, is such, that he imparts his comforts only to those who are contrite in heart, and seriously grieved for their sins; and he never cheers their minds with his sweet consolations, without inciting them, at the same time, to the love of God, to fervent gratitude, and to the practice of the most conscientious piety. When these things are connected in this manner and order, a man has no cause to doubt of the Spirit's having been imparted to himself.

XLI. It serves also in no inconsiderable degree to heighten the value of this gift, that it cannot be lost. "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever." The presence of the Lord Jesus was exceedingly dear and precious to the Apostles. But how dear soever it was, they were at last to be deprived of it. Nay, it was expedient for them that their Lord should go away, that he might give place to that Comforter and Advocate, who should both do greater things than Christ's bodily presence had done, and was never to depart.^x And why should he depart? Because he is expelled by force? He is the Spirit of God, against whom the spirit of the world and the spirit of hell cannot prevail. Or because he meets with ungrateful treatment from believers? He is sometimes grieved indeed by their sins: but then he also grieves them in his turn, that having excited them to a salutary penitence, he may continue to seal them unto the day of redemption. With regard to the infusion of his consolations, and the communication of alacrity in the spiritual life, he withdraws, we admit, for a time; yet he remains for ever as the fountain of life, and the bond of union with Christ. He is "the anointing which abideth,"^z and "a well of water springing up to everlasting life."⁶¹—All these considerations serve clearly to demonstrate the inexpressible greatness of the love of God in giving us his Holy Spirit.

XLII. But we ought also to consider the duties which we owe to this Spirit of God. 1st, Since the Spirit is the Most High God, let us treat the Scriptures given by his inspiration with profound reverence, no less than if we heard a present God, addressing us immediately from heaven. Every affront that is done to the Prophets and Apostles, strikes against the Spirit of God. 2dly, Let us receive with becoming reverence his internal reproofs, counsels, and convictions; neither daring to make the least resistance, nor presuming to linger when he stimulates. This were to grieve the Holy Spirit, by giving him ground of offence, and causing him to withhold his accustomed delights, and to cease for a time to operate as a Spirit of consolation and joy. 3dly, Let us carefully watch over this sacred fire, that it be not extinguished either in ourselves or in others, but rather stirred up. 4thly, Let us consecrate ourselves as temples to the Spirit, and preserve them holy and pure.

DISSERTATION XXIV: ON THE CHURCH, AND THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS, AND THE OPERATION OF OUR FAITH WITH REGARD TO BOTH

I. IT is truly impossible to mention or to conceive a conjunction, more beautiful, more close and intimate, or more endeared by mutual love, than that which subsists between God and his people, between Christ and the Church. Here beauty and comeliness appear in full perfection. In Christ indeed it shines with a transcendent lustre; and hence it is said in the Psalms, "Thou art fairer than the sons of men;" where the doubling of the radical letters in the Hebrew word rendered "fairer," adds to the energy of the signification. But the beauty even of the Church is so great, that he whose province it is

to judge, pronounces this eulogy upon her: "Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair, thou hast doves' eyes." Nay, "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee."b Again, this union is so intimate, that hardly any similitude is sufficient to express its closeness. Marriage, as it exists amongst men, has been defined by lawyers, "a state in which two persons are indissolubly united in life."* According to the definition of Scripture, "two shall be one flesh;"c than which expression, certainly, none more proper or vigorous could have been employed. But here is something farther. "He who is joined to the Lord," is not only one body with him, "a member of his flesh, and of his bones," but also "one spirit" with him.e And who can doubt that, since Christ and the Church are so fair, and so closely united, the happy consequence must be a most delightful interchange of mutual love. Such an interchange of love doth in reality take place. "How fair, and how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights!" We must not, therefore, presume to disjoin in our meditations, subjects which are connected together by so many ties. But having treated of God and Christ, and the Spirit who proceeds from both, we must now speak of the CHURCH, which the FATHER has elected, and the SON redeemed, and which the SPIRIT unites to Christ, and seals unto the day of complete redemption.

II. Four points fall to be explained here. First, THE NAME. Secondly, THE THING ITSELF. Thirdly, THE EPITHETS. Fourthly, The exercise of our FAITH in relation to the Church thus described.

III. It is proper to take notice of three Greek terms which are very similar in meaning, namely, Συναγωγή, Ἐκκλησία, Πανηγυρίς. Συναγωγή, Synagoga, corresponds to the Hebrew word קהל, and in the New Testament generally signifies the assemblies of the Jews, which were held here and there, in various places and cities, for religious purposes. And as the designation Curia, which at first was given to men that conjunctly conducted the affairs of the state, was transferred to the place where they met; or as amongst the Greeks Βουλή signifies not only the senate, but also the place in which the senate is held,—the word Synagogue has been applied in the same

manner; as is evident from Luke 7:5, and numberless other passages. It has been observed, however, by the learned, that there is scarcely a single passage in the sacred volume, where this term is employed to denote the Societies of Christians. Paul indeed exhorts the Hebrews "not to forsake" τὴν ἐπισυναγωγὴν αὐτῶν, "the assembling of themselves together." But as he is there addressing the Hebrews, he accommodates himself to their forms of speech. Nor yet does he use precisely the same word, and the expression he employs is not of the same meaning with Church; for the Apostles are accustomed to speak of the Church of God, or of Christ, not of the Church of these or those persons. Ἐπισυναγωγή, therefore, denotes the gathering together itself, or the assembling of believers, as in 2 Thes. 2:1, where Beza has well rendered it aggregation, "gathering together." James alone uses the expression, ἡ συναγωγή, the synagogue of Christians. Whether he intends, however, the place of meeting, or the assembling or gathering together, or the assembly which meets, I shall not now scrupulously examine. But that Apostle also addresses himself chiefly to the Jews, to whom he thought it would be agreeable for him to adopt a term which among them was at once common and honourable.⁶²

IV. Christ, and the Apostles after him, nevertheless, preferred Ἐκκλησία, Ecclesia;—a word, which, though originally borrowed from the Grecian customs, and afterwards applied to the institutions of the Jews, was at length peculiarly appropriated to Christians. In democratic states, an assembly of those of higher rank was styled συγκλησία, or βουλή; and the name Ecclesia, which is derived from ἐκκαλεῖν, to call out, was given to the assemblies of the people, who were called out by a public herald, and gathered into a certain place, in order to deliberate together. Conformably to this, the Greek Interpreters of the Old Testament gave the name Ecclesia, to the assembly of Israelites, which at certain stated seasons, was called together to one place from all parts of Judea, to celebrate the solemn festivals, and to perform public and important acts of religious worship. The corresponding word in Hebrew, is לִהָקֵף. Now the word Ecclesia seemed to Christ and his Apostles more proper than any

other to designate the community of believers, both because it was the most pertinent to signify the thing, and because they wished by this appellation to distinguish Christians from Jews, who chiefly assumed the designation of Synagogue. They were disposed, in fine, to accommodate themselves, in this instance, to the Gentiles, who were henceforth to constitute by far the greater part of the people of God: For while Synagoga was a word rarely used among the Greeks, Ecclesia was a term remarkably well known, very popular, and naturally calculated to conciliate the minds of men. It denotes a promiscuous multitude of men of all descriptions, not indeed confused and irregular, but of such a complexion that none is excluded from it on account of the meanness of his rank. To this effect are the following words of Paul: "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called. But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world," &c.63

V. We must not neglect to advert also to the word Πανηγυρίς, Panegyris, which the Apostle uses in Heb. 12:23, and which differs somewhat in meaning from Ecclesia. When the people were summoned to consult or determine about affairs relating to the commonwealth, the meeting, as we have remarked, was termed Ecclesia. But when they were invited to any solemn spectacle, as in the Panathenea, the assembly was then styled Panegyris; and a speech delivered at such a time was termed a panegyric oration.*64 An assembly of believers, therefore, may be called Ecclesia, because they meet to consider the matters which pertain to the kingdom of God, that is, spiritual and heavenly things; they may be denominated Panegyris, as they are invited and admitted to by far the greatest of all spectacles; namely, that of the Divine perfections shining forth in Christ,—a sight which even celestial spirits contemplate for ever without satiety.

VI. Let what has been said suffice at present for an explanation of the terms. We now proceed to the thing itself. The Church may be defined, A Society of believing and holy men, called by God out of the

world of mankind by the word of the Gospel, to a participation of the blessings of the covenant of grace which stands fast in Christ. That this definition contains nothing superfluous, will appear from an explication of the several expressions. When we call the Church a Society, we show that it is a multitude; "We being many," &c.—but a multitude of persons united together, "We being many, are one body." "The body is not one member, but many:"^j "And the Church is the body of Christ." We confine this community to men. Angels are indeed our "fellow-servants," having the same Lord with us, and are sons of the same family,^m and sharers of the same felicity, which consists in fellowship with God; and hence it is said, "ye are come to an innumerable company of angels." It is, however, quite in a different way, and by a different title, that angels are what they are. They are not redeemed by Christ, nor called by the Gospel, nor regenerated by the Spirit, nor partakers of the covenant of grace. These are the high privileges, and distinguishing characteristics of the Church; "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham."^o We add, that it is a society of believing men, that is, of men who receive the doctrine of the Gospel, and recognise it as true. "Then they that gladly received his word, were baptized," and added to the churchy. "Whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence, and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end."^q And we call it a society of holy men; "An holy nation;" "Called to be saints."^s They are gathered together by God, who is therefore styled "he that calleth;" as they themselves are "the Church of the living God." This gathering is effected by the word of the Gospel; for although God in some respect invites men to himself by the works of nature, no invitation of that sort is sufficient for constituting the Church; but the word of supernatural revelation must be added. "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." The preaching employed for this purpose, is partly that of the Law, that the minds of men may be rightly prepared: "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." But the preaching of the Gospel is chiefly made use of: "This only would I learn of you, Received ye the

Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" The invitation given by the Gospel is termed our Calling: "Them he also called." Hence, too, the frequent designation of "the called," and the very word Ecclesia, the Church. This form of expression seems, however, to be taken from Prov. 8:1. "Doth not wisdom cry? and understanding put forth her voice?" &c. and from similar passages which elsewhere occur. This is a calling of persons out of the world of mankind; from which God first called the Israelites, and afterwards the Gentiles, according to Isaiah: "Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not."^b The end of the calling, in fine, is a participation of the blessings of the covenant of grace, which stands fast in Christ; which are thus figuratively described; "Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither; ... Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled."

VII. But it ought to be carefully observed, that the form, or, if you please, the state and condition of the Church, is twofold; the one internal and spiritual, according to which God only judges with certainty concerning her members;—the other, external and more visible, which even men are empowered to discern.

VIII. There is, accordingly, a twofold calling; the one external, merely by the word, "For many be called, but few chosen;"—the other internal, by the Spirit, which is peculiar to the elect.

IX. In correspondence to this twofold calling, there is a twofold Faith. The one is a common faith, which may be found even in reprobates, and by which they assent to evangelical truth, and feel a kind of transitory joy, arising partly from the novelty and extraordinary nature of the subject, partly from that presumptuous hope by which they boldly arrogate to themselves, the blessings of the Gospel, while they have no interest in them. "Then Simon himself believed also." The other is a saving faith, "the faith of God's elect," "faith unfeigned,"^h "faith which worketh by love."

X. There is also a twofold Holiness. The one is merely relative, external, federal; and consists in a person's being separated from the fellowship of the impure and profane world, numbered amongst the people of God, and having access to many promises. Thus the Israelites are called, "the holy seed, who have mingled themselves with the people of these lands, the people of the earth." In the same sense Paul says; "For if the first fruit be holy, the lump is also holy; "and if the root be holy, so are the branches;"k that is, If the fathers were in covenant with God, their posterity are also to be regarded as in the same condition. Holiness of this sort is recognised, too, under the New Testament; for the whole body of Christians is opposed as holy to the heathen as unholy; and the unbelieving husband is said to be sanctified by the believing wife, and the unbelieving wife to be sanctified by the believing husband, so that the children of such a marriage are accounted holy, children of the covenant and heirs of the promises. But the other kind of holiness is internal, and absolute, peculiar to the regenerate, consisting in conformity to God, and the image of the divine purity. "Holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, for ever."

XI. In like manner, the participation of the covenant of grace is twofold. The one includes merely symbolical and common privileges, which have no certain connection with salvation, and to which infants are admitted by their relation to parents that are within the covenant; and adults, by a profession of faith and repentance, even though insincere. As all who make a profession of Christianity, and do not falsify it by a wicked life, do by this their profession enter into the covenant, the oath, and the curse, so they cannot be kept back from a participation of the sacraments by the rulers of the Church. And thus far they are really in covenant with God, and, in a certain sense, even branches ingrafted into Christ, although they do not bring forth fruit nor abide in him; who shall be punished not merely for the transgression of the precept, but also for the violation of the covenant, if they be found to lead a wicked life. The other participation of the covenant of grace, is the partaking of its internal, spiritual, and saving blessings, as the forgiveness of sins, the writing

of the law in the heart, &c. Accordingly the Apostle makes a distinction betwixt the Jew outwardly and the Jew inwardly,—betwixt circumcision in the flesh and the letter, and circumcision in the heart and spirit; which, by analogy, may be transferred to Christianity.

XII. From all these remarks it follows, that the Church has a twofold aspect or form; the one visible, which is made out by a profession of faith and the performance of divine worship; the other spiritual, which owes its first origin to Divine election, and is completed by a living faith and true holiness. This distinction is suggested by John: "They went out from us," that is, from the external community of those who profess Christianity in common with us; "but they were not of us," they did not belong to the society of the elect and of true believers.

XIII. If you look to the Church in its internal form, none but the elect belong to it; "Ye are a chosen generation:"—Those who are inwardly and effectually called; "Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling:"—Those endowed with a true and living faith, and sanctified by the Spirit of God; "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:"—Those, in fine, who enjoy spiritual communion with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ; "God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord;" "That ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."x

XIV. The government of the Church, viewed in this form, belongs only to God in Christ: for he only has authority and power over the minds and consciences of men, and he only can admit whom he will to a participation of saving benefits. He alone, too, searches the heart, and has a certain knowledge of all the true members of the Church. "The Lord knoweth them that are his." Such, however, is the nature of true faith and holiness, that they evidence themselves to

men by their fruits, so far as is sufficient to justify a judgment of charity regarding our neighbour.^z

XV. But if you consider the external form of the Church, God has appointed Stewards over it, who are intrusted with the dispensation of external privileges according to established rules. And really, none has a right even to these privileges, who is not renewed and sanctified; for they are the signs and seals of spiritual grace, which belongs to believers only, and are consequently profaned by unbelievers who venture to receive them. It is incumbent on the Stewards to give serious and faithful warning of this, to all, and to every individual, lest by rash and unhallowed approaches, they procure judgments to themselves. But since it is not their prerogative to know the heart, they are bound to demand a profession of faith and repentance from all who make application for communion with the Church; and if any make this profession with the tongue, and do not openly belie it by his practice, the office-bearers, so far as themselves are concerned, may safely admit him, without too scrupulous an inquiry into his spiritual state; the certain knowledge of which we read that God has reserved to himself, whilst it is nowhere affirmed that God requires it of the ministers of the Church. In primitive times indeed, Apostles and Evangelists were endowed with an extraordinary gift, which Paul styles "the discerning of spirits."^c But it does not appear that, in admitting the members of the Church, they made use of that gift, to distinguish those who were truly regenerate from such as by their profession and external conduct made false pretensions to regeneration. Had they done this, how could Simon Magus have been admitted to the Church? And whence those scandalous persons at Corinth, whom the Apostle reproveth?^e

XVI. Since, then, it is impossible but that amidst so great a multitude of professors, some will falsely pretend to the Christian character, hypocrites and worthless men are never wanting in the visible Church. On this account the Church is compared to a floor, in which there is not only wheat, but also chaff;—to a field, where tares as well

as good seed, are sown;—to a net, which gathers bad fish together with the good;—to a great house, in which are vessels of every kind, "some to honour, and some to dishonour."

XVII. Let us now attend to the Epithets and honourable characters given to the Church; which are suitable to it in both forms, yet principally in its internal form. Three of these are mentioned in the Creed: HOLY, CATHOLIC, CHRISTIAN.

XVIII. The Church may be called HOLY, 1st, With respect to doctrine; which, in soundness of principles, purity of precepts, excellence of examples, and efficacy of motives, infinitely surpasses whatever is commendable in all the admired institutions and maxims of lawgivers, or priests, or philosophers. 2dly, With respect to life and manners. The Old Testament Church was distinguished by a certain typical holiness, which consisted in the separation of the people of Israel from the rest of the nations, that they might be consecrated to the worship of God, and in a certain external and corporeal purification, by which they were, so to speak, purged and sanctified.* Corresponding to this, there is in the Gospel Church a real holiness, which consists in separation from the common condition of sinners to the performance of that spiritual Divine service which the New Testament prescribes,k and in the purification of the mind by the blood and Spirit of Jesus Christ. The Christian Church, therefore, is called Holy, in contradistinction not merely to other nations, which were altogether impure and defiled; but also to the Jewish nation, to whose typical sanctity a true and substantial holiness is opposed.n 3dly, With respect to inviolability, or the sacred protection under which it is placed. "He suffered no man to do them wrong: yea, he reprov'd kings for their sakes, saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm."

XIX. The epithet CATHOLIC does not occur in sacred writ. The first whom we find using it is Ignatius in his Epistle to the Church of Smyrna, if indeed that expression was in reality written by Ignatius, and not interpolated by some unfair hand: "Wherever Jesus Christ is,

there is the Catholic Church."* But it occurs also in the Epistle of the Church of Smyrna, in which they give an account of the martyrdom of Polycarp, their Pastor; for that Epistle is inscribed to the Church of God at Philomelium, "and to all every where that belong to the holy Catholic Church."†

XX. The appellation Catholic is taken in several senses. 1st, Very extensively, as comprehending all the diversities of places, times, persons, and states, and as denoting the whole family of God, whether now or formerly sojourning on the earth, and dispersed through all ages and quarters of the world. 2dly, More strictly, when it is ascribed to the New Testament Church in contradistinction to the Old. The middle wall of partition being broken down, the Gospel Church is not confined, as was the Church of old, to any place or people; but is scattered abroad throughout the whole extent of the world; and is the common Mother of men of all nations, nourishing all with the same milk, and cherishing all in the same bosom; making the whole world, so to speak, a common temple unto God. "She is called Catholic," says Cyril of Jerusalem, "because she is diffused over the whole world from the one end of the earth to the other."* It was worth while also, by this characteristic, to distinguish the Christian Church from the Synagogue, in order to show that by the coming of Christ the truth of the ancient prophecies appears, in which it had been very often foretold that all nations without distinction should be invited to fellowship with God. This epithet, however, it is evident, has prevailed chiefly, since the Novatians, and afterwards the Donatists, presumed to restrict the Church to the narrow limits of Africa. To those men, the Orthodox then opposed the appellation Catholic, to distinguish the Church of Christ which subsisted in the whole world, from the conventicles of heretics and schismatics. 3dly, This appellation is used improperly, to denote a particular Church, which holds fellowship with the Church Universal, and is not separated from it by heresy or schism. Nay, it became customary to employ the term Catholic in the same sense with Orthodox. Hence we read in ancient writers, of "the Catholic Church

in Smyrna, in Alexandria, in Constantinople, in Nazianzum," and the like, without number.

XXI. In fine, the Church is also styled CHRISTIAN, because she is the disciple of Christ, and Christ is her Master;—because she is the Spouse of Christ, and Christ is her Bridegroom;—because she is the body and the fulness of Christ, being necessary to the perfecting of his stature, and Christ is her Head. In short, she is so closely united with Christ, that she is even denominated Christ.

XXII. It now remains, to consider the exercise of our Faith in relation to the Church. And here we must first attend to the repetition in the Creed of the expression Credo, "I believe;" and then to the alteration of the phrase: For whereas it was formerly said, "I believe in God the Father, &c." "I believe in the Holy Ghost"—it is not here said in like manner, Credo in Ecclesiam, "I believe in the Church," but Credo Ecclesiam, "I believe the Church." The expression I believe, seems to be repeated of purpose, partly, to apprise us that we are entering on a new class of subjects, which differ widely from those previously mentioned; and partly, because, without that repetition, the construction of the words would render the sentence either obscure, or scarcely consistent with piety. Had the words run thus, "I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic Church,"* it would have been difficult to connect the words "I believe" with "the Holy Catholic Church," so as to suppress the particle in. This however was necessary; for our faith is exercised with regard to the Church in a manner very different from that in which it is exercised with relation to God. The Church, it is certain, is a society of creatures, in whom, whether considered individually or collectively, it is criminal to repose the confidence of faith.

XXIII. When we affirm, therefore, that we believe the Church, we profess, that there has existed from the beginning of time, still exists, and will continue to the end of the world to exist, a society of men chosen by God to salvation, called by the Gospel and the Spirit, professing faith and piety with the mouth, and practising them in the

conduct. We declare, also, that neither the machinations of the world that lieth in wickedness, nor the gates of hell, shall ever prevail against this society: For it is utterly impossible that the decree of God should fail;—that the promises of God should come to nought;w—that the word of salvation should be preached in vain;—that the prophecies respecting the perpetuity of Christ's kingdom should fall to the ground;y—or that Christ should lose the reward of his labour, and become a Master without disciples, a King without subjects, a Bridegroom without a bride, a Head without a body.

XXIV. Nor is it sufficient to believe and profess this in general. We must endeavour, in our meditations, to enter more deeply into the subject, that we may adore with reverence, and with a sort of holy amazement, the methods of God's procedure in the government of the Church, and the displays which it affords of his perfections. From eternity he delineated in his own mind the whole state and condition of the Church,—wisely fixing her diversified fortunes in the different periods of time;—dispensing the word of his grace at sundry times and in diverse manners;—treating her at first more liberally in the families of the Patriarchs, then more strictly in the nation of Israel, and at length giving her ample liberty in an acceptable time and a year of grace;—sometimes chastising her with the rod of fatherly correction, at other times delighting her with a happy abundance of peace;—now adorning her with the flowers of a grateful spring, anon afflicting her with the wasting severity of the storms of winter. He has peculiarly exhibited his adorable wisdom in the New Testament Church; which he rescued from the yoke of the ancient ceremonies, and extended amongst the nations on every side; and to which, after she had nobly struggled first with the pertinacity of the Jews, and then with the ferocity of the Heathen, and with the wiles and artifices of Heretics, he gave the dominion of the world under Constantine the Emperor. From that period the connexion of the Beast with the Church commenced, Antichrist began gradually to prevail, and the people of God were led captive to Babylon; until by means of the blessed Reformation, the Church was indulged with more auspicious times;—hitherto indeed interrupted, and still to be interrupted, by

intervals of declension,—but to issue in the happy conversion of the Jews, and in all the glories reserved for the Church in latter days, till, whilst religion is again declining, the Judge shall appear from heaven, and bring all things to their consummation. These varied scenes, which are often predicted in the prophetic books of Scripture, and accurately detailed in the sacred Revelation of John, but now in a great measure fulfilled in the events themselves, are presented to believers as the subject of pious meditation, for the glory of God, the confirmation of faith, and the exercise of hope. "The righteous shall see it, and rejoice; and all iniquity shall stop her mouth. Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord." Nay, these are matters in which, "unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, is made known by the Church, the manifold wisdom of God; according to the eternal purpose, which he purposed in Christ Jesus, our Lord."b

XXV. But even this is not all that is necessary. We must also cultivate fellowship with the Church of Christ, by associating with her in the hearing of the word, in public prayer, in songs of praise to God, in the profession of the faith, and in the participation of the same bread and wine at the Lord's table. We ought not merely to run, but even to "fly" together "as doves to their windows;" that in us, too, those prophecies may be accomplished, which describe in terms so magnificent, the joyful flowing together of the nations to the Church.d "Behold, how good, and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! &c."

XXVI. Nor should we be deterred from this communion by some faults which may possibly be committed in the government of the Church, or by the sins of others, who do not duly regulate their practice according to the commandments. If only the truth of the Doctrine continue uncorrupted, if we are not obliged to approve of those faults, and if we are careful to have no fellowship with others in their sins, it becomes us to discover so much reverence for the institutions of God, and so much love for the faithful who belong to that society, as cheerfully and frequently to unite with them in the

social exercises of religious worship; "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another." In vain do we expect to see on the earth a Church without spot, a thrashing-floor without chaff, a field without tares, or a house in which are none but vessels unto honour. Nor let us imagine that we are to please God by any presumptuous conceit of our own sanctity, joined with contempt of others.—"Which say, Stand by thyself, come not near to me, for I am holier than thou. These are a smoke in my nose, a fire that burneth all the day."g

XXVII. It is necessary, however, to take heed, that we associate only with a true Church, lest we embrace a prostitute and an adulteress instead of the chaste Spouse of Christ. Amidst so great a multitude of societies, which vie with each other in claiming to themselves the name of the Church, it appears an arduous task for a man concerned for the salvation of his soul, to determine which of them ought to be preferred. But there is in particular one characteristic, by which, without great difficulty, you may discriminate the true Church of Christ from an adulteress, to wit, the truth of the heavenly doctrine. If a society devoutly profess the truth, as it was delivered by Christ, and by the Prophets and Apostles, you may safely recognise it as a Church of Christ. For what is the Church but "the pillar and the ground of truth?" "Built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone, &c."i

XXVIII. Such, too, is the nature of the heavenly doctrine, that it readily approves itself to the conscience. It is entirely and directly calculated to refer all things to the glory of God;—powerfully to repress the arrogance of the human mind;k—sweetly to console the afflicted spirit in times of adversity and sorrow;—and strongly to enforce the practice of the purest holiness.m Whoever has considered these criteria of the truth, will easily perceive that, with regard to doctrine, what is usually called the Reformed Church holds a conspicuous place amongst others professing the Christian name. With that Church it is an object of the greatest solicitude, that God be recognised as the author and giver of whatever is good, as well in

man as in every other creature;—that man, conscious of his nothingness,* and divested of all confidence in his own powers and in his own merits, depend wholly on Divine grace; that trusting in no creature, but in the all-sufficiency of God in Christ, he may have a sure foundation of comfort under every perplexity;—that, in fine, stimulated by the amazing kindness of God towards man, and by the unmerited love of Christ, he may apply himself to the practice of an ingenuous holiness, which lays aside the mercenary baseness of self-love, and is habitually influenced by pure love to God, and an unfeigned concern to promote his glory. In all these respects, they who belong not to the society of the Reformed Church, are universally found exceedingly deficient.

XXIX. Nor should we suffer ourselves to be intimidated by the importunate clamours of the Romanists, who demand where that Reformed Church of our's was before the appearance of Luther or Calvin. This puerile question is easily answered, and requires no tedious discussion. On both sides, surely, it is admitted, that there has always been a true Church of Christ: nor will the Romanists themselves affect to deny, that a Society which sincerely and stedfastly maintains all the doctrines delivered by Christ, and by the Prophets and Apostles, must be owned to be a true Church of Christ. Now that this is done by our Church, has been long since evinced in detail from the Scriptures. If the Romanists assert the contrary, let them point out a single article in which we deviate from the pole-star of Sacred writ. This is the surest, and the most compendious method. Let the pious inquirer be directed to prove all things by the touchstone of Scripture, and not to search the unwieldy volumes of those whom they style Fathers, and all the recesses of an obscure antiquity; the investigation of which has long since worn out the patience and baffled the ingenuity of men of even the most profound erudition.

XXX. Let it not be supposed, however, that we decline this ordeal. We are prepared to show, that in all ages not only learned men, but also whole communities, have professed the same truths with

ourselves. 1st, The four first Centuries are in our favour. Jewel, Perkins, Raynolds, Mornay, Moulin, Rivet, Aubertin, Daillé, Blondel, Claude, and others, have demonstrated, by incontrovertible evidence, that the Justins, the Clements, the Ambroses, the Augustines, the Jeromes, the Chrysostomes, and all the Fathers of those ages, hold, in every thing essential, the same sentiments with us. 2dly, After the Papacy began to lift up its head, and the Church to degenerate gradually, there were some who, both by their discourses and writings, protested against the prevailing errors, and boldly defended sound doctrine. Lists of these have been compiled, by Flaccius Illyricus, the Ministers of Magdeburg,* Mornay,† Usher of Armagh,‡ and others. 3dly, In the valleys of the Alps, a whole nation remained unpolluted by the devices of Antichrist, the hope and the seed of a better Church. 4thly, Where our Churches were, is asked with a bad grace, by men who so cruelly persecuted them in the Waldenses, the Leonists, and the Bohemian Brethren; and, with horrid barbarity, butchered so many myriads of holy martyrs, precious in the sight of God. 5thly, We might advert, in fine, to the very numerous Churches in the East, who not only detested the arrogant pretensions and supercilious conduct of the Bishop of Rome, but also combated his many errors.

XXXI. But even though we may have found a true Church with which we can associate in profession and worship, the business is not yet completed. External communion with an approved Church, is not enough to sustain a solid hope of salvation. In vain do proud boasters exclaim, "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are these." We must see that we belong to the internal and spiritual Church of Christ, and that, united to her by the secret bonds of the Holy Spirit and a living faith, we be assured in our own mind of that union. For this purpose we should examine the marks of election, the efficacy of the inward calling, the life of faith, the nature of Christian holiness, the evidences of Christ himself dwelling in the heart, and whatever other characteristics serve to distinguish the spiritual Church. These we have stated at some length in their proper places, particularly, in the Treatise on the Economy of the Covenants.

XXXII. Let but a few of them be observed here. 1st, In the mystical Church of Christ, not merely the external voice of the Gospel is heard, but also the internal voice of the Spirit; which not only strikes the ear, but reaches the heart, and bends it to the obedience of faith. On this account, they are called "the epistle of Christ, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart." Here, too, not merely are the seals of the Covenant of grace distributed, but the grace of God itself, in which the life of the soul consists, is exhibited, tasted, and enjoyed: "If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious."p Here flow those admirable waters of the Spirit, which gradually increase, till they form a river that cannot be forded; and which, while they are constantly running, heal other waters that they touch, and give life and vigour to a vast multitude of fishes. A right, or access, to this grace, is not obtained by a mere verbal profession before men, but by that which the Apostle requires when he speaks of "a professed subjection to the Gospel of Christ."69

XXXIII. 2dly, The spiritual Church of Christ is truly holy, and surpasses other societies of men, and even nominal professors, in unblemished purity of conduct, as far as the temple of Jerusalem surpassed the ordinary houses of the citizens in splendour and magnificence of workmanship. No one, therefore, can justly consider himself a member of this Church, who doth not possess in his heart, and discover in his behaviour, the superior excellence of the Christian character.t

XXXIV. 3dly, This Church is far more glorious within than without; just like the tabernacle erected by Moses, which was covered without, with rams skins, and badgers skins; whilst within it was adorned with fine linen, purple, gold, and jewels. Our Lord aptly compares hypocrites to "whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness."v The Spouse, on the contrary, is said to be "like the tents of Kedar," whose appearance was mean; but also "like the curtains of Solomon," in which the elegance of the workmanship vied

with the extraordinary magnificence of the materials. The one expression refers to her external appearance, the other to her internal beauty.⁷⁰ And truly "the King's daughter is all glorious within;" and her adorning consists "in the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."

XXXV. 4thly, Here the praises of God resound, and all things are referred to his glory. "In his temple doth every one speak of his glory." "This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise."^z Here then let every one investigate his own character, and if he find in himself the characters which have now been mentioned, he may conclude that he is a member of that Church, which is the Spouse of Christ, and the partaker of his blessings.

XXXVI. The sacred volume abounds with eulogies on the inexpressible felicity of the mystical Church. "Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God." 1st, This is a society of men, which God chose before the foundation of the world, by an immutable decree of which he will never repent, that he might be glorified and admired in them;^b and into whose mouth he puts this unspeakably delightful song: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as he hath chosen us in him, &c." 2dly, A society which, the Son of God, by undertaking the character of her Surety, has betrothed to himself, and to which he has betrothed himself; and which he has purchased at the expense of his own precious blood,—"having obtained eternal redemption."^d This again is the subject of a new song. 3dly, A society which he has called by his word and Spirit to his kingdom and glory. 4thly, A society in the midst of which he dwells, by an inhabitation far more excellent, far more lasting, than that by which he dwelt of old in the temple of Jerusalem. "An habitation of God through the Spirit."^g "Ye are the temple of the living God, as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them." 5thly, A society which he crowns with every blessing, and endows with the richest gifts of his Spirit. "I will abundantly

bless her provision; I will satisfy her poor with bread; I will also clothe her priests with salvation, and her saints shall shout aloud for joy."i "Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock and of the herd; and their soul shall be as a watered garden, &c." "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord, and shall water the valley of Shittim."k 6thly, A society for which he bears so affectionate and tender a regard, that he prescribes no bounds or measures to himself in proclaiming her praises: "Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse; thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck. How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse, &c." And why do I select a part of this divine song, when the whole is to the same effect? 7thly, A society which he protects with so solicitous a care, that she is secure against the assaults of earth and hell, and amidst all adversities is mere than a conqueror. 8thly, A society which he will at last deliver from the tyranny of Antichrist, enlarge by the accession of the Jews and multitudes of the Gentiles, and render glorious by signal improvements in wisdom, holiness, consolation, and spiritual excellence of every kind. This is often promised in the prophecies of Scripture, and very expressly and copiously in the sixtieth Chapter of Isaiah, which relates entirely to the glorious state of the Church after the restoration of Israel to it, of which he had spoken in the Chapter immediately preceding.n 9thly, A society, in fine, which, after having discharged from all her contests on the earth, and rescued from the jaws of the grave, in which the bodies of the greater part had been detained, he will bless with everlasting felicity in heaven. "In Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order, Christ the first-fruits; afterwards, they that are Christ's, at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father, &c."

XXXVII. Whilst all these privileges pertain to the whole body of the Church, every member of the mystical body individually, is blessed with a share of them, according to his own proportion. And since all believers are very intimately connected together by the bond of mutual love, each will regard what is given to the whole society, as conferred upon himself. Who that considers these things would not exclaim; "Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts; we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple. By terrible things in righteousness, wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation, who art the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off upon the sea."

XXXVIII. But further, that faith which respects the Holy Church of Christ, requires and infers the offices of Charity towards her. How can we, without crime, be void of love to a society of men, who are the care of Angels, and the delight of Heaven? 1st, Let us beware, therefore, lest in any instance we ever injure the Church; all the injuries done to which, the Lord will avenge as done to himself; Acts 9:4, 5. Who that ever engaged in any enterprize against her, has not had the worst possible success? "And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people; all that burden themselves with it, shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it." On this subject instruction may be received from the ignominious and dreadful exits of Pharaoh, Sennacherib, Haman, Herod, and others without number, both in ancient and modern times. 2dly, Let us diligently inquire into the fortunes of the Church as detailed in the prophecies of Scripture, that, by a kind of holy ingenuity of faith, we may gather from the contests with which she has been already exercised, what she has further to fear or to hope for:—adoring on every occasion, the admirable ways of the Lord. "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy."r 3dly Let us tenderly sympathize with the Church in her adversities. 4thly, Let us rejoice in her prosperity, congratulating her in affectionate terms; "The Lord bless thee, O habitation of justice, and mountain of holiness."t

—"That I may see the good of thy chosen, that I may rejoice in the gladness of thy nation, that I may glory with thine inheritance." 5thly, Let us promote the edification of the Church by all the means in our power, by discourses, by labours, by prayers. "For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake will I not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth."v "For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee; because of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek thy good."

XXXIX. This is a duty which all of every rank and condition are bound to perform. Let the princes of this world devote entirely to the enlargement of Christ's kingdom, that sceptre, and that dignity, which they have received from Christ. "Kings shall be thy nursing-fathers, and their queens thy nursing-mothers." Let rulers of Churches esteem it the sole business committed to them, to exert their abilities with unwearied diligence in promoting the interests of the Church. "I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence."y Let believers of the common people remember, that it is incumbent on them also, by holy conferences on religion, and by the example of an irreproachable life, to allure to the fellowship of the Church, and to confirm in her communion, first of all, their domestics; then their neighbours; and in fine, all of every description with whom they have intercourse. "Wherefore, comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do," &c. And here I include even our wives,a and our daughters, whom it no less becomes to lend their assistance in building the walls of the spiritual Jerusalem, than it became the daughters of Shallum of old to repair the walls of the earthly Jerusalem. And who is there, in short, that is not under indispensable obligations to offer up daily prayers on behalf of the Church? "Thy kingdom come." "Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion; build thou the walls of Jerusalem."c "Oh! that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! When the Lord bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad."

XL. The article in the Creed immediately following, namely, that of THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS, is so closely connected with the one relating to the Holy Catholic Church, that it appears to be nearly the same. For what is the Church but a Society? What is a Society, but the union of persons possessing some privilege in common? Who are they, besides, that compose the Church, excepting the Saints? What is the Catholic Church, in fine, but the association of Gentiles with Jews in the paths of holiness? Hence also this additional article of the Communion of Saints, is not found in many of the ancient copies of the Creed. It is not in Jerome against the Luciferians, nor in Augustine on Faith and the Creed, nor in Rufinus, nor in Maximus of Turin; and many others, both in the East and West, have purposely omitted it. Yet as it is now received amongst all Christians, and as it expresses more explicitly some ideas which are rather implied in the article respecting the Church, we shall now briefly treat of it. Let us show, First, Whom we are here to understand by SAINTS. Secondly, In what the COMMUNION OF SAINTS consists. Thirdly, What is implied in BELIEVING the Communion of Saints.

XLI. God is eminently, originally, and exemplarily HOLY; for he is infinitely removed from all that is vile and impure. Rational creatures that are conformed to God's image in purity, that is, who resemble him in the love and practice of truth, are also called holy. This honourable epithet, accordingly, is ascribed to Angels. We read of the "holy Angels;" and they are termed absolutely "Saints," or "holy ones."g But it is attributed, likewise, to men, whether they still remain on earth, or have been received into heaven and crowned with perfection and glory. The Psalmist speaks of "the saints that are in the earth, and the excellent;" and the Apostle, of "the spirits of just men made perfect."i

XLII. COMMUNION is a certain relation subsisting between several persons, who by an undoubted title are in possession of the same privileges. Thus, there is a communion betwixt husband and wife, of persons as well as goods, by an equal right on each side, according to the rule, Ubi tu Caius, ego Caia.* And truly it cannot be denied that

there is a certain communion betwixt all that are called Holy. Believers have undoubtedly communion with God and Christ, as we have lately remarked from Scripture; for they are God's portion, and at the same time have God for their portion,^k and consequently, whatever belongs to God, belongs also to believers. And Christ not only shares his good things with them,^m but took their evil things upon himself. There is also a communion of holy men with Angels, who cheerfully perform their ministrations for us,^o and are our patterns of piety towards God, our fellow-servants in obedience to the same Lord,^q and our associates in the same felicity. Hence Paul represents believers who are still on the earth, as having "come to an innumerable company of angels."^s But what is chiefly intended in the Creed, is the communion which holy men have with one another.

XLIII. This again may be considered in three different views. 1st, As the Saints in heaven hold fellowship with one another. 2dly, The Saints that are on earth, with the blessed in heaven. 3dly, The Saints on earth, with each other. That those parts of the Church which are in heaven, are joined together by a mutual communion, which is even more intimate than the fellowship betwixt them and the blessed Angels, no one, I suppose, entertains a doubt. They are at once members of the same mystical body, and enjoy the same glory and felicity, whilst they behold the face of the same God, are blessed through the merit of the same Redeemer, join with perfect harmony in the same songs of praise to God, and love one another with the most ardent affection. But since the Scripture says very little on this subject, and since the Creed contains principally such articles as are both most certain and most necessary, and appears to have been intended for the use of Catechumens, who, when about to be admitted to baptism, were examined concerning the faith,—it is not likely that the compilers of the Creed, in framing this article, had much in their view, that communion which the spirits of the faithful have with one another in heaven.

XLIV. The Scripture more expressly teaches the communion of saints on earth with the blessed spirits above. Paul at least makes mention

of "the gathering together in one of all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth." The original expression signifies the gathering together into one sum, as in computation, all the particulars are united and mixed together in one complete sum. It is said to be the gathering together "of all things," not surely of all creatures, or even of all mankind, but of all believers,—of all that are in Christ. "Both which are in heaven, and which are on earth:" for those in heaven are very closely joined to one another, and bound together "in the bundle of life," of the living, much more than when they were in the body; and those that are on earth, are associated with the blessed in heaven. "Ye are come," says Paul, "unto mount Zion, ... to the general assembly and church of the first-born which are written in heaven, ... and "to the spirits of just men made perfect."v Now this communion consists in the following things. 1st, That having one God and one Saviour, and animated by the same Spirit, they constitute one body, whose parts are indeed widely separated from each other with regard to distance of local situation, but maintained in close mutual connexion by the same Spirit of Christ. 2dly, That the souls of the blessed, although they be entirely ignorant of the particular persons of believers on earth, and of their necessities, yet by their earnest prayers unite with us in soliciting, and, so to speak, accelerating, the day of the complete redemption of the Church;x whilst the saints on earth are associated with those in heaven, in spirit, affection, and desire, having their conversation in heaven.

XLV. But we are chiefly to attend to the communion which believers have with each other on the earth. This includes three heads. 1st, That intimate union, by which, how far removed soever as to place, they are mutually joined together by the Spirit; not merely as brethren, but, what we have already often inculcated, as members of one mystical body. 2dly, Their enjoyment in common, of the most invaluable blessings. "There is one body, one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all." 3dly, The reciprocation of offices of kindness, which they perform to one another. This may be viewed as

consisting of three parts. 1. Sympathy in evil things: by which every one condoles with his neighbour in afflictive evils, and hastens to his relief, no less than if himself were visited with the same adversities;— and in moral evils, far from treating a fallen brother with cruelty, every one endeavours to restore him in the spirit of meekness. 2. The communication of good things; as well temporal, as spiritual. We have a mutual dependance on each other; which the Apostle nobly urges and illustrates.^h 3. The devout offering up of prayers for one another, as to those matters in which it is not in our power to avert evil from our brethren, or to confer on them what is good.

XLVI. That FAITH which we profess regarding the communion of Saints, implies principally the three following particulars. 1st, That we recognise and celebrate the admirable power of our God, which unites believers of every nation, age, condition and sex, often separated from one another by such vast intervening spaces of land and sea, of such dissimilar capacities and tempers, and engaged in such diversified pursuits; and so closely conjoins them by one Spirit, that they most harmoniously concur in the same sentiments and feelings respecting God and Christ, and in the same devout prayers and praises, and discern in each other, with mutual congratulation and applause, the same effects of the same Divine grace; so that, even at their first meeting, a most delightful interchange of love often arises.

XLVII. 2dly, That we regulate our life and conduct in a manner becoming the communion of Saints. 1. That we promote, as far as possible, the unity of the Church, and carefully take heed, not to disturb the peace of this sacred society by unnecessary controversies, hot disputations, ambitious projects, or perverse passions of any kind; but, making many allowances for human infirmity, and for those imperfections under which we all labour,—to cultivate assiduously that harmony which Christ so earnestly inculcates upon us, and promote it to the utmost of our power, by fervent prayers, and by a Christian moderation of spirit. 2. That we edify one another by the communication of spiritual gifts. This is the duty not merely of

Pastors, but of believers of every class. This includes, administering reproof to an offending brother; k which, when guided by prudence, and dictated by love, obtains, in the issue, greater favour than the fulsome compliments of flattering lips:—The instruction of the ignorant: m—Mutual excitement to pious zeal:—Holy conferences, with fellowship in prayers and hymns. o The communion of Saints ought, doubtless, to flourish not only in churches, but also in private houses. And it is lamentable, that in the present state of Christianity, these exercises of social piety are become so antiquated, or are sometimes so injudiciously performed, that they are even hateful and odious to many. 3. That we comfort the poor, the sick, the afflicted in mind and body, by our conversation, our prayers, our kind offices. It is wonderful, and in these days almost incredible, how admirably the primitive Christians expressed their love for one another. From numberless instances of this, I may now select one, which Eusebius relates.* At the time when a dreadful pestilence and famine prevailed, after Maximin had issued against the Christians his cruel decrees, "the heathen every where beheld a striking proof of the piety and universal benevolence of the Christians. Amidst calamities so numerous and so severe, they alone exhibited in substantial deeds, the offices of mercy and humanity. They daily employed themselves, partly in protecting and burying the bodies of the dead, (for innumerable multitudes, of whom no person took care, died every day;) and partly in distributing provisions to all the indigent in the whole city that were pining for hunger, whom they collected for that purpose. The consequence was, that this was extensively talked of and divulged, and all men highly extolled the God of the Christians, and confessed that they alone had approved themselves in deed and in truth the sincere worshippers of God."

XLVIII. 3dly, That we seek in this communion the solace of our souls. What can be more delightful than the mutual fellowship of brethren, mingled together, as Tertullian expresses it, in spirit and soul! What more amiable than the reciprocal offices of love, and the holy familiarity of the friends of God, edifying, admonishing, and comforting one another, and uniting in the same supplications and

spiritual songs! How refreshing is it to the soul of an afflicted saint, if at any time he becomes languid in prayer, to encourage himself by the thought, that there are so many myriads of believers making intercession for him with our common Father! With what cordial congratulation does he rejoice in the gifts of the Divine liberality towards his brethren, which he knows are granted for this purpose, that they may prove subservient to the general good, and that their salutary fruit may extend to himself also, as a part of the whole community! For of so ingenuous a nature is Christian charity, that, on account of the gathering together of all things in Christ, she considers what belongs to each of the brethren as her own. In this communion of Saints, in fine, there is a kind of prelude of heaven, where there will be no private or separate interest, but ONE GOD SHALL BE ALL IN ALL.

DISSERTATION XXV: ON THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS

I. ALTHOUGH high encomiums are pronounced on the holiness of the Christian Church, yet while she continues in her militant state on earth, she is never without her blemishes; and is far from that perfection, which she hopes at last to obtain in heaven. Here indeed she is "fair," but yet "as the moon." The moon being herself void of light, borrows all her light from the sun; as her increases and decreases, at stated intervals; is sometimes eclipsed even when full; and, though she suffer no eclipse, always discovers her spots. So the Church is in herself mere darkness, becomes light only "in the Lord,"^b and shines, in so far, merely, as she is clothed with that Sun. Nor does she always prosecute her pious course with uniform constancy, or with equal vigour and alacrity. Sometimes she makes progress, when her "path is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."^d But sometimes also she declines, when, owing to the intervention of a thick cloud of temptations or a dark mass of earthly perplexities, she sustains no inconsiderable loss of light. Nay, there is no period at which the piercing eye of the Lord doth not discern her spots in her.^f And her faith and hope would utterly perish, were they not supported by the free FORGIVENESS OF SINS, which God promises in the Gospel, and the faith of which she herself professes. "If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? but there is forgiveness with thee."

II. We come now to speak in order of this FORGIVENESS OF SINS. It will be proper to show, first, what SIN is, and what guilt or debt it implies; secondly, what is intended by the FORGIVENESS of sins; and lastly, what it is to BELIEVE the forgiveness of sins.

III. SIN is a transgression or violation of that most holy law, which God, the supreme Lord of all, has prescribed to reasonable creatures. We lay it down as a first principle, that God is the absolute Lord of all

that are without himself. This absolute dominion is founded in the independence and other perfections of God, and in that universal dependance of all creatures on God, which the very conception or idea of them, necessarily includes. "Forasmuch as there is none like unto thee, O Lord; thou art great, and thy name is great in might;" so that it is "a more excellent name,"ⁱ having all the power and authority of the greatest name: "Who would not fear thee, O King of nations, for to thee doth it appertain." By virtue of this authority, and for the manifestation of this dominion, God has prescribed laws to his reasonable creatures. "The LORD is our Lawgiver; the LORD is our King." "There is one Lawgiver, who is able "to save and to destroy."^l In the law which he has given, he has not only expressed the good pleasure of his will, which cannot be otherwise than most holy, but also proposed that Holiness which is natural to himself, as a pattern to man,ⁿ whom he created after his own image. Now, all these obligations are violated by sin. It involves a contempt and renunciation of the dominion of God, defection, and shaking off the yoke. It is a revolt,^{*} and a neglect of obedience,[†] so that you omit the duties commanded; nay, even rebellion,[‡] so that you oppose his authority, and commit what is forbidden. "We have transgressed, and have "rebelled."^o—"The rebels, and them that transgress "against me."—Again, sin is a transgression of the Divine Law.^q—In fine, sin includes a perverseness,[§] a crookedness,^{||} contrary to that rectitude, of which indeed there is a transcript in the law,^r but the archetype is in God himself, and the living copy was in the first man.^t To this, that expression of Elihu refers: "I have perverted that which was right."

IV. As there is criminality in sin, so it cannot but infer great misery to the sinning creature. Both are elegantly pointed out by a Hebrew word,^{*} which properly signifies wandering from the marks. It denotes infelicity,[†] so that one comes short of what is proposed, and falls into the contrary, to wit, misery.[‡] The mark which man ought to propose to himself is true happiness, consisting in the fellowship and image of God. The sinner wanders from this mark, proposing something else to himself as his end; or not taking his aim aright, as

to the object towards which, or the manner in which, he should have aimed. He acts a part, too, contrary to his incumbent duty; for he cannot without crime neglect or contemn the end for the prosecution of which he was created: and he renders himself miserable, because he not only deprives himself of his proper good, which consists in attaining the end of his existence; but brings himself under obligations to restore to Him who is his Chief end and happiness, that glory of which he has robbed him.

V. It is particularly proper, distinctly to consider in every sin, the Stain and the Guilt. The stain is that pollution with which sin defiles the soul, repugnant to the Divine purity, the image of which man ought clearly to exhibit in his heart and conduct. "These are the things which defile a man." "Thus were they defiled with their own works."x Hence sin is represented as an unclean things, and as a leprosy. Guilt is an obligation to punishment "The judgment, the guilt, was by one to condemnation." In this view, sins are called debts, because they render men amenable, and obnoxious to punishment. According to the Apostle, to be "under sin,"c and to "become guilty before God," are convertible expressions. The Stain of sin has a reference properly to the unspotted holiness of God expressed in the precepts of the law, which it opposes; and hence arise the detestation and abhorrence in which God holds it, who "is of purer eyes than to behold evil." Guilt has a respect to the avenging justice of God: "Shall I not visit for these things, saith the Lord? shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?"—And to the sanction of the law: "Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law, to do them."g

VI. Further, guilt sometimes denotes the demerit of sin, by which, on account of its intrinsic evil and turpitude, it deserves to be punished; in reference to which the Apostle says, it is "the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death:" And sometimes it denotes actual obligation to punishment, which will be accompanied by condemnation itself, and the infliction of the punishment; "He that believeth not, is condemned already." In the

former sense, guilt cannot be separated from sin. Every sin includes in it a contempt of the Divine Majesty, and there is therefore no imaginable sin, which is not deserving of punishment. Nay, it may be affirmed further, that there is no sin at all, which is not actually punished, either in the sinner himself, or in his Surety. Hence it follows, if we wish to speak precisely, that even an actual obligation to the infliction of punishment is inseparable from sin. This obligation may be removed from the sinner, indeed, when sin with its guilt is transferred to the Surety, who makes satisfaction for him, in consequence of which, the principal debtor is absolved from making payment. It cannot be removed, however, from sin itself; for God, even when he pardons, doth "by no means clear the guilty." In this sense the following words of Paul are to be understood: "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus."k The meaning is not, that there is no sin in them, or that their sin doth not merit condemnation, or that by a dispensation on the part of God, their sin is exempted from actual obligation to punishment. But, Christ having suffered condemnation in their room, the sin which was punished in the Surety, cannot be punished a second time in them. In short, all sin involves an actual obligation to punishment; but with this difference, that some, having no Surety, are bound to undergo the punishment themselves, whilst others make satisfaction, not in their own persons, but in the person of a Surety.

VII. THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS, therefore, is, the absolution of the sinner from guilt which Christ took upon himself; or, the declaration of God the Lawgiver and Judge, that on account of the satisfaction made by Christ the Surety, the sinner shall not suffer the punishment which he has deserved. Since that satisfaction, too, was of necessity accompanied with a most complete righteousness, which obtains a title to life, it follows, that he who is absolved from guilt and condemnation as if he had never committed any sin, has a right to eternal life adjudged to him, no less than if he himself had fulfilled all that righteousness which the law requires. They whose sins are forgiven, are accordingly pronounced blessed.

VIII. Further, the forgiveness of sins may be considered either absolutely, as it is a blessing of the covenant of grace, equally pertaining to all believers in all ages; or under certain circumstances, which are diversified according to the varied economy of the covenant of grace.

IX. Even from the beginning, owing to the surety-ship righteousness of Christ, sin, after having been committed, could not be imputed to believers, because it was charged on the Surety, and it was to be laid upon him, and exacted from him. So that the will to punish the sins of believers on themselves neither was, nor indeed could be in God; for it is contrary to justice and equity that the same debt be twice demanded.

X. It pleased God, immediately after the fall, in the first promulgation of the Covenant of grace, to reveal to man, his merciful determination not to inflict on believers the punishment due to their sin. The same words in which he passed a condemnatory sentence on the devil, contained a promise of the grace of Christ unto righteousness.

XI. He also applied, brought home, and intimated that grace to individual believers, that they might know they were restored to a state of favour with God, and that their sins should not hinder them from possessing the heavenly inheritance;—that they might even delight in the love of God towards them, and have the full assurance of the hope of eternal felicity;—that in fine, after the afflictions of this life, they might, as the friends and the sons of God, be actually received into everlasting joys.

XII. Where these happy privileges are found, (and they were experienced from the beginning,) no man of a sound judgment will deny, that there is a real and a full remission of sins. Hence even under the Old Testament, God is described as "forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin;"—Abraham our father is said to have been justified;—it was said to David, "The LORD also hath put away thy

sin, thou shalt not die;"—and Christ is introduced making intercession in these words, "Deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom."q Thus far the forgiveness of sins is a blessing of the covenant of grace, equally belonging to all believers of every age.

XIII. Some diversity must be admitted, nevertheless, in the mode of forgiveness, corresponding to the diversity of the Old and New Testament. 1st, The satisfaction of the Lord Jesus, which is the sole meritorious cause of pardon, is considered under the Old Testament as promised by Christ, and to be performed at the time appointed; but under the New Testament as actually accomplished and performed. Now, the righteousness, or that for which we are justified, has an actual existence. Now, the "everlasting righteousness" is brought in.s Now, expiation is made by the blood of the Surety, and eternal redemption is obtained. It was not so, in ancient times. 2dly, There is a difference also as to the manner of promulgation. Whilst the legal economy was in force, the promises of grace and of the forgiveness of sins, were more obscurely, and more sparingly set forth; and were generally mixed with the terror of legal threatenings. 3dly, Under the Old Testament, expiation being not yet made, sin might still be called to remembrance, and the hand-writing be demanded, which contained an acknowledgment of the debt not yet paid by the Surety, and was thus far "against us, and contrary to us." Under the New Testament, expiation having been made, a remission is granted of such a nature, as is quite incompatible with a typical oblation, calling sin to remembrance;w and the hand-writing is cancelled, and nailed to the cross. In short, the forgiveness of the Old Testament was not inconsistent with the bondage of the elements of the world, from which we are completely delivered by the forgiveness of the New. 4thly, The sense of the remission of sins, the consolation it affords, the liberty of access to God, and the sealing of the Spirit of grace, are more abundant, more frequent, and more penetrating, under the New Testament, in "the kingdom of God, which is righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost," than

under the Old Testament and legal economy; the inward operations of the Spirit being suited to the mode of the external dispensation.

XIV. It seems proper to observe, further, that the forgiveness of sins, even as it is enjoyed chiefly under the New Testament, is distinguished by various steps. The first of these is that general declaration, by which God has announced, that his justice is amply satisfied by the death of Christ, and that therefore he will demand satisfaction for their sins from none of those who belong to Christ, having already given a discharge in the resurrection of the Surety. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." The iniquity of the whole earth was then removed in one day.^z In the next place, what is thus declared in general respecting all, is applied to particular believers. 1. When a man who is regenerated and united to Christ by a living faith, is declared to have now actually passed from that state of condemnation and wrath in which he remains till he is by faith united to the Saviour, into a state of righteousness and grace,— "That he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." 2. When the sentence then pronounced in the court of heaven, is intimated and brought home to the conscience by the Holy Spirit, who makes us "to hear joy and gladness."^b 3. When the sinner is re-admitted to familiar fellowship with God, and to the mutual intercourse of delightful friendship. This frequently takes place after a believer has repented of some heinous sin, or awaked from a torpid condition of soul, by which his communion with God was not a little marred. We find David soliciting such a restoration. Then God, in very deed, declares, that he is become propitious to the sinner; applies to this gross iniquity or this languishing condition in particular, the general sentence respecting the forgiveness of all sins which is pronounced immediately after regeneration; and in answer to his earnest supplication, restores the cheering light of his countenance. 4. When, in the very article of death, God assigns to the believer's departing spirit as the object of his generous friendship and love, a mansion of eternal felicity, of which he had, by his sins, rendered himself exceedingly unworthy. 5. When, lastly, in the great

day of final judgment, the forgiveness and grace which God, for Christ's sake, confers on his elect, will be openly proclaimed before an assembled universe, and gloriously manifested.^e Then what is promised in the book of Revelation shall be fully accomplished: "To him that overcometh will I give ... a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it."⁷⁵

XV. That FAITH which we profess to have as to the forgiveness of sins, comprises numerous and important mysteries regarding our salvation. First, We confess that we are chargeable not merely with one sin, but with many and highly aggravated sins. We confess also, that on account of our transgressions, God might justly cast us into the prison of hell, whence we should not be permitted to escape till we had paid the uttermost farthing.^h We acknowledge the righteousness of all those judgments which God inflicts upon us, to manifest his wrath, and his hatred of sin. We confess, in fine, that our salvation must not be sought in any merits, or in any satisfaction, of our own; but in the free remission of our debts, which we are equally unable to deny and to clear. The attentive consideration, and sincere confession of these truths, are highly useful and necessary to produce in us that humility and that holy self-despair, without which we can neither participate of the Divine favour, nor flee to Christ as our refuge, nor build a firm and solid hope on his grace. Let this, therefore, be the prayer of the soul trembling before God at the sight of its offences: "I have sinned; what shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver of men."^k "Enter not into judgment with thy servant; for in thy sight shall no man living be justified."

XVI. Secondly, We ascribe this glory to God, that he can grant us the pardon of our sins in a manner that will reflect no discredit on any of his attributes, but on the contrary, afford a bright manifestation of them all. If one carefully consider the all-sufficiency of the Divine perfections according to that idea of the Supreme Being which is impressed by nature on our minds, he will possibly conclude, or at least conjecture; that it is not altogether beyond the range of

possibility, that a just and holy God may be reconciled to a sinner. This hope is cherished by observing the Divine patience and long-suffering, by which he not only bears with sinners, but also invites them to seek his face. But that method of forgiving sin which alone is worthy of God, could never have been discovered by the utmost efforts of the human mind. And whilst that scheme is utterly unknown, it is hardly possible, that the mind which weighs in a just balance the importance of so momentous a concern, could venture to entertain the firm expectation of pardon. Here the Gospel comes in to our relief, and shows to the anxious mind a plan in which conscience acquiesces as most worthy of God, and according to which he displays, in the forgiveness of sins, at once the inexorable rigour of his justice, and the incredible tenderness of his mercy; the guilt of our sins being transferred to the Surety, who has cheerfully fulfilled his engagements, and most completely freed himself and all his people from the guilt which he undertook to bear. This is the glory which, conformably to the doctrine of the Gospel, Christian faith ascribes to God when it says, I believe the forgiveness of sins. "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage. He retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy."

XVII. Thirdly, But faith does not stop here. Assured that the forgiveness of sins is laid up in Christ, the believer betakes himself to him, that he may obtain for himself for his own salvation, that which is promised, as he learns from the Gospel, to all believers. "Let him return to the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." And truly it is impossible for a man to believe that remission of sins is granted, which can be certainly found in the satisfaction and merits of Christ alone, without being inflamed at the same time with an ardent desire that himself may be blessed with the participation of so great a benefit, and without resolutely having recourse to the quarter where he cannot seek it in vain. "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ." "Surely shall one

say, In the LORD have I righteousness and strength. Even to him shall men come ... In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory".

XVIII. Here it is necessary to stand greatly on our guard, that we may proceed in the right method. 1st, It behoves the sinner to be so convinced of his sins as to acknowledge them with the deepest grief, shame, and detestation, and even to confess that he is guilty of more than he is able to conceive. 2dly, Under the consciousness of his crimes, his soul must then tremble at the tribunal of God, the most righteous Judge, aware also that he is unable to sustain the Divine anger, and that neither himself nor any other mere creature in the universe, whether man or angel, can make satisfaction to that Divine justice, which he has so often offended. 3dly, Hence, whilst the soul is engaged in meditating on itself and on God, arise sorrow, contrition, and a certain holy despair of relief from itself, and from all other creatures; for these sacrifices are highly pleasing to God. 4thly, Let the man, besides, make a sincere, free, full, and affecting confession of his sins in the presence of God, and condemn himself beforehand, that God, beholding his ingenuity, may the more readily absolve him. 5thly, Let him, next, with deep humility, and without the least reserve, surrender and resign himself to God, that he may do with him what is good in his eyes: Just as the servants of the king of Syria presented themselves to Ahab with sackcloth on their loins, and ropes on their heads, as if they surrendered themselves to disgrace, to imprisonment, to the halter itself. 6thly, Let him, in the mean time, pray with tears and unutterable groans, not once or twice merely, but by often reiterated supplications, beseeching and imploring, that if required to taste the bitterness of his sins, and to bear the rod of fatherly correction, he may not, however, be rebuked in wrath, nor punished in hot displeasure, but permitted at last to behold the face of his Father; and that some beam of continued favour may shine from his countenance through the cloud of his just indignation,—protesting that he is ready even to suffer death for the sake of so highly valued a privilege. 7thly, Relying by faith on the merits and intercession of Christ, let him, in fine, venture to hope for

pardon,y provided he sincerely promise that in future he will diligently watch against all iniquity, and be prepared to forgive the offences done him by his neighbour.a

XIX. Fourthly, After a man, proceeding in this manner, has by faith relied on Christ for obtaining forgiveness of sins, he advances by degrees to such holy confidence, that from sure and infallible signs, to which the secret testimony of the Divine Spirit is added, he concludes and professes, that now all his sins are forgiven for Christ's sake, and that the door of heaven is opened, affording free access to the throne of grace and glory—which brings inexpressible joy to the mind. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." "Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering."c

XX. But we must take heed lest, in place of a well-assured faith, a bold and headlong presumption take possession of our mind. We shall be able to distinguish the one from the other, if we attend to what goes before, to what accompanies, and to what follows this assurance. The things which go before it, are those which we have stated in order in the eighteenth Section, namely, unfeigned sorrow for our violations and neglects of duty, the fear and trembling of a mind that dreads the offended justice of God, holy self-despair, an ingenuous confession of our trespasses, earnest prayers, the flight of the trembling soul to the merits of Christ not without the hope of forgiveness, and in fine, resolutions of more pious and circumspect behaviour in time to come. It is not to be imagined, that God ever speaks pardon and peace to the soul, which continues to sleep securely in its sins, and neglects to condemn itself, and by importunate supplications to solicit the favour of God in Christ. "He shall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him; and he shall see his face with joy, for he will render unto man his righteousness. He looketh upon men, and saith, I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not."77

XXI. This assurance of forgiveness is accompanied by the conscientious cultivation of accurate holiness. The promises of justification and of sanctification being equally extensive, no man can claim the former, who doth not also find the latter in himself. "Wash you, make you clean, &c. Learn to do well, &c. Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord, Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, &c." As often as the Holy Spirit speaks to the heart in his own gracious language, saying, "Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee," he at the same time convinces the soul of its unworthiness, and fills it with admiration of so great kindness, and with joyful gratitude, which constrains it to celebrate the stupendous grace of God. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, ... who forgiveth all thine iniquities."f

XXII. In fine, a fervent love to God and our neighbour follows this assurance. Who would not ardently love Him, by whom, he believes that, when he might justly have inflicted punishment, so many and so great offences have been graciously forgiven! "I love the Lord," says David, "because he hath heard my voice and my supplications." And what was the sum of his supplications? "O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul."h—The love of God, too, is joined with reverence. "There is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared." And the fear of God is a powerful preservative of the soul from sin. Far be it, that he who is sure that his iniquities are forgiven him, should thence arrogate to himself a liberty of sinning.k—The love of God and of Jesus towards us, kindles also in our heart love to our neighbour, so that we are ready for Christ's sake to forgive him. "Even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye."

XXIII. To enable us to form a right estimate of the greatness of their felicity, who have obtained from God the remission of their sins, it is proper to consider the extreme misery of the sinner whose transgressions are still unpardoned. Sin is truly a burden, which it is not merely difficult, but impossible, to bear; and which brought down to the dust the magnanimous Lion of the tribe of Judah, when, having taken on himself the guilt of our crimes, he was required to

make satisfaction for them. But if, perhaps, the mind of the sinner doth not feel itself greatly burdened or weighed down by them, whilst he securely indulges in them as his pleasure, let him wait a little. "Sin lieth at the door,"ⁿ like a furious mastiff, awaking from his sleep, ready to rush suddenly upon him, and to show no more pity to his soul, than was shown of old by the dogs to the carcase of Jezebel.

XXIV. The unpardoned sinner is unquestionably destitute of a sense and taste of the Divine loving-kindness, without which even life is not life. He is not permitted to behold the face of God as a reconciled Father,^q which ought to be regarded as more grievous than death itself. In vain does he expect any kind words from the mouth of God, who is either silent in his wrath, or severely reproveth, and denounces condemnation.^s Let him not entertain the least hope of admission to heaven; for its gates are barred against him. He is banished from that paradise, and all access to it is eternally prevented.

XXV. But if he happen to enjoy a considerable share of the advantages of the present life, these are to him, merely what the quails were to the Israelites, which they perversely demanded, and in which they ate death to themselves, or what a new suit of fine clothes is to those who are condemned to hang on the ignominious cross. He possesses those worldly advantages with the men "who have their portion in this life."^v He has nothing farther to expect, "but a certain fearful looking-for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." Nay, his present enjoyments contain a seed, from which he shall reap never-ending torments; according to that expression: "How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and misery give her."^x

XXVI. So dreadful is the plague of unpardoned sin, that it pervades the sinner himself in all the parts of his nature; and infects, with a hideous contagion, whatever belongs to him, whether at home or abroad, whether in the city or in the field, whether prosperous or unfavourable; and renders all that concerns him cursed and execrable, just as is the sinner himself.

XXVII. All these evils, too, are only the beginnings of sorrows. There remain the never-dying worm of a conscience that gnaws without mercy, the unquenchable flames of hell, the reproaches of malignant devils, and what is chiefly to be considered, the intolerable weight of the wrath and vengeance of God to abide on the sinner through all eternity. These are not the vain terrors of weak minds, but the true and faithful words of God. Such is the deplorable condition of those whose sins are not forgiven.

XXVIII. Hence appears, on the other hand, the blessedness of those "whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered, unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity." Christ is justly honoured with the name of JESUS, or the SAVIOUR, because he obtains this blessing for his people, and bestows it upon them. Rejoice, ye happy souls, who are admitted to the participation of so invaluable a benefit. You need not tremble at the name of hell, or quake for fear at the mention of heaven: to you the former is shut, the latter open. You need not be afraid of the calumnies of Satan, or of those accusations, worthy of his name, which he brings against you. "The accuser of the brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night." And if he should even stand at your right hand to resist you, he shall hear again what was said to him of old, according to Zechariah: "The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan; even the LORD that hath chosen Jerusalem, rebuke thee." You need not dread the tribunal of your own conscience. It will upbraid you indeed with numerous crimes, and crimes which you have really done; but purified by the blood of Jesus and by faith in him, it will attest that they are all blotted out and cancelled by the merits of Christ. Whatever conscience may do, God, even in this respect, is a greater and higher Judge than our heart. "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?" &c.

XXIX. That hostility which once subsisted betwixt God and you is now removed, and happily exchanged for the most delightful intercourse of mutual friendship. "For I will not contend for ever," saith God, "neither will I be always wroth; for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made.... I have seen his ways,

and will heal him: I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him and to his mourners." You may now approach the throne of grace with all filial freedom, and with confidence pour out all the sorrows and all the joys of your heart into the bosom of God, as a most indulgent Father. He is liberal in the manifestation of his kindness. To his ministers he gives the following commission: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God," &c.g And he himself speaks to the soul by the secret whisper of his Spirit: "Thou shalt be called Hephzi-bah, my delight; ... And as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee." "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you."i

XXX. All these felicities, however, are but an earnest of those eternal blessings to which they whose sins are forgiven on account of the infinitely meritorious righteousness of Christ, have a title no less valid, than if they had never been guilty of any offence, and had in their own persons rendered the most perfect obedience to the law. "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound; that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord."

DISSERTATION XXVI: ON THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY, AND THE LIFE EVERLASTING

I. IN the sacred records I find three kinds of RESURRECTION mentioned; of which we may call one CIVIL, a second SPIRITUAL, and the third, the Resurrection of the BODY.

II. A deliverance from any dreadful calamity and peril, or a restoration from a miserable to a more prosperous state, may be

styled a CIVIL Resurrection; for as a calamitous condition is called death, so a happy one is termed life. A resurrection of this sort may be experienced, either by individuals, or by an entire society or state. We have an instance of the former in David; "O Lord, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave; thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit:"—In Hezekiah; "So wilt thou recover me, and make me to live:"^b—And in Paul; "God who raiseth the dead, who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver; in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us." A free constitution, under a just and legitimate magistrate, whom the Israelites were accustomed to call "the breath of their nostrils,"^d—is the life of a State. The loss of a free government, is death; its restoration, is a resurrection. To this may be referred the following expression in Hosea:—"He hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days "will he revive us, in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight." The thirty-seventh Chapter of Ezekiel, too, is particularly worthy of notice. We have there a long and elegant allegory, setting forth the deplorable condition of Israel during the Babylonish captivity under the emblem of "an open valley, covered with dry bones," and their happy restoration under the similitude of a resurrection. That passage, however, is also to be viewed as affording a type and a pledge of the general resurrection.

III. The SPIRITUAL Resurrection, is the raising of men from the death of sin to the life of God. This, again, is the resurrection, either of individuals, or of the Church at large. Of the former, we read in the following words: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead," that is, the dead in sin, "shall hear the voice of the Son of God," to wit, the preaching of the Gospel, accompanied with the quickening energy of the Spirit of Christ, "and they that hear," that receive the Gospel with the obedience of faith, shall live." Such a resurrection is ascribed to the Church at large, when she is blessed with a remarkable increase of spiritual life, as well with regard to the number of her living members, as with respect to the gifts of Divine grace with which they are enriched,—knowledge, holiness, joy, peace, and the like. Hence Paul informs us,

that the receiving of the Jews will be to the Church as "life from the dead." And the nature of the life which the Church is then to enjoy, is explained by Isaiah.h

IV. The Resurrection of the BODY, is the raising to life of the same body which death had dissolved, by re-uniting the soul to it. To this the following things are necessary. 1. The conservation in the hand of God, of the particles into which the dead body was resolved. 2. The conservation of the soul also, to be re-united to the body in due time. 3. The re-formation of the same body from those very particles of which it formerly consisted, and the preparation of it to be a suitable habitation for the soul. 4. The renewed union of the soul with the body thus prepared. 5. The life of the whole compound being, resulting from that union.

V. This resurrection of the body is that great mystery of Christianity, without which the Gospel is vain, and our faith and hope are vain, and the consolation of those who have undergone the severest sufferings for Christ, is either small indeed, or no consolation at all. Justly does Tertullian begin his book on the Resurrection of the body with the following words: "The Resurrection of the dead, is the support of Christians."* An article of our faith, therefore, so sublime and momentous, must be examined with the greatest attention. In treating it, we may observe the following arrangement. We shall show, First, That there will be a resurrection of bodies. Secondly, That there will be a resurrection of the same bodies, with regard to substance. Thirdly, That the resurrection will be universal, extending both to the righteous and to the wicked. Fourthly, We may inquire, further, whether the resurrection of all and of every individual is to take place at one and the same time; or whether the resurrection of believers, or at least of martyrs, is to precede the resurrection of others a thousand years. Fifthly, We shall speak, in fine, of that LIFE EVERLASTING, which will be the consequence of the blessed resurrection of the godly.

VI. In the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, the God of truth affirms, that the resurrection of the body will certainly take place; and Reason, when divinely instructed, confirms the doctrine. The passages relative to this topic in the Old Testament, in conformity to the nature of the ancient dispensation, are indeed less perspicuous; yet they are convincing, and particularly so to us, to whom they are placed in a clearer light, by the interpretations of Christ and his Apostles. Let us hear our Lord himself reasoning from Moses: "As touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." The words quoted by our Lord, it is to be observed, were spoken by God after the patriarchs had been long dead.^k Hence it is inferred, in the first place, that even when dead, they were living to God, at least with regard to the soul. Further, that covenant of grace, by virtue of which he calls himself their God, concerns not merely their separate spirits, but their whole persons, which God required to carry about the sign of the covenant even in the body; and therefore the life promised in the covenant extends also to the body, which must consequently be re-united to the soul that is now living with God, in order to partake of the same felicity. This demonstration brought forward by the Lord Jesus, was so powerful, that the multitudes were astonished at his doctrine, and the mouth of the Sadducees was stopped. And whatever the more ancient Hebrews may have seen, or not have seen here, the modern Rabbies, at least, acknowledge the force of this argument. Aben Ezra says that this declaration, "I am the Lord your God," includes a promise of life in both worlds.* Manasseh Ben Israel reasons as if from the mouth of our Lord.† The following expressions, too, which occur in Midras Kohelet,‡ are not unlike his words. "The ungodly while living, are called dead; and the righteous are spoken of as living even after death." Accordingly it is said;—"Unto the land which I swear unto Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."^{m*}

VII. Let us next attend to the profession of Job, Chap. 19:25, 26, 27. That some weighty topic is there treated, appears as well from the

sacred magnificence of the expressions themselves, as from the preamble introducing them; in which he utters an earnest wish, that his words were not only written in a book, but engraven with an iron pen upon the rock, to preserve the remembrance of them for ever. Having elsewhere discussed this argument at greater length, I shall here bring the matter within a short compass. One of two things is necessary: Job either predicted the restoration of his former happiness in this life, or foretold the resurrection of his body after death. He did not do the former, for he despaired of the return of temporal prosperity in this life. It follows, therefore, that he did the latter.⁷⁹

VIII. Add to this Isaiah 26:19. This verse, it is certain, contains the consolation of the Church against the calamities mentioned in the foregoing verses. But no consolation could be more efficacious than that which is derived from the resurrection of the dead; and this interpretation is supported by the plain meaning of the words. It is not indeed very evident, whether these be the words of the Church, or the Prophet in the name of the Church, speaking to God; or the words of God addressed to the Church. If the former view be preferred, they may be thus paraphrased. "Thy dead men shall live." With regard to those, who from faith in thee, O Lord, and concern for thy glory, have, after incredible tortures, willingly submitted to death, and who being previously dead to the world, were appointed by thee to become a spectacle to others,—we firmly believe, that they shall be raised up at last to a happy life. We expect the same privilege to be conferred also on each of ourselves, and therefore add, "My dead body, shall they arise," and not sleep for ever in the dust. Animated by this hope, we call upon our brethren, in language which all of us wish in due time to hear from thy mouth; "Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust,"—ye who are one day to shake off that dust, and to come forth in glory. "For thy dew is as the dew of herbs." As by the resistless and gentle energy of thy power, thou, O our God, causeth herbs that are cut down to sprout again, why shouldest not thou, by the operation of the same power, cause our bodies, though dissolved by death, and sown in corruption, to spring forth again from the

grave? The clause immediately following may be rendered; "And thou wilt make the giants fall prostrate on the earth."* Thou wilt abolish all power, and every thing that with gigantic audacity opposeth itself to thee. Or the phrase may be translated thus; "The earth shall cast forth the dead, as an abortion," which it can no longer retain in its bosom.

But if we are to consider God as here addressing the Church, the words may be thus interpreted: "Thy dead men, O my much-loved people, shall live." But why do I call them thine? They are rather mine—"my dead body." I am the God even of the dead; and what is done to my servants, I regard as done to myself. Some, however, may choose to go still higher, and to refer the expression to the dead body of Christ, whose resurrection is at once the pledge and the cause of our's. According to this interpretation, it is as if the Lord Jesus should say: It is as certain, O my Church, that thy dead men shall be raised, as it is certain that I, clothed with a human nature, shall one day be delivered up to death for the expiation of thy sins, and shall rise from death for the glory of the Father. The words which follow need not be repeated. Only let it be observed, that the dew of the Church, may denote that quickening and refreshing grace, with which God is pleased to favour her.

IX. The testimonies to the resurrection which occur in the New Testament, are so many that it is difficult to enumerate, so perspicuous that it is unnecessary to explain them. Those referred to at the foot of the page, may serve as a specimen. The fifteenth Chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians, demands particular attention, as containing at once the strongest of all arguments and the amplest discussion of the subject.

X. To the testimony of God on this subject, human Reason not unwillingly lends her suffrage, when, being subdued to the obedience of faith, she has carefully attended to the perfections of God, and the works he has already performed. Amongst the perfections of God, his power, wisdom, goodness, and justice, chiefly come to be considered.

It appears from his unbounded Power that he is able, and from his other perfections that he is willing, to raise the dead. Our Lord, when disputing with the Pharisees on this subject, called their attention to the Divine omnipotence, saying; "Ye do err, not knowing ... the power of God." Paul, too, when attacking the prejudices entertained against this truth, first of all employs the same argument: "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" The Wisdom of God seems also to require the resurrection of the body. Since it is his will that all other things which exist, should either remain entire, or should completely perish, is it proper that the human body, when once dead, should never revive, and that the soul should continue for ever in a separate, and, so to speak, a widowed state? The Goodness and the Justice of God lead us to the same conclusion. For as vice and virtue belong to the whole man, and not merely to one part of our nature, so it is reasonable that the appointed retribution, whether punishment or reward, should be allotted to the whole man, and not to a part of him only. And so in making use of this argument too, we but follow the Apostle, who says: "We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

XI. The Jewish Talmud* contains an elegant apologue intended to illustrate this subject, which it will not be improper to subjoin to what has been said. On a certain occasion, Antoninus, we are told, had a conversation with Rabbi Jehuda Sanctus to the following effect. The body and the soul, said the former, may demand exemption from judgment. How? The body may say, it is the soul that sinned; for ever since it departed from me, behold, I have lain senseless in the grave, like a stone. The soul may say, it is the body that sinned, for no sooner was my connexion with it dissolved, than I began to fly through the air like a bird. To this the Rabbi replied, saying, I will tell you a parable. A certain King, having a delightful garden, the fruits of which were come to maturity, appointed two watchmen to take care of it; of whom the one was lame, and the other blind. The lame one, allured by the sight of the fruits,

persuaded his blind companion to take him up on his shoulders, that himself might pluck them, and that thus they might regale themselves together. The lame man, accordingly, having taken his seat upon the neck of the blind, they plucked and devoured the fruits. Some time after, the proprietor of the garden came, and made inquiry concerning the fruits. The blind man alleged that he had no eyes to see them; the lame that he had no feet to go near them. But what measures did the owner of the garden adopt? He commanded the former to be placed on the shoulders of the latter, and judged and punished both of them together. Similar to this will be the procedure of God towards man: he will re-unite the soul to the body, and judge soul and body together.

XII. But another argument, equally powerful, may be added. It is surely reasonable that the reward which believers receive through Christ, who is the Head and Surety of the covenant of grace, the promises of which are represented as incomparably excellent, should not be inferior to that which was held out to Adam in the covenant of works. According to the tenor of that covenant, Adam, had he persevered in his integrity, would have enjoyed a blessed and an everlasting life, in his whole person, soul and body. The same happiness, therefore, must be considered as awaiting those who are Christ's; for since Christ hath given the most ample satisfaction to the whole law in their room, it follows that "they who receive the abundance of grace, and the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life," in a manner no less glorious than Adam was to have reigned.

XIII. Further, the certainty of our resurrection appears, with irresistible evidence, from the resurrection of Christ. With this argument Job consoled himself in the days of old. With this argument, too, our Lord comforted his Apostles, and the Apostles other believers. But what is the nature of the connexion between Christ's resurrection and our's? It may be viewed in various lights. 1st, Christ, when he rose from the dead, became "the first-fruits of them that slept."x As therefore the first-fruits were offered to God on the second day of the Jewish passover, in the hope, and even for the

consecration, of the harvest which was speedily to follow; so Christ, when he came forth from the sepulchre, and was exalted to the immediate presence of God, as the first-fruits of them that sleep, consecrated all his people to God, to secure their resurrection to the same immortal life, at the season of harvest, that is, at "the end of the world." 2dly, As Adam's sin is the cause of an eternal death, to which the whole man, soul and body, was obnoxious; so, according to the reasoning of Paul,^z the resurrection of Christ must be the cause of eternal life to the whole man. Christ was "justified," too, in his resurrection, having therein received a discharge from the Father, testifying, that the most complete satisfaction had been rendered to his justice. Hence it follows, that our resurrection is inseparably connected with the resurrection of Christ. 3dly, Christ, by rising from the dead, showed that he had conquered and triumphed over all our enemies. When God ariseth, his enemies are scattered. The last of all our enemies is death. Death must, therefore, be destroyed at the last;^c that, as it was unable, by all its bands and pains to detain the head in the chambers of the grave, so it cannot detain those who are the members of his mystical body. 4thly, From the union which subsists betwixt Christ and believers it follows, that Christ would not account himself completely alive, unless his people lived with him. The Apostle also intimates this, when he says, that God hath "raised Christ from the dead, ... and given him to be head over all things to the Church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."

XIV. An argument no less conclusive, is derived from the Spirit's inhabiting and sanctifying believers. Here again the Apostle is our guide: "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." This reason may be urged in several forms. 1st, By the inhabitation of the Spirit, the bodies of believers are sanctified for a temple to God.^f And who can suppose that the Spirit, who is equally powerful and good, will suffer his temple to remain through eternity a heap of ruins? When the first temple at Jerusalem was destroyed, God caused another to

be built more glorious than the formers. Why may we not hope for the same privilege with regard to our mortal bodies,—that though destroyed by death, he will rebuild them in glory? 2dly, This argument will receive additional force, if we rightly consider the nature of that holiness, which the blessed Spirit imparts even to the bodies of believers. It is not a mere relative, but also a real, holiness; and it includes a beautiful resemblance to God. It need not appear very surprising, that the temple of Jerusalem should be so destroyed as to remain eternally buried in its ashes; for the holiness with which the presence of God adorned the walls of that edifice, reached no further, so to speak, than the surface, and consisted merely in its relation to sacred purposes. But the holiness which the Spirit of God infuses into our bodies, penetrates to the affections, pervades our faculties, and actuates all our members. It is a purity which accords with the nature of the Spirit himself, and in fine, is of such a kind that we appear to become, in a sense, one with him; for Peter calls it "the divine nature." Without doubt, then, he can by no means allow such tabernacles of his Divine majesty to perish eternally. 3dly, The Spirit who inhabits and sanctifies believers, is the Spirit of him that raised up Christ from the dead. Hence we reason thus. The Spirit of God was the cause of the resurrection of Christ your head, both by the efficacy of his unbounded power, and the personal property, so to speak, by which he is the immediate cause of life to all living,—and by the energy of that holiness with which he beautified the human nature of Christ, and preserved it from personal sin, the sole cause of death.ⁱ If you, then, are partakers of the same Spirit, who with all the fulness of his gifts is in Christ as in the fountain, he will in the same manner produce similar effects upon you, as well by his mighty power, as by virtue of that sanctification with which you are blessed. Sanctification is the resurrection of the soul, and must necessarily be followed by the resurrection of the body; for indeed even in the present life the body is a partaker of the blessing of sanctification, receives its sacred seals, and exhibits its excellent fruits.

XV. Having now, we think, sufficiently established the truth of the resurrection, let us proceed to consider WHAT body is to rise again,

and in what MANNER the resurrection will be effected. To us it appears indubitable from the Scriptures, that the same bodies which we now have are to rise again; to wit, the same in substance, but endowed with qualities widely different. Let us demonstrate each of these assertions.

XVI. That the SAME BODIES are to be restored to us, is manifest from the very term resurrection. For, according to the definition of Damascenus, what else is the resurrection* than "a second standing, an erection, of that which hath fallen." † It is not the soul, besides, which rises again; for the soul doth not fall or die: nor is it properly and directly the man: but it is that part of our nature which is called the flesh, that is, the body, which in the present state is animal and mortal. The body only, therefore, is called πτωμα, a carcase, or a dead body fallen to the ground, because it is only the body which πίπτει, falleth. Accordingly, as we have seen above, Paul says, "he shall also quicken your mortal bodies."

XVII. The Scriptures, too, supply other express testimonies to the same effect. "In my flesh," said Job, "shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another." And Paul affirms, that the same body shall be raised, which is sown in corruption, in dishonour, and in weakness, and sown a natural body; and that "this corruptible," which we now carry about, "must put on incorruption." † He tells us, in fine, that Christ "shall change our vile body,"—the same body, to wit, which lay in the grave.ⁿ

XVIII. We have a specimen of this in them that were raised from the dead by the Prophets, our Lord, and the Apostles. Were bodies created out of nothing, or brought down from heaven, for those persons? Or were not the same bodies restored, which death had formerly removed? "Many bodies of the saints which slept arose." And what are these but beginnings and specimens of that which God will one day accomplish upon us?

XIX. The same thing is evident from the resemblance which our resurrection bears to Christ's. "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." That Christ's resurrection is the pattern of our's, who can doubt? Most certainly, however, Christ did not assume a different and an ascetic or supplementary body, nor did he represent himself as clothed with a new body brought down from heaven; but he brought back from the sepulchre his own proper body, which he showed to his disciples, bearing the print of the wounds he had received,—and which was carried up into heaven.

XX. Christ will judge alike the quick and the dead. But in what body will the quick appear before the tribunal of Christ? In the same body, doubtless, which till then they had carried about, but, as the Apostle informs us, changed by the power of God." Why then should not the dead also resume their own bodies, that the condition of all may be the same, since the Scripture nowhere intimates, that the condition of those who shall be then living is to excel that of believers who have slept in Jesus? To imagine with regard to those men who shall be found living in the day of the Lord, that new bodies will miraculously descend from the upper regions, and be superinduced like garments on their original and proper bodies, in order to swallow up their mortality, to consume the entire matter of them, and remain themselves in their room,—what is this but to entertain an idle and presumptuous, I dare not say a pleasant, dream?

XXI. In fine, the justice of God, and the manner of his judicial procedure, require, that as well the living as the dead appear before him in the very same bodies. The actions to be judged are attributed, not to the body apart, nor to the soul as separate from the body, but to the whole person, consisting of body and soul. It is necessary, therefore, that the same body, as well as the same soul, be brought into judgment, that sentence may be pronounced on the actions of the whole person. Were not this to be done, the consequence would be, that, in the distribution both of punishments and of rewards, a great confusion, unworthy of the divine administration, would take

place. In respect to punishments;—bodies which were subservient to sinful passions, being finally reduced to dust, would not be punished according to their desert; since punishment doth not consist in mere annihilation, but in eternal torments in the lake of fire and brimstone. On the other hand, bodies which are quite adventitious, and which have merited no evil, would be joined to ungodly souls, and most unjustly and cruelly participate in their miseries and plagues. The same disorder would ensue in regard to rewards. Those bodies which have ministered to the soul in fastings, prayers, praises, and other exercises of godliness, whose members have been presented as instruments of righteousness, and which, in some instances, have endured incredible tortures for the sake of Christ and religion, would remain altogether unrewarded, being either annihilated or dissipated into their own elements, and, in short, placed in the same state with the bodies of the wicked. The crown of righteousness would be conferred, at the same time, on other bodies, which had never approved themselves to God, either by works of faith, or exercises of holiness, or by a cheerful submission to sufferings for Christ's sake. These things are diametrically opposite to the justice of God, and to the uniform doctrine of Scripture. "Always bearing about in the body," says the Apostle Paul, "the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal body." And when he concludes a long discussion relative to the resurrection of the dead, by exhorting the Corinthians to steadfastness, and constancy, and abounding always in the work of the Lord, he enforces his exhortation by adding, that their "labour shall not be in vain in the Lord." But their labour would be entirely in vain, so far as their bodies are concerned, if these remained in dust and putrefaction, and other bodies were formed in their stead, to enjoy a reward obtained by labour in which they had no share.⁸¹

XXII. A considerable difficulty, I will not dissemble, arises from the barbarity of those, who, by feeding on human bodies, have changed part of them into their own substance. How can the same flesh, after having belonged to different men, rise again in different individuals, to be punished in some, and to be rewarded in others? What will

become of the flesh which has been thus devoured? Whose will it be at the resurrection? Will it belong to the man that has devoured it, to whom it pertained last? Were this the case, it would necessarily follow, that the person devoured would be mutilated as to that part of himself, and that this part would undergo the punishment due to cruel and barbarous men. Or, will it be restored to the person devoured, to whom it originally belonged? If so, the cannibal would be denuded of part of his body, which, although it deserved to be severely tormented, will perhaps be glorified in the body of the other.

XXIII. But in fact this objection discovers a preposterous curiosity, and an immoderate love of refinement; which, however, it is not impossible to repress by satisfactory arguments. Even although we could find nothing more particular to say in reply, is it fit that we should bring forward our reason, so feeble, so diseased, so enveloped in thick darkness, and so defiled by numerous corruptions, to weigh and measure the wisdom and power of God, his faithfulness in his promises, and his admirable providence and incredible facility in removing the greatest possible difficulties? Truly that man cherishes most unworthy thoughts of God, who determines to believe him in nothing but what he is able to investigate and comprehend in its entire nature and mode, by the force of his own understanding. We make this remark, however, not because we have no other answer to return to the objection; but because, when human reason replies against God, it is useful again and again to inculcate, that nothing is more just and proper than that, in its inquiries into divine mysteries, it should lay aside all murmuring, and allow itself to be subdued to the obedience of faith.

XXIV. To come nearer therefore to the point: we observe, in the first place, that it is not requisite to the identity of the body, that it should consist entirely of all those parts of which it formerly consisted. Although some part of its matter be wanting, it does not on that account cease to be the same body. Who ever heard of cannibals that devoured the entire body of a man? Supposing, however, that they have literally done so, how small a part of the body consumed goes

into the substance of the consumer! What a great proportion is discharged by sweat and various humours, by the grosser evacuations, and even by insensible perspiration! On this subject, naturalists and physicians may be consulted with advantage. The unbounded wisdom and power of God, therefore, are able so to preserve and collect the parts which are not devoured, or which, though devoured, have not passed into the substance of him who devoured them, as from them to raise the body of the dead man. And although the thousandth part of it possibly may belong to the man-eater, this circumstance will not be sufficient to destroy its identity.

XXV. Do you urge, that in the recompence allotted at least to that particle, the goodness or justice of God is obscured? I reply, you who have just contended, that although God were to form other bodies entirely, to receive rewards or punishments instead of the body deceased, he should do nothing unworthy of his attributes,—do you now demand such perfect accuracy, that you must be solicitous about so very small a particle? What? Do you deem it better, or even more probable, that the body, that essential part of man, should be wholly deprived of its own glory, and that another body should possess its reward, than that something of it, and that but a very small proportion, should perish, whilst the whole remaining mass is raised to immortality?

XXVI. But I would not have you to perplex yourself even about this small particle. Do you regard it as difficult for the omnipotent God to recover and restore it to its first and rightful possessor, and to return to the other, that part of his flesh which, a short time before he obtained possession of this, was somehow worm away? "The flesh in question," as Augustine nobly observes, "shall be restored to the man in whom it first became human flesh. For it is to be considered as borrowed by the other man, and, like borrowed money, to be returned to him from whom it was taken: whilst the flesh belonging to the man who had been emaciated by hunger, shall be restored to him by that God who is able to recall those particles which have been dissipated into vapour."*

XXVII. And indeed what necessity is there for supposing that any particle of the consumed human body passes into the substance of the cannibal; or that, if it does, it remains joined to his substance so long as he lives? No instance was ever found, I imagine, of a person who subsisted on human flesh alone. Is not that divine Providence, which happily adapts every thing to the purposes which it has in view, able to provide,—nay, doth it not actually provide, that the flesh of a man, though eaten and in various ways digested, should be emitted, and thus never incorporated with the bodies of those monsters; or even if incorporated, should be dissolved into vapour, by perspiration, labour, want of food, or some other means, and thus recovered from the unjust possessor, and reserved, for its own resurrection body, in the hand of an omniscient and all-powerful God? When these things are duly weighed, the whole difficulty arising from the horrid practice of cannibals, and devourers of other people's flesh, will appear, I apprehend, to be satisfactorily solved.

XXVIII. But though, with regard to substance, the same bodies which died, are to rise again, yet after the resurrection, they will be endowed with very different qualities. With respect to the wicked, (for we will show immediately that they too are to be raised,) their bodies shall be so constituted, that, standing in no need of food, sleep, or other supports pertaining to this animal life, they will be capable of bearing eternally the torments of hell. In this world, the bodies of men are so formed, that sleep arises from labour, and refreshment from sleep;—that extreme pain renders the sensation less acute, or sometimes induces a swoon, which affords a kind of respite; or if the pain be exceedingly vehement, it cannot be of long duration, as it terminates in death. But in the world to come, the bodies of the wicked will be so strengthened and hardened for sustaining the most intense torments, that without any intermission of pain, or suspension of feeling, they will burn through eternity in the flames of divine wrath, and yet never be reduced to ashes. Christ informs us accordingly, that God "is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."

XXIX. But the Scriptures give us a more ample description of the change which is to take place on the bodies of believers. "So also is the resurrection of the dead: It is sown in corruption." The body, which falls into the earth and is one day to come forth anew, previously to its fall, is perishable, liable to a continual waste of the sensible parts, and evaporation of such as are insensible—insomuch that, as it is elegantly expressed by Heraclitus, you can no more see and touch the same man twice than you can descend twice into the same river; and after it is sown in the earth, it putrifies, and dissolves into dust. "It is raised in incorruption;" it comes forth again from the grave, incorruptible, unfading, subject to no infirmity or decay. "It is sown in dishonour;" for when alive, it had its vileness and loathsomeness; and when dead, it is frightful and disgusting even to the most intimate friends. "It is raised in glory," which includes the highest degrees of loveliness, beauty, and majesty. "It is sown in weakness:" after death it has no power to retain a consistency of parts; it is not a fit habitation for the soul; it has no use of any of its members or organs. "It is raised in power," so that without the least fatigue, it affords the most prompt and perfect service to the soul in the glorious exercises of the celestial life. "It is sown a natural, animal, body:" its constitution was accommodated to the present life; it required meat, drink, and sleep for its support; it had various carnal appetites; in a word, it had the seeds and principles of the vegetable life. "It is raised a spiritual body." This expression doth not signify, as the Socinians absurdly allege, "subtile, flexible, sprightly, capable, like the air or the wind, or rather like the spirit of Chemists, of penetrating through the narrowest passages." But it is called "a spiritual body," because, whilst it will stand in no need of any thing necessary to human sustenance in the present state, as food, sleep, or air for respiration, it will have the Holy Spirit for the principle of its life, by whom it shall be animated for the employments of heaven, and for the services which it must there perform to the soul.

XXX. Thus light is thrown upon another apostolical expression,—"Meats for the belly, and the belly for "meats, but God shall destroy both it and them.... And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will

also raise up us by his own power." The various kinds of food are created and intended for man, and given to him in this world to satisfy the belly: the belly also is intended and calculated to receive food. But God shall destroy both meats and the belly. As it respects individuals, this takes place at death. As it regards all mankind, it will be accomplished at the last day: after which there will be no meats, nor yet a belly, that is, a belly fit for receiving meats. The mutual relation of meats and the belly will cease. The bodies of men when raised from the dead, will not indeed be without that part of their frame; but that part of their frame, will not be devoted to any such use. And why? For "God hath both raised up the Lord" to a heavenly life, and "he will also raise up us" to a similar life, that our body may be "for the Lord," as his glorious and everlasting residence.

XXXI. For the glorious change undergone by the body, is owing to communion with Christ and his Spirit. "And so it is written; The first "man Adam," the natural and federal head of the rest of mankind, was made a living soul." The noblest thing he had within him, was a soul, the principle of animal life. "The last Adam," Christ, the root of those that are to be saved, "was made a quickening Spirit:" He was conceived and born in such a condition, that he was truly man, but at the same time a Spirit possessed of a quickening power, by which he could both raise up himself after suffering death for the salvation of mankind, and also raise up his people from the dead.—"The first man is of the earth;" he was formed of the earth, he was created on the earth, and he inhabited the earth: "Earthy"—made of dust, it was possible for him to return to dust. "The second man is the Lord from heaven:" he came from heaven with regard to the manifestation of his special presence in forming and inhabiting the human body which he assumed; and therefore he is Lord of his own life, who was indeed capable of dying once, but rose to die no more. "As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy;" in consequence of the natural and federal connexion, which subsists between our first father and his posterity. Suppose that Adam with his posterity had not sinned, in that case indeed no man would have died; yet they would have had in themselves the principles of at least a remote

mortality, the force of which the Providence of God alone would have restrained, by constantly affording new strength to the body, and by averting all those misfortunes, which might have proved fatal to human life. But after Adam sinned, all his posterity being involved in the guilt of the same offence, became equally obnoxious to the same inevitable death. "And as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly." Believers have a communion with Christ in his grace and Spirit, to which not only their souls but also their bodies are admitted; and by reason of this communion, as Christ having died once is now alive for evermore, so our bodies, when raised again from the dead, shall be endowed with such vigour, that they will be secure from death, not by the external care of Providence, but by an internal vigour. "And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." For without doubt, the dignity of Christ our head requires, that his members derive from him a far more vigorous and glorious life than that which Adam could impart to his posterity.

XXXII. But the Apostle also suggests a reason, for which it is necessary that our bodies should undergo so great a change. "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." "Flesh and blood" do not here mean human nature as corrupted by sin, but the very substance of the body, with those infirmities of the animal life which now attend it. This is a Hebraism of frequent occurrence, not indeed in the Prophets, but in the writings of the Rabbies; who call "flesh and blood," a mere natural man,—such human bodies as are now produced on earth. Nor is it probable, that Christ and the Apostles used expressions in a sense different from that in which they were commonly understood. This interpretation, too, derives support from the uniform language of holy writ; for, as Gomar, Cappel, and other learned men have judiciously observed, this phrase is nowhere used in a moral, but always in a physical sense. Besides the passages referred to at the foot of the page, I know no place where it occurs except the one before us. And whatever may be its meaning elsewhere, it is evidently susceptible of no other signification here, than that which we have

mentioned. It is not the disorders of the mind, but the state of the body, that is here intended; and thus the Apostle himself explains the expression, adding; "Neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." The sum of the whole matter is as follows. Our bodies in their present condition, animal, mortal, corruptible, are not adapted to that celestial life with which God has determined to bless his people: partly because such bodies are unable to bear so great a weight of bliss, and partly because the dissimilarity betwixt them in their terrestrial state, subject as they are to natural infirmities, and the celestial mansions, is so exceedingly great, that they could not possibly suit one another. That nothing may be wanting, therefore, to that felicity which God has destined for his people, he has determined that our bodies shall undergo a change, with regard to those qualities, to which the designation of "flesh and blood" refers.

XXXIII. In what respect, then, will there be a resurrection of the flesh?* If you take the flesh as denoting merely the substance of the body, we have already shown that the same body which died shall rise again; and in this sense Job expressed his assurance, that "in his flesh he shall see God."^b But if you consider the term as including the weaknesses of this animal life, there will be a resurrection of the flesh in a sense analogous to that in which there will be a resurrection of the dead. As we say that the dead are to be raised again, intending that they are now dead, not that they will be dead after the resurrection; so we affirm that they who were flesh previously to their death will rise again, not that they will be flesh after they shall have been recalled to life. The Apostle, in the same sense, denominates the time of Christ's abode in this world "the days of his flesh," in contradistinction to that celestial life which he now enjoys.⁸²

XXXIV. But let us proceed to inquire, WHO they are that shall be raised? Some Jewish Doctors contend that the righteous alone are to rise again, and that the wicked finally expire, and are buried in eternal darkness, never to revive. Socinus maintains, though covertly, the same opinion. Dreading the odium of the sentiment,

and the offence which it would give, that subtle serpent so wraps himself up in his sophisms, that the reader is apt to find himself persuaded of the doctrine, ere ever he observe that he is urged to embrace it. His disciples have ventured to make an open profession of this heresy in the Short Summary of their Doctrine;* as also in the Treatise concerning the state of the dead, taken from the Acts of the Racovian Conference.† Volkelius, Schlichtingius, and others of that school, appear to have returned to more sober sentiments. But however the point may be doubted or denied by others, we hold it as one of the most certain and unquestionable truths, that there shall be a universal resurrection of all the dead, the wicked as well as the righteous, that every one may receive, both in soul and body, a reward according to his works. We shall not now industriously collect all that the Scriptures contain regarding this topic, but only attempt a vindication of the most remarkable testimonies.

XXXV. Let us first consider our Lord's words in John 5:28, 29. "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." Here let the following things be observed.

1st, It is the resurrection of the body that is here treated. This is evident, 1. From the connexion; for after having ascribed to himself the raising of those who are spiritually dead to spiritual life, our Lord proceeds to speak of the raising of bodies, that by one divine and astonishing work he might confirm another. That he here enters on a different topic appears from the expression, "Marvel not at this." As if he had said, I will give you notice of farther and still more illustrious displays of my power and majesty. I am not only able to raise the souls of men to a new and better life by the preaching of my Gospel, but I will also raise their bodies at last from the dust by my all-powerful word. 2. From the conjunction of the resurrection mentioned with the general judgment, which will immediately succeed the resurrection of the body. 3. From the determination of

the time. At the twenty-fifth verse he had said, "The hour is coming and now is;" because the spiritual resurrection there intended had its commencement at that time. But here he says merely, "The hour cometh," that is, at the end of the world; he doth not add that it was then arrived. 4. From the description of the subjects of the resurrection, those "that are in the graves." That this expression denotes those that are spiritually dead, is an assertion supported by no passage of Scripture.

2dly, By "the voice of the Son of man" is here meant, not the preaching of the Gospel, but that efficacious and all-powerful command of the Lord Jesus Christ of which we read in Mat. 24:31. and 1 Thes. 4:16. It is a voice that gives life to all who hear it, and causes them to come forth from their graves, but in very different circumstances. This however holds, neither in respect to that hearing of the Gospel which is merely the hearing of the bodily ears, nor as to that which is joined with the obedience of faith. For many of them whose ears hear the sound of the Gospel remain in a state of spiritual death, under the power of ignorance, error, and sin; and certainly none of those who receive the Gospel with an humble faith, shall experience the resurrection of condemnation.

3dly, The resurrection here described is universal. It is the resurrection of "all that are in the graves," whether they have been Jews, or Barbarians, or Scythians; whatever their rank or age may have been; whether they have lived before or after the coming of Christ; and in short, whatever kind of death they may have died. There is none of these, which the universal term "all" doth not include. "And the sea gave up "the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works."

4thly, This universal resurrection is distinguished by its opposite results. As they who shall come forth from their graves consist of two classes, those that have done good, and those that have done evil; so

the former shall come forth "unto the resurrection of life," and the latter, "unto the resurrection of damnation."

XXXVI. Adversaries would here confess themselves convinced, unless they had decidedly resolved to oppose the truth, however clear the light in which it might be presented to their minds. See what evasions they contrive. They affirm, that "the graves are ignorance, and the deplorable state of all men by nature; and that to come forth from the graves, is to have permission on the part of God to go forth." They expound the doing of good and evil, as referring not to deeds which have preceded, but to deeds which follow the hearing of the voice of the Son of God, and coming forth from the graves. And their paraphrase on what our Lord says of them that have done evil is as follows. "They who have done evil, that is, after having come forth from the graves, after having been delivered on the part of God from a state of ignorance and misery by the announcing of the hope of immortality and eternal life—men of this description shall "come forth to the resurrection of judgment; that is, even these shall be delivered as far as they can be "delivered: but yet because they have not obeyed the Gospel, this deliverance will issue in their utter destruction."

XXXVII. But truly this is not to interpret the Scriptures, but to pervert and expose them to ridicule. For, 1st, By what example do they prove, that the graves signify ignorance, and the deplorable state of the soul in this life? "To be in the grave," signifies that the body is buried in the grave. Compare the words of Heman; "Free among the dead, like the slain that lie the grave."h 2dly, To "come forth," is quite a different thing from having liberty on the part of God to go forth. The Son of God shall come "with a shout, with the voice of the Arch-angel, and with the trump of God." This voice will not merely give permission to come forth; but on its being uttered, all the dead shall actually come forth. All shall hear it, and shall experience in themselves its power to recall them to life with an efficacy which cannot be resisted. All shall likewise come forth, whether they have been righteous or wicked. The same action is

ascribed to both. What! Shall they who have done good receive only a permission on the part of God to come forth? Is nothing farther granted them? Are they not actually to come forth? Since Christ then uses the same expression with regard to both indiscriminately, who gave you authority, by so opposite an interpretation, to wrest it to a sense altogether different? 3dly, If the graves, according to your opinion, signify the deplorable condition of the soul, and if, as we have shown, to come forth from the graves must be understood not of permission granted on the part of God, but of the action of man coming forth at the command of God; how can it be conceived that deliverance from that deplorable condition is in order to a resurrection of condemnation? You say, "if after that deliverance he shall do evil." But I reply; he who is once raised from spiritual death never sins again, so as to die eternally; and "he that heareth Christ's word," and hearing it arises from spiritual death, "hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation."k 4thly, I appeal to every one that has even a moderate acquaintance with the Greek language, whether, if he any where read the expression ἐκπορευσονται οὐ ποίησαντες, they that have done shall come forth, he would not explain it so as to make ἡ ποιησις, the doing, to precede ἡ ἐκπορευσις, the coming forth. The phrase here is precisely of the same kind with that in a foregoing verse; "They that hear, shall live;" where the hearing intended, assuredly precedes the life. With regard to their assertion that the Aorist* always refers to the tense of the verbs with which it is joined, nothing can be more opposite to all grammatical accuracy, and to the practice of those who speak correctly. The remarks of Beckman on this subject, deserve attention.†

XXXVIII. Let us attend, in the next place, to Dan. 12:2. "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake; some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." We dare not interpret this passage in any other way than as relating to the resurrection of the dead, for the following reasons. 1st, On account of the exact coincidence of these words with those of our Lord which we have just explained, with the exception of the single

word "many," instead of which Christ says "all." Of this we are to speak presently. 2dly, On account of the connexion of this verse with what goes before it. In the first verse it is promised, that Michael, a great Prince, to wit, Christ, who is equal in dignity to the Father, the Lord of Angels, and the King of the Church, shall stand up for the children of Daniel's people, that is, for the remnant of the Jewish nation. It is foretold, that after the cruel persecution of Antiochus, there shall again occur, "a time of trouble such as never was, since there was a nation even to that same time;"—a description which our Lord expressly applies to the time of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. Yet God is pleased to add, "And at that time thy people shall be delivered." They shall not all perish; for the elect's sake these days shall be shortened. There shall yet be a tenth in the land. A remnant shall be left for a seed; and a signal deliverance shall be wrought for "every one that shall be found written in the book"—for all those whom, in the covenant of grace, God hath, by an immutable decree, appointed heirs of eternal life. But that none may imagine that the grace of Michael extends merely to the living, it is immediately subjoined, that the dead are also to be raised by his power. 3dly, The words of the text all lead to the same interpretation. To "sleep in the dust of the earth," is an expression descriptive of the dead; who are said to "sleep the sleep of death,"—to "sleep a perpetual sleep and not wake,"^p—and to "sleep in the dust" Hence also sepulchres were usually termed cemeteries,* that is, places for sleeping. And what can it be to "awake" from that sleep, but to be restored to life? In this sense surely it is used by Job, when he says; "So man lieth down and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep."^r He affirms that none shall return from the dead, to perform the functions of animal life in this world. 4thly, What follows serves also to confirm the same interpretation. For the third verse contains a description of the glorious state of them that are raised: "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever." This promise ought certainly to be compared with other passages of Scripture, where the

glory of those that shall be raised from the dead is professedly treated, and illustrated by the same similitude.

XXXIX. It should excite no scruple in our minds, that in this passage the Spirit of God has not employed the universal term all, but the word many, and even the expression, of them that sleep. To this objection it has been answered by a great number of writers after Augustine, that the word many is sometimes equivalent to all; and as an instance of this Rom. 5:19. is generally quoted. But not to urge this answer at present, I reply that "many of them that sleep" may signify that innumerable multitude of men which consists merely of the dead; and that this multitude is divided into two classes, so as to intimate that every individual must be referred to the one or the other. God here distributes the multitude of the dead in the same way in which Christ distributes το παν, the whole number—"all that are in the graves."

XL. The twofold issue also of the resurrection, here pointed out, confirms this view of the passage. They "shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." This can with no propriety be understood of the restoration of the Jewish state and Church after the ravages of Antiochus. For while Antiochus was alive, the wicked and ungodly did not sleep in the dust, but lived and flourished, being treated with honour and esteem. And consequently, after the death of Antiochus, they were not raised from the dust, but were rather civilly and ecclesiastically dead; for some of them, as Grotius on this point well observes, were נדוי partially separated, and others חרם fully excommunicated. How could it be affirmed, besides, of those who, after having been long in exile for the sake of their religion, at last returned home, that they awoke "to everlasting life." To understand this, with Porphyry and Grotius, of a long and happy life in the land of Canaan, is a meager interpretation, which falls far below the majesty of the words.

XLI. Our interpretation is supported by Josephus Jacchiades, who has the following paraphrase on the verse: "And then shall come to

pass the miracle of the resurrection of the dead: for many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake; those who are holy, to everlasting life; but those who are wicked, to reproach and everlasting detestation. The design of the resurrection of the latter is, that they may openly confess that their faith is false, and that such as placed confidence in them followed after vanity, and became vain; and may acknowledge that their fathers inherited falsehood." Manasseh Ben Israel* proves in like manner that the wicked are to be raised again, because it is said in Daniel, "Many of them that sleep, &c." "But if these many," he observes, "were the righteous only, they would be few indeed, for not very many of this description are to be found. It immediately follows, however, some to shame and everlasting contempt, which certainly relates to the wicked and ungodly."

XLII. But if there could be any dispute amongst Christians with regard to this topic, it is terminated by the following declaration of the Apostle Paul: "And have hope towards God—that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." Was it possible to use expressions on this subject more clear, or more decisive? Very possible, it has been said; for the words of the Apostle may, and even ought to be explained in a manner that will render them of no avail in this controversy. They may be so explained; for by "the just" we may understand those who in general lived righteously in the whole course of their life, and never sinned presumptuously or deliberately, as for example John the Baptist and his Parents; and by the "unjust," those, on the contrary, who, after having led a wicked life, were at last converted; as the publican, and the thief on the cross. As instances of that figure of speech by which the Apostle calls himself and others of the same character unrighteous after they had become righteous, they refer to several passages of Scripture. Nay, say they, the words ought to be so explained. 1. Because the resurrection here spoken of is one of which the Apostle says he has the hope. And who does not see that it cannot be affirmed of any believer that he has the hope of the resurrection of the wicked? 2. Because the Apostle professes that he has the same hope with that of the ancient

Hebrews. But that these did not believe the resurrection of the wicked, may be sufficiently gathered from that saying of the ancients which Rabbi Saadiah Gaon, and Rabbi Moses Gerundensis,* and others, have quoted: "The benefit of rain is common to good and bad; but the resurrection of the dead is the privilege of those only who have led a good life."

XLIII. It will not be very difficult to expose these perversions of Scripture by the native evidence of truth. Nowhere in the Sacred Volume do we find that monstrous distribution which they make of true Christians into "the just and the unjust." The Scripture, when it brings forward any such antithesis, never opposes believers to believers, but the wicked to believers. Hence the following expressions: "The evil and the good, the just and the unjust;"—"the unjust and the saints;"^x—"the godly and the unjust;"—"the ungodly and the righteous." In the proverb just quoted concerning rain and the resurrection, and every where in the Jewish writers, the same mode of speaking is observed. Where no such antithesis is intended, believers, we admit, are called unjust and ungodly, in reference to their former state. This is not, however, the denomination of one or another individual, by which he is distinguished from other believers; as of the publican, or of the thief on the cross. It is common to the whole body of believers, of whom at their first justification, "there is none righteous, no not one."

XLIV. The object of Paul's hope was the general resurrection of all, in which he was certain he would obtain his own blessed share. All Christians in like manner hope for the coming of Christ to judgment, when both the righteous and the wicked will be recompensed according to their deeds. What should hinder Christians from even hoping for the resurrection of the ungodly? Although they take no pleasure in the misfortunes or calamities of any man, they cannot fail to applaud the manifestation of the divine glory in the just punishments of the wicked.

XLV. The faith of the ancient Hebrews is to be learned from the prophetic writings, not from the jejune productions of the Talmudical Doctors. The most judicious of these, however, afford us their support. Here let us avail ourselves of the assistance of Manasseh, who is himself a Hebrew. "Something occurs," says he, "in Ros a Sana, which gives confirmation to this opinion. The words are as follows: 'Three kinds of men will appear in the day of judgment; one consisting of those who were perfectly righteous,* that is, whose merits exceed their demerits; another, of those who were very wicked,† whose demerits exceed their merits; and a third, of those who hold a middle place betwixt the two former,‡ their merits and demerits being equal. If the day of judgment, then, be connected with the resurrection of the dead, and if these three kinds of men are to be judged on that day, it clearly follows that men of all sorts are to rise again.' The following expression also is used by Rabbi Eliezer:§ 'On the day of the resurrection all the dead shall rise again, except the generation of the flood.' " These writers, it is evident, erred in excluding some from the resurrection. But they agreed with the Apostle, so far at least as to hold that there shall be a resurrection of the wicked. As to the sentence respecting rain quoted above, Manasseh shows that the author intended to point out the difference betwixt rain and the resurrection—that whereas the former is beneficial alike to good and bad, and waters the fields as well of the profane as of the pious, the latter shall not be equally advantageous to the righteous, the wicked, and those of the intermediate class, but will prove a most intolerable misery to the wicked.

XLVI. There is no force in the objections drawn from those passages of Scripture, in which the resurrection is described as the privilege of the righteous, and of true believers. For since the Lord Jesus has taught us to distinguish betwixt the resurrection of life and the resurrection of condemnation, it is clear that only the former is intended in those passages where the consolation of believers arising from a blessed resurrection to eternal life is spoken of,—a consolation in which the wicked have neither part nor lot.

XLVII. We now proceed to inquire, in the FOURTH place, whether the general resurrection of all men is to happen at one and the same time; or whether the resurrection of believers, either all of them, or at least some of the most distinguished, and in particular Confessors and Martyrs, is to take place a thousand years prior to the raising of the wicked. In elucidating this question, if we attend, as we certainly ought, to the whole tenor of Scripture, it is scarcely possible for us to doubt that all are to be raised at the same time. Christ designates one hour, in which all that are in the graves, as well the righteous as the wicked, shall hear his quickening voice.

XLVIII. Nor has the Saviour promised to raise believers before the last day. "This is the Father's will who hath sent me, that of ALL which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again AT THE LAST DAY." Here let the universal term ALL, and the repeated specification of the same time in this and several subsequent verses, be carefully noted. Paul in like manner connects the resurrection of those that are dead in Christ with the Lord's descending from heaven with a shout, and with those that are alive and remain being caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Elsewhere the same Apostle very emphatically says: "But every man in his own order; Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's, at his coming." See here the order of the resurrection. "Christ" is the first in order of time and of efficacy; for none was ever raised before him to the possession of the celestial life, and none shall ever be thus raised but by his merits and power. "Afterwards they that are Christ's." But are they to be raised at different times? No. All are to be raised "at his coming." "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."h All these events are to take place at the same time.

XLIX. Neither Christians of singular eminence nor Martyrs shall be raised before the great body of believers. Paul was at once a most distinguished Apostle and Martyr. Yet in the same place where he speaks of his approaching martyrdom, he professes that he does not

expect the crown of righteousness, before that day in which, he affirms, the Lord is to confer it, not upon himself only, but upon "all them also that love his appearing." And what advantage, in fine, could the Martyrs gain by thus anticipating the general resurrection? How blessed soever you may suppose the condition of the Church on earth in those times to become, it will assuredly be far inferior to the glorious state of the inhabitants of heaven; and without doubt, the glory of Christ will never shine more brightly amongst mortals, than it now shines amongst the spirits of just men made perfect. Is it not therefore better, and much more desirable for deceased believers, even for Prophets, Patriarchs, Apostles, and Martyrs, to enjoy with entire satisfaction the pure bliss of heaven, and mean time to wait with assured hope for the resurrection of their bodies on that day, in which they shall see all things purged from every stain and remainder of iniquity, and fashioned in a manner nobly conducive to the glory of God—is not this far more desirable, than to be recalled from the joys of heaven, even to the happiest state on this earth—in order to dwell among those who, though saints, are not yet perfectly sanctified; and to inhabit a world, where they should see many things calculated to afford them the greatest pleasure, but some things too, I apprehend, which they would choose rather not to see.

L. These sentiments are clearly deducible from the constant and unvarying doctrine of the Scriptures, and from sound reason. They who think differently, however, have something to produce as the ground of their opinion. They found it in particular, on Rev. 20:4–6, where John gives an account of a certain period of the Church in which "the Devil and Satan is to be bound a thousand years." "And I saw thrones," he adds, "and to be used in they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first

resurrection;—they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." From this prophecy it may be urged, 1. That there is here a promise, not of a spiritual resurrection from the death of sin to the life of grace, but of the resurrection of saints, confessors, and martyrs, who were beheaded for the testimony of Jesus. 2. That a resurrection is promised, the immediate result of which is not the glory of heaven, but a reign with Christ on earth. 3. That this resurrection will not fall to the share of all; for others are expressly excluded, who are not to live again till after the completion of the thousand years. 4. That in fine, such a resurrection is here promised as is first in order,—an expression which clearly refers to another that is to succeed.

LI. I will not deny that this passage is attended with very considerable difficulty. Let us try, however, whether the difficulty may admit of a solution. I begin by observing in general, that what is said of the time of the resurrection in the passages which we have just produced from the doctrinal discourses of Christ and writings of Apostles, is expressed in plain and proper language; but what is brought forward from the prophetic and mystical book of the Apocalypse, is enveloped in obscure and enigmatical terms. Now, whether is it more proper, and more consonant to reason, to wrest plain and explicit declarations from the native signification of the words, that they may agree with notions which we think we have collected from the intricate enigmas of the prophecies;—or, in investigating the sense of such mysterious parts of the sacred oracles, to proceed with cautious steps, and to beware of imagining that we discover any thing in them contrary to those doctrines of faith which are elsewhere clearly stated?

LII. But, if we rightly examine the several parts of the context now before us, we shall find that it contains no such sentiment as that which these men suppose they discover in it. John does not affirm that he saw "the souls of them that were beheaded," much less that he saw the martyrs themselves that were beheaded, sitting upon thrones. He says only, that he saw thrones, and those who sat upon

them, not determining who they were. Nay rather, he determines that this is not to be understood of souls; for such an interpretation doth not suit the gender of the words in the original language.* I will not deny that the erection of the thrones here relates to the Church subsisting on earth, and that it is intended, that believers, at least without molestation or impediment from civil rulers, and even with their countenance and support, shall hold their assemblies, for preaching and hearing the word of God, for governing the Church by the power of the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and for condemning and triumphing over pernicious heresies. The persons who sit on these thrones, therefore, are not men long since departed, but saints alive at the period here described.

LIII. He does not say, too, that he saw that the men who were beheaded lived again, far less that the bodies of the beheaded lived again on the earth. He asserts merely, that he saw the souls of them that were beheaded, not living again, but living, that is, filled with unceasing joy, as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob "live to God;"—and reigning with Christ, to wit, in the kingdom of glory, where they reap the fruit of their labours and death, whilst they behold the enlargement of the Church during these thousand years. For, owing to the communion of all believers with Christ, and owing to the communion of the Church militant with the Church triumphant, every accession that is made to the kingdom of Christ either on earth or in heaven, proves an accession to the kingdom of the saints in heaven. Thus far we have no mention of the resurrection of bodies, or indeed of any resurrection at all.

LIV. But if we even grant, that ἐζησαν, lived, has here the same meaning with ἀνεζησαν, lived again, in which sense the word is thought to be used in Rev. 2:8.; since this reviving, if you will have it so, is ascribed to the souls of them that were beheaded, it remains to be inquired, in what that reviving of souls consists. In my apprehension, the meaning is as follows. Those who, under the reign of Satan and the Beast, murdered the servants of Christ, at the same time calumniated them, in their sentences, decrees, and writings, as

ungodly, cursed, hateful to God, enemies to Christ, slaves of the Devil, and men whose crimes a single hell was scarcely sufficient to expiate. Thus these pious men, while punished with death, were, as to their souls, more than dead in the estimation of the princes of the world, and of the credulous multitude who were imbued with the same errors. But afterwards, in happier times of the Church when the light of the Gospel shone forth more clearly, the same believers that were formerly loaded with so many reproaches, were publicly known and recognized as the friends of God and of Christ, who reign with him in glory. Then it was found, believed, and proclaimed, "that those whom human tribunals had condemned to death, are living with God in heaven."* The Scriptures furnish many examples of a thing being said to happen or to be, when it is discovered and acknowledged. Nor is it a contemptible accession to the glory of the saints, that the grace of God towards them is celebrated by the inhabitants of the earth.

LV. Besides the souls of those that were beheaded whom he had seen in heaven, John saw on the earth "those" (observe, it is not the souls of those, but the persons themselves) "who had not worshipped the beast, nor his image, &c." that is, those who, adhering stedfastly to Christ, determined to have no fellowship with the kingdom of Antichrist. These also "lived," enjoying a blessed peace of conscience, and a rich abundance of spiritual consolation;—"and reigned with Christ," victorious over Satan and the world, and partaking of the Redeemer's glorious grace. They thus lived and reigned with Christ, "a thousand years." Not that their lives, as individuals, extended to a thousand years; for this never was, and never will be the lot of any mortal: but men of that description reigned during many successive ages, till the appointed period. And if you strongly urge their living again, this may be affirmed of these also; for they lived again, inasmuch as under the tyranny of the Beast, that description of men had been lately harassed, oppressed, reduced to a small number, and involved in such difficulties and privations that they scarcely lived or discovered any principle of vitality at all: but now, the face of affairs being changed, their numbers are increased, and breathing a freer

air, they move all their members with ease and spirit. Nor ought it to seem harsh and unnatural, that one and the same word is employed to designate the life and reign of souls in heaven, and of others on earth. Those of each class, it is evident, live and reign only where they exist. As heaven is the habitation of those souls whom John saw in a state of separation from their bodies, they must live and reign with Christ in heaven. The earth being the abode of other believers, who are not naked spirits, these must live and reign on earth. In reference to both classes, the life and reign are limited to a thousand years in the sense already explained. And here again we find nothing relative to an anticipated resurrection of confessors and martyrs.

LVI. "But the rest of the dead lived not again." "The rest" are those who received not the testimony of Jesus and worshipped the Beast, that is, those who persisted in their infidelity, or instead of sound doctrine embraced the errors of the Antichristian Church. These are certainly to rank amongst the dead, since nothing but death reigns in every kingdom which stands opposed to the kingdom of Christ. And these "lived not again:" they did not become partakers of spiritual life, nor had they any part in the felicity of that blessed state to which the true Church of Christ is advanced at that period. This again is to be understood not so much of particular persons, as of a certain kind of men; and it serves to show, that they who adhere to the Antichristian profession and heresies even when detected and exposed, are utterly excluded from a participation of that felicity which is promised to the Church.—"Until the thousand years were finished." Throughout the whole period of time, during which Satan is bound, they still continued under the power of spiritual death. How much more, when Satan is again loosed?

LVII. "This is the first resurrection." The resurrection from which the enemies of the kingdom of Christ are excluded, must correspond to their death; and since the one is spiritual, it necessary follows that the other also is spiritual. This appears too, from the addition of the word first. A twofold resurrection is promised to the Church, whose condition John narrates; the one in this world, the other in the world

to come. The resurrection in this world is spiritual, and consists in the glorious enlargement of the Church by the successful preaching of the Gospel, and the renovating energy of the Holy Spirit. This is termed the first resurrection, in contradistinction to the other—the second, which is a resurrection of bodies, and relates to the world to come. The first, however, extends to several periods. It includes the first promulgation of the Gospel of the kingdom among Jews and Gentiles, accompanied by the conversion of multitudes; the public renunciation of heathenism in the Roman empire, under Constantine; and the Reformation of the Church by the exposure of the Antichristian system. To this prophecy of a thousand years must also be referred all the favourable changes which are yet to be expected, at whatever seasons the dates of their commencement or termination are to be fixed. It is not our present business, however, to discuss this subject.

LVIII. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection." This expression stands opposed to the false glorying of the followers of the Beast, who, in consequence of the superstitious and idolatrous canonizations of the Pope, honour their partizans with the titles of Saints and Blessed. "On such the second death hath no power." They are secured from apostacy, from impenitence, and from the lake of fire and brimstone. "But they shall be priests of God and of Christ." They shall have free access by faith and hope to the holy places of the sanctuary, and offer sacrifices well-pleasing to God.

To explain more fully what remains of the passage, is foreign to our present purpose. Let it now suffice to have shown, what we undertook to demonstrate, that this prophecy contains nothing which obliges us to conclude, that a happy resurrection of bodies is to take place prior to the last day.

LIX. The consequence of the Resurrection hoped for, is THE LIFE EVERLASTING; which is often the subject of promise in holy writ. It is mentioned last in order in the Creed, because it is in reality "the

end of our faith,"n the ultimate object of our hope, the completion of our salvation, and the final issue and consummation of the whole scheme of redemption.

LX. The term LIFE doth not here signify the bare existence of the person living; for in that respect even the wicked live, whom, nevertheless, Divine justice has consigned to everlasting death. We are to understand by this expression, a state of the highest felicity. To live is not merely to exist, but to be happy.* In this sense the word is often used in the Scriptures. Thus we read; "Let my lord king David live;"o "Your heart shall live for ever;" "The humble shall see this, and be glad; and your heart shall live, that seek God."q

LXI. This life is called EVERLASTING, in contradistinction to the present animal life. Even from the beginning, animal life was capable of being terminated by death, in the event of the entrance of sin; and after the commission of sin, its termination by death became indispensable. But the life which follows the resurrection, shall have no bound or termination, because all sin will be removed at the utmost distance; because the body itself will be endowed with such qualities as shall repel every kind of corruption; and, in fine, because it will be conferred on man, not as the former life for the probation of his constancy, but as a recompence for well-doing, and as a reward due to the satisfaction which Christ has made in our room. Hence the distinction which the Apostle states betwixt "the life that now is," and "that which is to come."

LXII. The life everlasting, as it is here mentioned in the Creed, is the life of the whole man, and includes the highest felicity of soul and body inseparably united together. But the nature and extent of this life can neither be conceived by the human mind in the present imperfect state, nor expressed by mortal tongues. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be." To this subject the following words of Paul are generally accommodated: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."t And the accommodation is

very proper; for although these words of Paul, quoted from Isaiah, immediately respect the mysteries of the Gospel which were unknown to the ancient people of Israel, yet the situation of Christians in reference to the things now concealed from our view which shall be disclosed at the last day, exactly resembles the condition of the ancient Israelites in relation to those things which were then hid, and were at last to be unveiled in the fulness of time.

LXIII. It has pleased God, however, to favour us with a partial discovery, in order to serve, in a manner, for a taste. And at least a general and indistinct knowledge of what he has revealed, is necessary to give stability to our faith, and vigour to our hope, and to enable us to relish the sweetness of the promises. We may therefore attempt a rude and imperfect delineation, such as our present capacity admits, of the life everlasting. The Life Everlasting is a most blessed state of the whole man, in which he rejoices in the immediate presence, the contemplation, and the glorious enjoyment of God in heaven, and is thus conformed to him as far as possible, in both soul and body, without the least interruption or diminution of his happiness to all eternity.

LXIV. As in the creation of this visible world, the method which the wisdom of God adopted, was to begin with things more rude and imperfect, and to proceed gradually in a course of successive days till his work attained a perfection in which it was worthy of his attributes to rest; so in exalting his people to the summit of felicity, he causes them to ascend by certain regular steps. In the present life, he gives them the first-fruits of the promised bliss. He reserves greater things for the soul after its departure from this vile body, till, at the resurrection, it recover the body, wonderfully changed and improved. Then at last they shall be put in possession of the greatest and most consummate felicity.

LXV. It pleased God to cause a cluster of grapes to be brought from Canaan to the Israelites in the wilderness, that from this they might form a judgment regarding the fertility of the promised land. In like

manner, whilst believers are prosecuting their journey through the howling deserts of this world to the heavenly country, he grants them some anticipation of those joys, to the full possession of which he will admit them in due season. The design of this indulgence is, partly that they may be comforted in the day of adversity; partly that by judging of the full harvest from the first-fruits, they may infer the excellence and greatness of the felicity reserved for them in heaven; but principally, that by the prelibation of that glorious reward which they expect, they may be animated to persevere with increasing alacrity in their course of faith and holiness.

LXVI. Even here, we know, God brings his chosen to himself, "causes them to approach unto him," and allows them to see his glory,^v in holy meditation, in prayer, and other devotional exercises. He gives them a kind of taste and experience of his goodness. Even here he favours them with the kisses of his love, and brings them into his chambers, and into his banqueting-house, displaying over them his banner of love.^x Even here he allows them so to possess and enjoy him as their portion, that their soul most delightfully relies on him as their treasure, is enriched by his riches, nourished by his abundance, guarded by his power, directed by his wisdom, refreshed by his goodness, and, in fine, replenished by his all-sufficiency. Even here he indulges them with "the riches of the full assurance of understanding," with the strongest assurance of possessing consummate felicity in due season,^a with peace of conscience and tranquillity of mind, and as the natural result of so many invaluable blessings, with "joy unspeakable and full of glory."^c

LXVII. But how exalted sover these enjoyments are, they are but inconsiderable, in comparison of those which await the souls of believers, after their release from their bodies. We ought ever to hold it as an indubitable truth, that the soul subsists after the termination of the natural life.* The Apostle would otherwise have in vain desired "to depart and to be with Christ;"^d for no man that has altogether ceased to be, can be with Christ. He would have falsely affirmed, too, that we are come "to the spirits of just men made perfect," if no such

spirits exist What is the purpose of the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, but to inform us of the existence of separate souls, and of their different conditions even before the day of general judgment? Since Christ was in all things made like unto his brethren, sin only excepted, is not our soul of the same nature with Christ's soul? But did his soul at his departure vanish into air, so that after death he became absolutely nothing! What Christian breast does not tremble at so blasphemous a thought; especially when it is considered, that our Lord, when about to leave the body, commended his spirit, as an invaluable deposit, into the hands of his heavenly Father?

LXVIII. Nor does the soul merely subsist after the dissolution of the body; it also lives, understands, and feels. It is affirmed by our Saviour that the Patriarchs, after they had been long in the state of the dead, were still "living to God," that is, enjoying communion with him in glory. And Paul impressively says; "If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness."j Remark, 1. That by the body and the spirit are here intended, as in several other passages of Scripture, the two constituent parts of man. 2. That by the death of the body is understood the dissolution of animal life,—the death from which the body is to be raised.l 3. That the spirit is represented not only as living, but as life; partly on account of the excellence and abundance of the spiritual life referred to; but principally because the spirit contains the source of that blessed life which is to be imparted in due season even to the body: for the future felicity of the body is incontestably inferred from the present felicity of the soul. 4. That this life is ascribed to the spirit, even whilst the body is dead. For the Apostle assigns two periods to it, the one before the resurrection, the other after it; the one mentioned in this verse, the other in the verse immediately following.

Further, was not Moses, whose death and burial are related in the book of Deuteronomy, seen with Christ at his transfiguration on the mount, conversing, and speaking of things to come? Whatever may have been the nature of the body that appeared, and from whatever

quarter he derived it, is not this at least certain, that Moses, with regard to his soul, then survived, lived, and possessed the powers of understanding? And what gain, pray, could Paul have derived from the hastening of his death, if believers are not permitted to enjoy the glorious presence of Christ before the last day?

LXIX. What, too, is the meaning of that celestial eulogy: "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them?" To whatever the expression from henceforth* may refer, all the circumstances clearly show, that the state in which the dead remain previously to the end of the world, is here described. Grotius in reality trifles, when he applies this remarkable passage to the condition of the saints in the present life. "As among the Hebrews," says he, "the word מות, death, signifies a great affliction, so מתים, νεκροι, the dead, signifies those that are grievously afflicted, those to whom life is not life, Col. 3:3. Ὁι ἐν Κυριῳ ἀποθνησκοντες, they 'that die in the Lord,' are those who encounter the perils of death for Christ's sake. Ἀποθνησκειν is thus understood in 1 Cor. 15:31. These shall not only be blessed hereafter in another life, but even in the present life. They labour indeed; but amidst their labours they have rest, that is, peace of conscience. And their works follow them, that is, peace ariseth from the consciousness of their good works." To this we reply, 1st, Such interpretations tend to reduce all the expressions of sacred writ, however grand and magnificent, to a very poor and trivial sense: and, by this very culpable method of proceeding, both the meaning of Scripture, and the consolation of believers, are essentially injured. 2dly, To die in the Lord may denote two things, the one of which is common to all believers, and the other peculiar to martyrs. The first respects the state of the dying—that they are in the Lord, united to him by faith, and abiding constantly in him till death. See in particular 1 Thes. 4:16. where by "the dead in Christ," we are not to understand martyrs as opposed to other believers, but all that have died in the faith of Christ, in opposition to believers that are still living. The other interpretation refers to the cause of death, as if it were said, for Christ's sake. In this sense the expression sometimes

occurs. Now we do not deny that this passage was principally intended for the consolation of martyrs; but at the same time we consider it as containing truth which applies in general to all the godly. 3dly, That those who lead an afflicted life are called νεχροι, Grotius unhappily attempts to prove from Col. 3:3. where neither the word, nor the thing, is to be found. The word there is 'απεθανετε, and the meaning is, ye have professed in your baptism that you have put off your former life. It is admitted that in 1 Cor. 15:31. Καθ' ημεραν 'αποθνησκω I die daily, signifies a person subjected to great affliction. But how absurd is it, to restrict to those alone who are called confessors, that consolation which is expressed in terms which in their proper and natural signification denote martyrs? 4thly, By this mode of interpretation, the place, the time, and the state of labour and rest—of the contest and the triumph, are improperly confounded. The Scripture carefully distinguishes these things, assigning labour to this life, "labour and patience;" and rest to that which is to come. Nay, in this very context, the Spirit ascribes "patience" to the living, and "rest" to the dead. 5thly, When works are spoken of as following men, the expression denotes the reward of their works, and particularly the recompence they enjoy after having ceased to labour. And since it is chiefly in the future state that believers are rewarded, why should we confine their reward within the narrow limits of the present life?

LXX. There is another passage in the Apocalypse which ought not to be omitted. "I saw under the altar," says John, "the souls of them that were slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held; and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them: and it was said unto them that they should rest yet for a little season." The souls which survived death, and survived in a state of rest, are seen "under the altar," to intimate that the martyrdom of those believers was a libation of blood, highly acceptable to God. The blood of the victims used to be sprinkled on the foot of the altar in the temple. Put there, as if in the immediate view of the holy place,

it, in a manner, gave notice to God of the offering of the sacrifice. Much more did the souls of the martyrs exhibit a memorial of the sacrifice. To this remark it may be added, that to be under the altar amounts here to the same thing as to be under the special protection of Christ. He is our altar, who renders our prayers, and all our devotional exercises, and martyrdom itself, well-pleasing to God. Whoever is under this altar, enjoys the gracious presence and the powerful protection of Christ. David accordingly says; "He shall hide me in his pavilion; in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me."y The souls are also here represented as in the condition of suppliants, and therefore as prostrating themselves at the base of the altar. Their crying denotes their ardent desire, that God would display his justice, in the vindication of a truly good and righteous cause; for it is not unworthy of the inhabitants of heaven, to desire and solicit from God, those things which are righteous, and for which they render thanks to his name.a The "white robes given to them," signify celestial glory, and perhaps a pre-eminent degree of glory, corresponding to the sufferings which they endured for Christ, and serving to celebrate their triumph over their vanquished enemies. This distinguished glory was also a pledge, that their cause would at last prevail in the world, and that persecutors would be effectually restrained. From all this we deduce the following argument. They are possessed of life, intelligence, and feeling, who after death are under the blessed protection of Christ, and in the condition of suppliants;— who devoutly solicit the just punishment of enemies;—and who are invested with robes of glory and triumph. All these things, however, are affirmed regarding the souls of the deceased. The deceased are possessed, therefore, of life, intelligence, and feeling.

LXXI. But we are further to believe, that the souls of the righteous, when released from the body, are admitted into celestial habitations and joys. The same heavenly Jerusalem, which contains myriads of Angels, and Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, numbers among its inhabitants, "the spirits of just men made perfect." The Apostle directs us to hope that when the earthly house of this tabernacle shall be dissolved, we shall inhabit "a building of God, an

house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."c And as the soul of Lazarus was carried by angels to Abraham's bosom, that at the celestial banquet he might occupy the nearest place to that venerable patriarch; so Christ promised to the penitent malefactor, that on the very day of crucifixion he should be with him in paradise.e

LXXII. The blessedness which the souls of the righteous enjoy in heaven, so far as it can be learned from Scripture, consists in the following things. 1st, They enjoy the glorious presence of God and Christ. 2dly, They see God clearly in the light of glory.g They behold him as he discovers himself in those works of glory which are exhibited in heaven, and which, by their superior lustre, eclipse the works of nature in the world, and the works of grace in the militant Church. They see him also "in the face of Jesus Christ." And in fine, they see him more immediately in himself, since man has intercourse with God, not, as now, "through a glass darkly, but face to face." 3dly, Thus knowing God perfectly, they love him most ardently, with a love not merely of desire, but of delight, arising from that full fruition for which they had formerly longed.j 4thly, They are conformed to him in holiness and glory. For if the face of Moses shone with an extraordinary radiance, after he had enjoyed fellowship with God on the holy mount; and if the contemplation of the Lord Jesus Christ by faith, and in a glass, transforms us into the same image;l how shall not the conformity of the soul to the Divine purity and glory, be the effect of that intimate communion with God, to which the saints are admitted in heaven? 5thly, As the result of all these blessings, they possess "fulness of joys."87

LXXIII. Although these felicities are truly excellent, they do not exhaust that plenitude of bliss, for which the Gospel teaches us to hope. And hence the consummation of our happiness is often spoken of as deferred till the coming of our Lord. It remains, therefore, to inquire in what manner our happiness is to be increased and completed at the last day.

LXXIV. Here it must be considered, in the first place, that whereas till then the soul alone is the subject of the heavenly blessedness, this blessedness shall from that time extend to the whole man. The bodies of believers, being raised up in glory, shall be restored to their souls; and the bodies of those whom that day may find alive, shall be transformed into glory, that, together with their souls, they may be capable of perfect felicity. Here the almost incredible benignity of God is admirably displayed. He had determined to bless as well our bodies, as our spirits, with a participation of the heavenly felicity. But since they are unable, as now constituted, to bear so great a weight of glory, what measures will he adopt? Will he diminish the glory of heaven, that our bodies may be admitted to a share of it? By no means. He will rather change the qualities of the human body. Though once animal, he will make it spiritual; though once earthly, he will make it heavenly; that it may possess a proper meetness for the glory with which it shall be blessed. Thus Christ "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." Thus, even in the corporeal part of our nature, we shall "shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of our Father."p The soul, too, owing to its natural affection for the body, cannot fail to perceive, with inexpressible pleasure, the great glory with which the body is adorned when re-united to itself.

LXXV. Further, God will in that day most amply display his transcendant glory in very glorious works. Then we shall see this vast universe delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God; and a new heaven and a new earth, wherein only righteousness dwelleth; and the general assembly of all the elect that have ever existed from the beginning of the world to the last day, clothed with renovated bodies, and shining with astonishing brightness. And since in all these things the saints will admire nothing but the reflected beams of the Divine glory sparkling on every side, may it not be said that, whilst seeing these, they shall see God himself in the most conspicuous manner? Hence says the Apostle John: "We know that when he shall appear, we shall be like

him, for we shall see him as he is." "As for me," says the Psalmist also, "I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake" from the sleep of death, "with thy likeness."r The object will then be represented in the clearest manner, and its influence on the mind will be highly efficacious, and such as we cannot now explain: and at the same time the subject will be excellently suited to discern every thing in God and relating to God, that is calculated to perfect its felicity.

LXXVI. Their enjoyment of God, too, who is the Chief Good, will then be far more perfect and more immediate than all that they had formerly experienced. The remains of sin, with which even the holiest men have always to struggle in the present life, will no more be found. Nor shall any effects of sin continue, such as those that are to be seen in the bodies of the pious dead, whilst they remain under the power and in the territories of death:—effects, of which the glorified saints cannot be ignorant, and which serve, it must be acknowledged, to prevent their joy from rising to the highest degree. So long as there are any of the remains or effects of sin in the elect, God holds communion with them only through the intervention of the Mediator. But by the resurrection, death itself "shall be destroyed," and "cast into the lake of fire;"t and henceforth shall have no power except against the enemies of God and his people. There shall be nothing in the whole church which will not be perfectly holy, and entirely subject to God. And there will be nothing to hinder God from holding communion with the redeemed, as he doth with holy Angels, most intimately and immediately, without the intervention of a Mediator, whose economy shall then entirely cease. "When all things shall be subdued to him, then shall "the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."*u

LXXVII. What crowns their felicity, however, is, that it will be EVERLASTING. It is not only life, but "life eternal." The subject of this blessedness will be for ever capable of enjoying it, and the blessedness itself will never be taken away. The soul is, by the

constitution of its nature, immortal. The body also will be entirely exempt from sin, which is the immediate cause of corruption: nor will it resemble those bodies which consist of a certain composition of the elements, and may be resolved into them; but, as we have already shown, it will be spiritual, heavenly, and incorruptible. Owing, besides, to the everlasting efficacy of the merits of Christ, and to the quickening power of the Holy Spirit, by whom both parts of the human nature are prepared for glory, the connexion subsisting between soul and body will remain for ever indissoluble. The blessedness itself, too, will be no less permanent. The inheritance reserved for us in heaven, is "incorruptible, and undefiled, and fadeth not away." We are encouraged to wait for "a crown of glory that fadeth not away."x

LXXVIII. And indeed if it is a real and solid blessedness, it must of necessity be permanent. Consider the matter in itself: when other circumstances are alike, any good is valuable in proportion to its duration; and the chief good, therefore, must be eternal. Attend to the impression of the matter in the human mind: how great soever any good may be, the thought of its coming to an end is distressing; and however long be its continuance, if it must be ended, it is impossible to avoid the thought of its termination. Nay, although it were never to end, whilst we have no assurance of its perpetual duration, it is hardly possible for us not to be seized with the fear of losing it. And wherever there is fear, there cannot be that fulness of joy which perfect happiness requires. Hence it appears that both the eternity of blessedness, and the full assurance of that eternity in the minds of the blessed, are essential to perfect felicity.

It would be easy to illustrate these things at greater length, and the pleasantness of the subject is very alluring. But as we have elsewhere discoursed more fully on these topics, it may suffice to have here briefly adverted to the principal heads.*

LXXIX. Since this is a discussion peculiarly calculated to make a deep impression on the human mind, we must take care that it seem

not to terminate only in frigid speculations. And first of all, the doctrine of so exalted a felicity tends to convince us of the Divine origin of the Gospel, by which it is revealed and exhibited. Examine the most ingenious discourses of Philosophers; consult the Koran of the Mahomedans; ask the modern doctors of the Jews. What have they to produce, which can at all be confronted with the felicity promised in the Gospel? Ever since our first parents lost their original happiness by the fall, the memory of that happiness is so worn out amongst their posterity, that they are capable of forming only an obscure and confused idea of the chief good; and, till they are enlightened by the Gospel, they universally embrace ashes instead of a treasure, shadows for substance, and nothings for realities. They seek, they search, they run, they pant; but they know neither for what, nor how they should strive. And when they flatter themselves that they have attained an object which will at last satisfy their eager mind, they soon find that their thirst is rather augmented than extinguished. For either they are deprived of the good things which they have long sought, after having possessed them for a short time; or their precarious felicity is destroyed by enjoyment itself, injures the possessor, and inflames the mind with new and equally tormenting desires.z

LXXX. The wisest among the heathen rather supposed and conjectured, than knew, something about the subsistence of the soul after the termination of the present life. A few of them, by a vague tradition, had heard of the resurrection of the body; the meaning of which they saw as through a mist, having no solid argument by which they could establish, to their own satisfaction, the truth of so wonderful a doctrine. But whereas the Philosophers employed themselves in anxious inquiries relating to the chief good; whereas Epicurus with his followers denied the immortality of the soul, while with much wavering and hesitation it was defended by Socrates and Plato, and held only as an uncertain conjecture by the Brahmins of India and the Druids of Gaul; and whereas the Poets enveloped the whole doctrine of a future state in numberless fables;—the glories of eternity are now clearly and certainly revealed in the Gospel, that we

may not only believe, but so anticipate them in our own souls, that from what we now possess, perceive, and taste, our faith may rise to full assurance.

LXXXI. Mahommed, when he intends to point out the highest rewards which he teaches his followers to expect, speaks of nothing but carnal enjoyments. The splendid mansions of Paradise; chambers containing couches of gold, and strewed with silk, tapestry, and precious stones; an unknown abundance of silver and gold; waters whiter than snow and sweeter than honey, and nigh them as many crystal glasses as there are stars in heaven; a table of adamant, with chairs of gold and silver; oranges to be presented to each of the guests, which they no sooner smell, than straightway, the most beautiful virgins burst forth from them to embrace the followers of Mahommed;—these, and other things of the same sort, or still more absurd, which it would be tedious and disgusting to detail, are the remunerations which that impostor proposes.

LXXXII. Nor do the Jews discover a greater share of wisdom and sobriety, when they talk of the magnificent feast of their Messiah, consisting of a woodland ox formed and fattened for the purpose, of the fish Leviathan, of the bird Bar Juchna, and of wines of the most delicate flavour produced in paradise, and reserved in Adam's cellar till the last day. Their ravings about these things are so ridiculous, that Manasseh himself was ashamed of them, and laboured strenuously, how unsuccessfully soever, to convert them into allegories. They entertain opinions wretchedly erroneous with regard to the condition of separate souls; which they represent as wandering about their own corpses, prompted by the love they bear for them, for a whole year after death; and as frequently employed for performing magical arts, by Demons that infest the air. The metempsychosis also, or the transmigration of souls into other bodies, was believed by the ancient Pharisees; and it is still maintained by the modern Cabbalists. They debase, too, the doctrine of the resurrection, by a multitude of fables, such as that which they tell of an incorruptible small bone in the chine-bone of the back,

from which alone, after the rest of the body shall have been consumed, it may be entirely recovered and restored; and of a certain celestial dew, by which that bone is to be mollified and extended, like leaven which diffuses itself through the whole mass;—to pass over the fable of the rolling of bodies through secret passages of the earth to Palestine, that they may be raised up in that country. All these notions are equally contrary to the dictates of sound reason, and the doctrine of sacred writ.

LXXXIII. How much more noble and sublime is the divine doctrine of the Gospel, which teaches us that the happiness of man is not to be sought in created objects, far less in those gross and animal pleasures which gratify his bodily appetites; but in the pious contemplation, the delightful enjoyment, and the holy resemblance of the Supreme Being:—that, through the grace of God and of Christ, the beginnings of these felicities are imparted to true believers even in the present life, and are more richly conferred on the souls of the godly at death, that, released from the body of sin, they may rejoice in the embraces of God and the Redeemer, till, at last, being re-united to their bodies, which shall be raised up to glory, they experience God, without the intervention of any medium, to be to them "all in all." These blessings are truly sufficient to fill and satisfy the soul that is desirous of the highest good; and beyond these, is nothing desirable, which it either knows or seeks. And who can question the truth and Divinity of that doctrine, which so clearly teaches, and so strongly assures us of, so great a felicity! Who would not rejoice that, after the reign of the grossest darkness, this Gospel has been so extensively preached, known, and embraced! Who would not cordially exult in it, as a treasure of inestimable value!

LXXXIV. It is necessary for us, however, to take heed, lest amidst a general knowledge of these glories, we rest satisfied with a hope of them that is either precipitate or not well founded. Every exertion must be made to obtain solid and convincing evidence, that we are entitled to hope for this glorious felicity. It is proper, therefore, to inquire, with the greatest possible solicitude, both what is essential

to the character of those whom God, in his testament, constitutes heirs of these blessings; and also whether those marks of Divine grace are to be found in us.

LXXXV. We ought, in the first place, to regard it certain and indubitable, that all are not to be admitted to a participation of eternal blessedness; nay, that this will not be the privilege of many, but of very few, compared with the multitudes that perish. They are a "little flock."b In Noah's ark, "few, that is, eight souls were saved by water." A still smaller number escaped the burning of Sodom, which amongst all its numerous inhabitants had not ten righteous persons. Of the six hundred thousand Israelites that departed from Egypt, only two entered Canaan. So here, "many are called, but few are chosen."d The awful admonition of Chrysostome to his hearers at Antioch is well-known: "How many do you suppose there are in our city, that shall be saved? What I am about to say, is indeed unpalatable; yet I will say it Among so many thousands, not a single hundred can be found that shall be saved: and I even doubt if the number be so large." It is not our province indeed, presumptuously to determine the number of those that perish and of those that are saved; much less to pronounce a rigorous sentence respecting our neighbour, who is perhaps no worse, or even better than ourselves. Yet according to the example of our Saviour himself we earnestly press it on the attention of men, that by far the smallest proportion of them are to inherit the life everlasting. Were this duly considered, would not every one anxiously inquire; "Lord, do I belong to the number?"

LXXXVI. Further, notwithstanding this warning of our Lord, there are very many that deceive themselves. Poor vain mortals! we are so blinded by self-love, and so void of understanding, that when asked what hope of future happiness we cherish in our breast, we generally class ourselves, with great confidence, among the few of whom our Lord speaks as walking in the way that leadeth unto life; and perhaps none will reply with hesitation, except the man who has the surest title to that felicity. Truly amazing, and never to be sufficiently

deplored, is that supine indifference, which induces us, although so often and so faithfully warned, to suspend that incalculable weight of glory upon the slender thread of a proud imagination, and so to speak, upon a spider's web. Who is there that, though he bends his attention with energy to the most unimportant of his other affairs, yet doth not flatter himself most stupidly in this highly momentous concern, on which all depends,—and doth not presume to affirm that he has a title to heaven, although he be possessed of no evidence, and can produce no proof of his title. Are we so absolutely lost to all rationality, as thus to trifle with our life, with our soul, with our salvation? We hear that salvation is obtained by few. And are we all bold enough to number ourselves amongst the few? For what reason? On what ground? None at all, but that we think proper to do so. But why do we think proper to entertain that view of our state? We know not; and we have no reason for our confidence to assign to our own mind, much less to others, much less to God. Oh what folly! what madness! what frenzy! What term sufficiently strong can I find, to stigmatize such deplorable supineness!

LXXXVII. Let us at length shake off this fatal lethargy, and know at least in this our day the things which belong to our peace. Let us no longer suffer ourselves to be deceived by the vain illusions of dreams, but "lay up in store for ourselves a good foundation against the time to come." Let us esteem it an inviolable maxim, that vain are all our hopes of living eternally in glory, unless we now possess the beginnings of glory in true holiness, and that none can attain the blessed resurrection of the body, whose soul has not first been raised from the death of sin. For in this sense too, these words in the Apocalypse hold true: "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power."g It is certain, that "except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Let every one, therefore, examine himself, whether he finds the Spirit dwelling in him as the author of a new life, by which he is dead to sin, the world, and himself, and lives to God. Let him inquire, whether he lives a kind of life, which is widely different from the ordinary course of mankind;

which far excels the moral probity of Philosophers, the false religious zeal of Pharisees, the feigned sanctity of hypocrites, and the most splendid virtues, which men of any description can acquire by the unassisted powers of nature. Let him see if he possesses a life that elevates the mind above the vanishing enjoyments of this world, and keeps it fixed upon God, in contemplating, loving, praying to and praising him, and in imitating his excellencies;—a life, in fine, that exhibits evident traces of the life of God, and of that which Christ led on the earth. Since the prize under our consideration is of unbounded value, and since it is bestowed on very few, it is natural to conclude, that something peculiarly excellent must distinguish the character of such as are entitled to rank among those on whom it shall be conferred. "For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."89

LXXXVIII. And assuredly that man is unworthy of everlasting life, who is not determined to prefer it to all other things, and to submit to any labour or exertion, how great soever, which the Divine wisdom has prescribed as a mean of attaining it. There is a story related by Marco Paulo the Venetian,* which, although strange, is well fitted to illustrate the present subject. The substance of it is as follows. A certain Tyrant in the country of Mulete, whose name was Aloadinus, formed a band of assassins, and availing himself of their unbridled ferocity, committed such ravages that he soon became a terror to all. To induce this execrable band of soldiers to hold themselves in readiness for whatever service he required, he had recourse to the following artifice. He had planted a garden for himself, situated in a most delightful valley, surrounded with lofty mountains, and furnished with every kind of pleasure, so as exactly to resemble the paradise of Mahommed, whose doctrines were held by himself and his subjects. The entrance was guarded by a well fortified castle, secured by a strong garrison; and there was no other way of entering or departing from the garden. Now pretending that God had intrusted him with the key of paradise, the Tyrant caused those whom he wished to render thoroughly obsequious to his orders, to be

first intoxicated with a kind of poisonous liquor, and when by this means overcome with sleep, to be conveyed unconsciously into his enchanting garden, that when they awoke and found themselves in the midst of such extraordinary pleasures, they might imagine they were caught up into the paradise of God. But when they had scarcely begun to taste the numerous delights around them, being stupified by the same liquor, they were carried out of the paradise. After returning to their sober senses, they could not help lamenting that they had lost so great a felicity, and were perfectly willing to suffer death for the sake of being exalted to the perpetual enjoyment of such a life. The Tyrant thus imposed on simple young men, that, prepared to exchange the present life for that felicity, they might be prodigal of their blood, and might not shrink from the most hazardous enterprize. But if so gross a deception had so powerful an effect on the minds of men, to what noble efforts ought not we to be stimulated by the certain hope and the undoubted first-fruits of a solid and substantial felicity?

LXXXIX. God indeed has freely promised that future bliss to his people. It is "the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Our title to eternal life is not founded on any merit of our own works, but solely on the satisfaction which Christ hath made in our stead. Let none, however, expect to obtain the possession of it otherwise than in the way of good works. The Apostle's earnest exhortation to all is, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."k The attainment of so great a felicity is no easy or common matter. "The righteous" himself "is scarcely saved." We must "strive to enter in at the strait gate."m The heavenly Jerusalem must be taken by a holy violence, nor can it be otherwise obtained. "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." God "will render to every man according to his deeds"; and he will adjudge eternal life to none but "them who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality."o Now since a reward of such inestimable value is proposed, who can consider any labour undergone in the service of God, either excessive or fruitless? "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always

abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

XC. How can that labour be in vain, to which the Divine veracity has annexed a glorious reward, which the Divine goodness will bestow? Who that attends to these things would not exclaim with delight; "Oh! how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!" How great the consolation which the sure hope of this felicity is naturally calculated to administer to afflicted souls! If they are stripped of worldly wealth by the fraud and violence of unrighteous men; thanks be to God that the happiness of the Christian by no means consists in possessions which moth or rust doth corrupt, and which are exposed to the rapacity of thieves. What does he lose, from whom are taken away perhaps some small and naturally perishing things, to which he had given a place in his house, but not in his heart; whilst he retains the invaluable pearl of Divine grace unhurt by enemies, and is certain that the substantial treasures of glory are deposited, and kept safe for him with God, in the sacred treasury of the heavenly temple, nay, in the bosom of the Deity himself? If afflictions assail him, and particularly if he suffer for the sake of Christ and of righteousness, let it not seem hard to "suffer with Christ, that we may be glorified together. For I reckon, that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."s If the body be chastened with grievous diseases or pains, if the soul be harassed with sorrowful thoughts, if even the terrors of death approach, let the noble mind of the Christian look earnestly forward to futurity. Let him by faith anticipate those times, or rather those everlasting ages, in which the body, freed from all the pains of sickness, raised from the dust of death, and conformed to the glorious body of Christ, shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of his heavenly Father; in which the soul, delivered from all the conflicts of temptation, shall rejoice in God and the Lamb. Let him anticipate those ages, when he shall see, possess, and enjoy, without measure, and without satiety, all those felicities, which here, amidst the numerous troubles of life,

and in spite of the rage and malice of the Devil, he believed, expected, and very imperfectly tasted. Then resuming his courage, let him boldly say, Ye diseases and pains, thou death, or thou Satan, with all thy infernal forces, do you expect to cast me down from my happy state? It is long since I knew you, and by faith stripped you of your mask. Without the will of my heavenly Father you can do nothing, you cannot injure one hair of my head. Ye pains, ye diseases, you will slay the old man, you will destroy the body of sin. Death, thou wilt terminate my miseries, and open wide to me the gate of heaven. And thou, O Satan, how unwillingly soever, shalt become to me a teacher of humility, and after a contest of short continuance, I will conquer, seize, and bind thee, and will trample and bruise thee under my feet: Whilst thou shalt be tormented with eternal flames, I shall be honoured with a triumph that will never end. "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, our inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal."

XCI. Since such treasures of glory are laid up and reserved for the Christian, with what magnanimity ought he to contemn the fading enjoyments of the world, and to consider as loss and dung, far beneath his regard, all those vanities which the unthinking multitude admire and adore! Shall a candidate for heaven, shall a son of the resurrection, occupy himself in laborious exertions to gather, preserve, and accumulate things of nought, things which render no man happier, since they render no man wiser, holier, or liker to God; and which generally become incitements to vice? Shall he be elated at the increase of such trifles, or discouraged at their loss? Shall he suffer himself to be ensnared by the allurements, or depressed by the calamities of the present life? Shall he contemplate with an envious eye the uncertain prosperity of them, "who have their portion in this life, and whose belly," not whose soul, "God fills with his hid

treasure; whose children are filled, and leave the rest of their substance to their babes:" whilst he "shall behold God's face in righteousness, and be satisfied, when he awakes, with his likeness."u

What expressions of the liveliest gratitude, in fine, will he not acknowledge himself bound to render to Jesus Christ his Saviour, who by his own death has rescued him from so deep an abyss of complicated misery, and advanced him to so great a height of felicity! "I thank God," says the Apostle, "through Jesus Christ our Lord."

NOTES: CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY

NOTE I. Page 4

THE venerable Author very properly adverts to these preludes of his intended advent which the Messiah was pleased to give, by appearing in a human form to Abraham, Jacob, and others. These appearances, he adds, prepared the way for the prediction in Isaiah 52:8. "Thy watchmen lift up the voice; with the voice together do they sing; for they behold before their eyes"—or as the expression might possibly have been better rendered, for they see face to face; or as it is in the common version, they shall see eye to eye. At all events, the Author considers these words, and those which he immediately quotes from the 6th verse of the same Chapter, as referring to that manifestation of the Son of God in human flesh, of which these ancient appearances were remarkable anticipations. The whole passage of which these verses are a part, without doubt, relates, in the first instance, to that striking display of Jehovah's presence, power, and goodness, which the watchmen and other friends of Zion had the happiness to behold, at the restoration of the Jews from their Babylonish captivity. It ought, however, to be ultimately referred to a more glorious salvation than that temporal deliverance; and whilst the expression "they shall see eye to eye," may justly be applied to those clear spiritual discoveries of the character of the Messiah, and of the glory of the Divine perfections, as manifested in him and his work, with which the watchmen of Zion were to be blessed in latter days, it cannot well be deemed unnatural to include those opportunities of seeing and conversing with Christ in his human nature on the earth, which were granted to Apostles and some other primitive preachers of his Gospel. These holy men saw the King of Zion with their own eyes, and were permitted to eat and drink with him, not only during his abasement, but even after his resurrection from the dead. Being eye and ear-witnesses of his words and works, they were the better prepared to "lift up the voice" with confidence;

and their testimony was the more valuable and satisfactory. See John 1:14. Acts 4:20. 1 John 1:1.

The Hebrew expression translated eye to eye, occurs also in Numb. 14:14. though rendered differently in that passage. It may be compared with Jer. 34:3. We read also of seeing face to face in Gen. 32:30. and Exod. 33:11. and of speaking mouth to mouth Numb. 12:8. Jer. 32:4. The expression under consideration, as Parkhurst remarks, may be rendered eye with eye, i.e. with both eyes, agreeably to the Targum, and to the French translation *de leur deux yeux*. It denotes, at any rate, clear vision, or familiar and distinct knowledge. See Pool's Synopsis and Annotations, Vitringa on the place, and Parkhurst's Hebrew Lexicon on ענה.

NOTE II. Page 7

Whatever veneration be due to the ancient writers of the Christian Church, and however excellent and useful their works may be in many respects, it cannot be denied that these Fathers often exhibit marks of human infirmity; and that their comments on Scripture are sometimes more fanciful than just. This remark seems fairly to apply to the notion to which our Author here refers in too favourable terms, that the three Angels, who, as we read in Gen. 18 appeared to Abraham in the plains of Mamre, were the three persons of the sacred Trinity. That one of these Angels was the Angel of the covenant, the second person of the Trinity, agreeably to the views of Calvin and many other judicious Interpreters, is indeed highly probable, if not incontestably evident. For that Angel, in the course of his interview with the Patriarch, ascribed to himself Divine characters and works, and also received and answered Abraham's earnest supplications on behalf of Sodom. It is sufficiently manifest, however, from the narrative itself, that the other two who accompanied him in his visit to Abraham, and then proceeded by themselves to the habitation of Lot, were only created Angels.—Since neither the Father nor the Spirit was to become incarnate, it might

not have been so proper that these Divine persons should appear even for a little in a human shape.

Some writers have endeavoured to find a mystery in Abraham's bowing himself towards the ground before the Angels at their first appearance, Verse 2. and alleged that, while he adored one of the three, he by faith discerned Three Persons in one God. But Calvin justly remarks, that this idea is frivolous, and obnoxious to the scoffs of adversaries; and adds, that Abraham was not immediately aware that these "strangers" were more than men, and that his bowing himself was only an expression of civil respect.* The notion that the Father and the Holy Spirit were, at all, two of the three Angels who appeared to Abraham in a human form, seems equally ill-founded, and equally calculated to expose the truth to the ridicule of enemies.

NOTE III. Page 14

The passage in Zech. 6:12, 13. relative to "the man whose name is the BRANCH," is one of the most pleasant and most remarkable Old Testament predictions. That the Messiah is in reality its subject, few have ventured to deny. Some of its clauses, however, have been variously understood by various Interpreters. The most obvious sense of the expression, "he shall grow up out of his place," seems to be, that, whatever difficulties might intervene, and whatever improbability might attach to the event, the Son of God should certainly appear in human nature at the appointed place of his birth—that, however low might be the state of the Jews, and however hopeless the condition to which the family of David might be reduced, this glorious Branch should spring up in due season in the land of Canaan, and in Bethlehem the city of David. This interpretation is justified by comparing the original with the same and similar expressions, as in Exod. 10:23. 16:29. Lev. 13:23. Josh. 5:8. The interpretation, at the same time, which the Author quotes with approbation from Aben Ezra, and which is adopted too by Calvin and Drusius, † cannot be considered as either unjust or unnatural. The expression may fitly be rendered *de sub se, ex seipso*,

that is, of himself, by his own proper power; and in this view it may be referred to his miraculous conception. From this comment of Aben Ezra, too, we may remark in passing, it appears that even posterior to the publication of the Christian religion, it has been admitted by some learned Jews, that the Messiah was to be born of a Virgin. On this point compare Doddridge's Paraphrase and Note upon John 7:27.

Witsius, as the reader will observe, understands that part of the prediction in Zech. 6 which foretells the building of the temple, as relating both to the temple of his natural body, and the temple of the Church. It refers, no doubt, in the first instance, to the building of the second temple at Jerusalem, a work which Zerubbabel could never have accomplished, without aid and support from above. The chief design of the prophecy, however, was to cheer the hearts of the pious with the prospect of the erection of a still more important and glorious edifice, of which the ancient temple was a type. There is some respect, it may be admitted, to the human nature of Christ, which the temple of Jerusalem unquestionably prefigured, and which our Lord himself, in John 2:19. expressly denominates a "temple." The building of the New Testament Church seems, however, to be the subject chiefly intended here; and the repetition of the words, "He shall build the temple of the Lord, even He shall build the temple of the Lord," may have been intended to intimate, that the building of this spiritual temple is a work of unparalleled difficulty—that none but Christ could dare to undertake it—that He is fully equal to the arduous enterprize—and that in due time he should accomplish it with signal and glorious success.

For some farther illustration of this striking prophecy, and in particular for an explanation and defence of the true meaning of its concluding part, "the counsel of peace shall be between them both," the reader may consult Witsius on the Covenants.*

That the Messiah was not only to belong to the family of David, but to appear at a season when that royal house should have exchanged its splendour for a state of indigence and obscurity, is very properly observed by the Author. The sense which he attaches to the expression, rendered by our Translators "the stem of Jesse," (Isaiah 11:1.) when he represents it as denoting "a decayed trunk," *truncus succisus*, is quite just, and is supported by the authority of eminent critics. Though the Septuagint and Jerome somewhat improperly render it by the same term, $\rho\iota\zeta\alpha$ and *radix*, by which they translate a different Hebrew word, rendered roots, at the end of the Verse; the term *truncus*, or *truncus succisus*, or *concisus*, is adopted by Calvin, Tremellius and Junius, and by Vitringa. Parkhurst[†] also renders it "the stump or stock of a tree that hath been cut down." Vitringa regards the use of the same expression in Job 14:8. and Isaiah 40:24. as decisive in favour of this interpretation; and Parkhurst adds in its support, that the same word in Arabic used as a Verb, signifies to cut, cut off. Bishop Lowth understands the term in precisely the same sense, and accordingly he renders the first part of the verse in question; "But there shall spring forth a rod from the trunk of Jesse." In his Note on the place, the Bishop clearly points out the beauty and force of the expression, as well as its connexion with the preceding context.

"The Prophet," says this elegant Critic, "had described the destruction of the Assyrian army under the image of a mighty forest, consisting of flourishing trees, growing thick together, and of a great height; of Lebanon itself crowned with lofty cedars; but cut down, and laid level with the ground by the ax wielded by the hand of some powerful and illustrious agent: In opposition to this image, he represents the great Person who makes the subject of this Chapter, as a slender twig shooting out from the trunk of an old tree, cut down, lopped to the very root, and decayed; which tender plant, so weak in appearance, should nevertheless become fruitful and prosper," &c.

This and other predictions, as Amos 9:11. relative to the depressed state of the family of David at the time of the Messiah's coming, as

our Author shows, were remarkably fulfilled. The treatment which he represents some near relatives of Christ as having experienced from Domitian the Emperor, if it really took place, was a striking illustration of the change of circumstances which that family had undergone. The story is related by Eusebius; and the learned Mosheim, in the first Volume of his "Commentaries on the affairs of Christians before the time of Constantine the Great," expresses his conviction that it was not at all improbable in itself that that tyrannical Emperor, knowing that Jesus of Nazareth was honoured by his followers as their Lord and King, began to suspect that his surviving Relatives in Palestine might claim a temporal sovereignty, and summoned them to appear before him to give him satisfaction with regard to their views and intentions. Perceiving that he had no cause to entertain any Serious apprehensions of danger from such plain and humble individuals as he found them to be, he deemed it sufficient to gratify his arrogance and malignity, by making the indications of their poverty the subject of his mirth.

NOTE V. Page 18

That the Messiah was to be born of a Virgin was obscurely intimated even in the first promise, Gen. 3:15, and plainly foretold in subsequent predictions, particularly those in Isaiah 7:14, and Jer. 31:22, to which our Author refers. Unless the birth of Jesus had corresponded in this respect to ancient prophecy, the evidence of his Messiahship would have been materially defective. Those chapters of the Gospels by Matthew and Luke, therefore, which narrate the circumstances of our Lord's conception and birth, are highly interesting and important; and nothing can be more awkward and absurd than the attempts which have been made to unsettle the faith of Christians regarding the authenticity of these portions of Scripture. The modern Socinians, in what they are pleased to style An improved Version of the New Testament, have thought proper to print the 1st chapter of Matthew from the 17th verse to the end, and the whole of the 2d chapter, and the whole of the 1st and 2d chapters of the Gospel by Luke, in Italic characters, in order to denote that the

authenticity of all these passages is doubtful. In support of this strange Improvement, they can plead no higher authority than that of Ebion and Marcion, two early heretics, and avowed mutilators of the Scriptures. These Chapters are found in all the ancient Manuscripts and Versions now extant. They are referred to as a part of the inspired record by the early writers of the Church; and even several of the cavils of Celsus against the Christian faith are founded on the contents of these chapters. Their authenticity is also strongly supported by internal evidence. See Dr Campbell's Notes on Mat. 2:23.2 and Luke 3:23.2 and the appropriate remarks of Dr Magee on this subject.*

The miraculous conception of Christ, though questioned by some, and horribly derided by others, exhibits to the pure and enlightened mind, a display of Divine wisdom and power, in perfect accordance with all the other parts of the scheme of redemption. It was highly expedient that this extraordinary personage should come into the world in an extraordinary manner; and if it was necessary that the Saviour of sinners should himself assume their nature, and at the same time continue completely free from moral defilement, why should it seem incredible that a miracle was wrought for the purpose of securing his exemption from that original guilt and corruption, which is inherited by all the other descendants of Adam? If "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters" at the beginning of the world, to produce, by his mighty influence, life, order and beauty, where all was darkness, confusion and inanity, what impropriety can be shown in the same Spirit's "creating a new thing upon the earth" in the fulness of time? In this miraculous operation, the Deity did nothing more unworthy of his character than when he formed Adam of the dust of the ground, and Eve of a rib taken out of Adam's side. See Bishop Horsley's Sermon on the Miraculous Conception; and also some judicious remarks on this topic by Dr David Hunter of St Andrews, whose useful and well-written book on the History of Christ ought not to be consigned to oblivion.*

The Protevangelium of James is one of those spurious writings which, under the name of Gospels, Epistles, Acts and Revelations, have made pretensions to a place in the sacred canon of the New Testament. It coincides, in general, with a work entitled The Gospel of the Birth of Mary, and is thought to have been written in the third or perhaps the second Century by some Hellenistic Jew. In common with the other apocryphal books, it was never acknowledged as authentic by the primitive Christians; and notwithstanding the bold assertions of a late writer, it was not frequently alluded to by the ancient Fathers, nor did it gain a general reception in the Christian world. The idle and impertinent stories indeed with which this and the other spurious Gospels abound, and which render them extremely unlike the sacred details of the inspired evangelists, afford sufficient internal evidence that they have no just claims to divine inspiration.

The attempts which the enemies of Christianity have made to sap the credit of the New Testament, by confronting it with these "silly and drivelling forgeries," could not fail to prove utterly abortive.—Dr Leland, in the 1st Volume of his View of English Deistical Writers, takes notice, in his account of Toland, of a book published by that Author 1698, entitled Amyntor, in which he strives with great zeal to invalidate by this means the authority of the New Testament;—and he refers to the satisfactory answers which Toland received from Dr Samuel Clarke, Mr Stephen Nye, and particularly recommends Mr Richardson's "Canon of the New Testament Vindicated"—"A new and full method of settling the canonical authority of the New Testament," in three Volumes, by Mr Jones—and the voluminous and excellent work of Dr Lardner, entitled, "the Credibility of the Gospel History." On this point the reader might also consult Horne's "Introduction to the critical study and knowledge of the Holy Scriptures,"* and a late article in the Quarterly Review.†

NOTE VII. Page 28

What our Author here says respecting the consequences of Christ's being born of a Virgin may be compared with his remarks on the same topic in his Treatise on the Covenants.‡ He justly affirms, that since our Lord was not born according to the law of nature, he was not represented in the covenant made with Adam, and consequently was not liable to the imputation of Adam's sin. It is shown also, agreeably to what was hinted in a preceding Dissertation,§ that the original purity of his human nature "forms a part of that perfect righteousness of Christ, by which, in the capacity of Surety, he satisfied all the demands of the law in our place." On this point, Witsius vindicates himself from the charge of singularity, by referring not only to the works of Gomar and Cloppenburgh, but also to the Palatine or Heidelberg Catechism, which was composed by Zachary Ursin, a celebrated Professor of Theology at Heidelberg, has been long made use of in most of the Reformed Churches, and was adopted by the Church of Scotland till it was superseded by the excellent Catechisms prepared by the venerable Assembly which met at Westminster. The same views, it may be added, are maintained by the Rev. Thomas Boston in his Treatise on the Covenant of Grace.||

Whilst our venerated Author teaches that Christ was not liable to the imputation of Adam's sin, the expression obviously implies, that, in common with the greater part of evangelical Divines, he considered the guilt of Adam's first sin as imputed to "all mankind descending from him by ordinary generation." It is to be regretted that this doctrine has been impugned by a late Author, no less distinguished by cordial attachment to many of the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel, than by the vigour and originality which pervade his writings.* Although he sincerely contends for the doctrine of original depravity, and considers that depravity as the consequence of Adam's apostasy, he seems to deny that Adam represented his posterity in the covenant of works, and that they were involved in the guilt of the first transgression. As the work referred to has obtained an extensive circulation, it were desirable that some Master in Israel would particularly advert to the mistaken statements of Dr Dwight, refute his arguments at length, and place the subject in a scriptural

light. The Church indeed is already possessed of a valuable antidote in the Treatise by President Edwards on Original Sin; and in some instances the masterly pen of the venerable Grandfather supplies a sufficient refutation of the reasonings of the respectable Grandson. For example, Dwight's objections founded on Ezek. 18:20. and also on the word impute, are obviated in that celebrated Treatise.†

The only argument against the concern of Adam's descendants in the guilt of his first sin, which shall be noticed here, is that which is founded on a new translation of 1 Cor. 15:22, "As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive." "The words in the original," says Dwight, "are ἐν τῷ Ἀδὰμ, and ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ. The Greek preposition ἐν signifies very often, as any person acquainted with the language must have observed, exactly the same thing with the English phrase by means of. The passage would therefore have been explicitly and correctly translated; As by means of Adam all die, even so by means of Christ shall all be made alive. Adam is therefore only asserted here to be an instrumental cause of the death specified, &c." Now, that the preposition ἐν does not unfrequently signify by means of, or simply by, as Dr Macknight has thought proper to render it in this same verse, is readily admitted. But the native and ordinary sense of this preposition is confessedly in; and it should be inquired whether the connexion of the words, and the scope of the passage, do not render it more probable that the preposition ought to be rendered so in this verse, than that it should be translated either by, or by means of. That ἐν when connected with τῷ Χριστῷ, and with other names and characters of the Saviour, should in no case be rendered by means of, we shall not affirm. But "any person acquainted with the language" of the New Testament "must have observed," that in a vast majority of instances where ἐν is thus joined with Christ, it would be highly improper to render it in any other way than by the English preposition in. A few expressions from the Epistles to the Corinthians may suffice for examples: "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus"—"Babes in Christ"—"My ways which be in Christ"—"If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature"—"I knew a man in Christ."* The expression ἐν Χριστῷ occurs even in the 18th, and again in the

19th verse of the same Chapter with the verse under consideration; and in both places it is justly rendered by our translators "in Christ"—"Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." It is unquestionably better to say "fallen asleep in Christ," and thus extend the expression to all who have died in a state of union with Christ, than to render it, as Macknight has done, "fallen asleep for Christ," and thus unnecessarily and gratuitously confine it to those "who have suffered death for believing the resurrection of Christ." "Hope in Christ," too, is fully as proper as "hope by Christ" The preposition ἐν sometimes signifies concerning, with respect to, as in Rom. 11:2. Gal. 1:24. and accordingly the 19th verse might be correctly translated thus; "If with respect to this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." Why then ought we not to retain the 22d verse as it stands in the common version; "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive?" The Apostle had said in the verse immediately preceding; "For since δι' ἀνθρώπου, by man came death, δι' ἀνθρώπου, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." He had thus already taught that by, through, or by means of man death came, and also the resurrection of the dead. He had already shown that Adam is "an instrumental cause of the death specified," and that "the man Christ Jesus," the Son of God in human nature, is the author of that blessed resurrection which awaits the just. When he proceeds to his next sentence, he changes the preposition in both its parts. In place of δια, by, by means of, he says ἐν, in. That he alters the preposition merely for the sake of variety of expression, ought not readily to be conceded. Is it not much more probable that the design of the Apostle, and of the Spirit by whom he was inspired, was to throw additional light upon the subject, and to suggest something relative to the manner in which death comes by the one man, and the resurrection by the other? Is it not clearly intimated, that Adam was not merely "an instrumental cause of death," but that we died in Adam as our common root and federal representative, in whom we sinned, and so became liable to death; and that Christ, in like manner, is not only the cause of the glorious resurrection of

believers, but that this resurrection is the consequence of their relation to him as their spiritual Head and Representative, who fulfilled all righteousness in their room, and rose again from the dead on their behalf? This view of the meaning divests the passage of every appearance of tautology. It tallies best, too, with what the Apostle states in the progress of the chapter, verses 45–49, respecting the first man, and the second man, whom he contrasts together in the public capacity sustained by each. It is powerfully confirmed, in fine, by the doctrine of the same Apostle in Romans 5:12–21, a passage which incontrovertibly establishes at once the imputation of Adam's first disobedience to his posterity, and the imputation of Christ's meritorious righteousness to all believers—two important points which must stand or fall together.

The difficulties with which this subject is attended, ought not to prevent us from acquiescing in the declarations of infinite wisdom. "What we can know," says that eminent Author, whose views on this subject we have taken the liberty to combat, in the same discourse to which we have referred,—"it is our duty and our interest to know. Where knowledge is unattainable, it is both our duty and interest to trust humbly and submissively to the instructions of Him who is THE ONLY WISE."—Amongst the numerous writings on this topic, the serious inquirer might read with profit the remarks of Witsius in another work,* an "Essay on Original Sin," by the Rev. Thomas Walker of Dundonald, † and President Dickinson's Discourse on Rom. 5:12.‡

NOTE VIII. Page 40

The Author's meaning in the last sentence of the 7th Section is so obvious, that the scholastic terms which he here employs, require little explanation. He represents the dignity of our Lord's Divine person, as the principium quod, that is, the great principle which regulates the value of his labours and sufferings, and gives them their boundless worth; while his human nature is the principium quo, that

is, the instrumental principle, by means of which they were accomplished.

Witsius justly teaches that Christ suffered both in soul and body—that his soul did not suffer merely from sympathy with his wounded and crucified flesh—that it smarted under the pressure of Divine vengeance, and that the sufferings of his soul were exceedingly severe, and such as none but THE MIGHTY GOD could have endured. These too are the views of this interesting subject which are generally expressed in the writings of sound Theologians. Some of the readers of Dr Dwight's Theology, however, have been sorry to find that that Author estimates the degree of our Lord's sufferings at a very low rate. He holds, indeed, that "the peculiar agonies which preceded and attended the death of Christ, and in which the atonement made by him for sin peculiarly consisted, were chiefly distresses of mind, and not of body." He even reasons strongly in favour of this doctrine, and confirms it by various cogent proofs. In illustrating the argument which he deduces from our Lord's exclamation on the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!" he has the following excellent passage. "The complacency of God, whose mind is infinite, and whose disposition is perfect, is undoubtedly the first of all possible enjoyments. The loss of it, therefore, and the consequent suffering of his hatred and contempt, are undoubtedly the greatest evils which a created mind can suffer; evils which will, in all probability, constitute the primary anguish experienced in the world of woe. Omniscience, and omnipotence, are certainly able to communicate, during even a short time, to a finite mind, such views of the hatred and contempt of God towards sin and sinners, and, of course, towards a Substitute for sinners, as would not only fill its capacity of suffering, but probably put an end to its existence. In this manner, I apprehend, the chief distresses of Christ were produced."*

Yet in the same Sermon the Doctor makes the following assertion. "The degree of suffering which Christ underwent in making this atonement, was far inferior to that which will be experienced by an

individual sufferer beyond the grave." "It will not be supposed," he adds, "as plainly it cannot, that Christ suffered in his Divine nature. Nor will it be believed, that any created nature could, in that short space of time, suffer what would be equivalent to even a slight distress, extended through eternity."[†]

To imagine that Christ suffered in his Divine nature, would indeed be absurd. But why should it be deemed absurd or incredible that a "created nature," personally united to the Divine, was capable of infinitely greater suffering than any other created nature? Is there sufficient ground to affirm, with the tone of perfect confidence, that it was impossible that "the man Christ Jesus," supported by his omnipotent Divinity, could sustain, within a limited period, the whole wrath due to millions of sinners, or even the punishment due to a single sinner, through eternal ages? Is it quite certain, that "the Lion of the tribe of Judah," was unable to bear "what would be equivalent to even a slight distress extended through eternity?" Can any one who holds the true Divinity of Christ allow himself to suppose, that the Son of God was incapable of enduring in the human nature a greater load of suffering than a mere man, whether supported by natural fortitude or superior aid? Some Divines may have expressed themselves in too peremptory terms with regard to the precise amount of the sufferings of Christ; and no doubt it ought to be remembered that "his atonement, great as his distresses were, did not derive its value principally from the degree in which he experienced them; but from the infinite greatness and excellency of his character." Nevertheless, whilst Prophets, Apostles, and Evangelists employ the strongest expressions which language could supply to describe the bitterness of those sorrows to which the Messiah submitted as the Substitute of sinners, and whilst our Lord's own expressions and behaviour in the day of his Father's anger manifestly tend to convince us that there is no sorrow like his sorrow, and that his sufferings corresponded in their measure to the vast extent of the imputed guilt which he bore,—it sounds very strange in a Christian's ear, to be told that "the degree of suffering which Christ underwent, was far inferior to that which will be

experienced by an individual sufferer beyond the grave." With all becoming deference to the learned and highly respectable writer, it may be affirmed that this assertion seems neither well-founded, nor fitted to serve any valuable purpose. High conceptions of the severity of our Lord's sufferings and the depth of his abasement, as well as a firm persuasion of the dignity of his person and the excellence of his character, are calculated to impress the mind with a sense of the efficacy of his atonement, the unparalleled greatness of his love, and the horrid malignity of sin.—The judicious Dr Witherspoon, in his Sermon on Isaiah 63:1. makes a few cursory but valuable remarks on the deep distress of our Lord's soul in the garden and on the cross.*

NOTE IX. Page 48

The Author, agreeably to Scripture, represents it as the design of the sufferings of Christ, to reconcile sinners unto God. This reconciliation too, he remarks, is ascribed, but in different respects, to the Father, to Christ, and to believers themselves. That it is attributed in a certain sense to believers, is evident from 2 Cor. 5:20. "We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." These words, however, do not mean that we at all make satisfaction to the justice of God, or procure his favour by our obedience in any form; but that, by the faith which is of divine operation, we accept of pardon and peace, as obtained by him who, though he knew no sin, was made sin for us, and as freely exhibited to us in the Gospel. This acceptance of forgiveness through the cross of Christ, never fails to be accompanied with a renunciation on our part of that enmity against the divine character and government which we naturally cherish.

It has been alleged by the disciples of Socinus, that the reconciliation of men to God means nothing more than their repentance or conversion, and that it does not at all imply the removal of the divine anger from them. Nothing, however, is more contrary to Scripture than this assertion. Mutual reconciliation betwixt God and men is indeed effected by the death of Christ. But it is clear that when we

read of our being reconciled to God by the sufferings and death of Christ, the principal thing intended is the turning away of God's judicial wrath from us, and the procuring of our acceptance in his sight. Accordingly, we read in the 19th verse of the Chapter just referred to; "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself—not imputing their trespasses unto them." On this question, too, the following passage in the Epistle to the Romans,* is completely decisive; "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son;† much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the reconciliation." ‡ In these verses, it is obvious, the Apostle continues his discussion with regard to the blessed effects of justification by faith in the blood of Christ. The 9th and 10th are connected by the particle for; and if the Apostle's reasoning has any force, justification by the blood of Christ, must at least be included in reconciliation to God by the death of his Son. In reconciliation, we are admitted into a state of favour with the Most High, of whose displeasure we were formerly the objects; in justification, we receive a sentence of absolution from our Judge, who heretofore condemned us. By the one, we are delivered from that just indignation to which we were obnoxious; by the other, we are set free from the curse of the violated law. In both, the benefit conferred is essentially the same, but differently expressed according to the different views which may be taken of that misery from which we are relieved. This interpretation is incontestably confirmed by the expression at the close of the 11th verse; which when literally and most correctly translated runs thus,—"by whom we have now received the reconciliation." That is, by faith in Christ, who has fully satisfied offended justice and brought in everlasting righteousness, we have now received the inestimable blessing of the restored favour and friendship of God.

The reader who wishes to see this point more fully discussed, may consult Wardlaw* and Magee,† and also the writers to whom the

latter refers.

NOTE X. Page 52

That the general character of PONTIUS PILATE corresponded with that instance of glaring injustice of which he was guilty in condemning Jesus to the cross, notwithstanding his firm conviction of his innocence, cannot admit of a doubt. Even the Evangelist Luke seems incidentally to intimate, that he was a man of no humanity or principle: † For admitting that the Galileans, by their political sentiments or conduct, had incurred the displeasure of the Roman government, yet to "mingle their blood with their sacrifices"—to seize the opportunity of their attendance on the solemnities of religious worship, to apprehend and slay them in the most summary manner, was an act of savage barbarity. Josephus, too, as well as Philo, represents his character in the most odious light, and mentions two instances of impiety and gross imprudence, which took place at the commencement of his administration; namely, his causing some bucklers, on which images of Cæsar were stamped, to be brought into Jerusalem by night, and his laying out the sacred money of the temple upon expensive aqueducts;—both of which deeds were extremely offensive to the Jews, and occasioned great disorders.*

One design of the insertion of Pilate's name in the Creed, without doubt, was to fix the date of our Lord's sufferings, and thus to show the exact accomplishment of ancient predictions, relative to the time of the Messiah's appearing and death. The compilers of the Creed, however, probably expected also that this circumstance would excite inquiry respecting our Saviour, and in particular respecting the testimony which the Roman Procurator bore to his innocence. Beside the solemn and repeated declarations which he made on this point to the Jews, when Jesus stood as a pannel at his bar, it is affirmed by ancient writers that Pilate gave ample testimony to our Lord's innocence, both in an express written to Tiberius and presented by that Emperor to the Senate, and in records which, conformably to

custom, he kept of important transactions which occurred during his government.

"Had the trial of Jesus ended," says an Author formerly quoted, "where it began, before the Highpriest and council of the Jews, it would have been less interesting to the world, and less satisfactory in the issue. But he was tried by a Roman judge; and his innocence, nay his dignity, stands attested, by the person who through weakness condemned him." "I am inclined to believe," he adds in a note, "that the compilers of the Creed, commonly called the Apostles' Creed, must have had this circumstance under their eye, as much as to fix the chronology of the death of Jesus. His suffering under Pontius Pilate would determine many to inquire into the particulars of the event, whom mere curiosity would not prompt, or who might have been restrained by their antipathies and indifference."†

A considerably full account of Pilate may be seen in Pearson on the Creed.‡

NOTE XI. Page 75

"HELENA, mother of Constantine the Great," it is said in a late Biographical work,§ "was probably a daughter of an Inn-keeper of Drepanum in Bithynia; for the comparatively recent tradition which makes her the daughter of a British Prince, though fondly received by some antiquaries of this country, seems to be entirely fictitious.... Her son Constantine treated her with great respect. Upon his conversion to Christianity, she followed his example, and became extremely zealous for her new faith. She had the title of Augusta and Empress at court and in the army, and the entire disposal of a large revenue.... About 326 she paid a visit to the holy places of Jerusalem, and this was the epoch of that memorable event in ecclesiastical history called the invention of the true cross.... Though Eusebius, in his Ecclesiastical History, is silent concerning this great event, it is recorded by so many other writers of grave authority, that the Catholic Church have made no scruple of commemorating it by a

religious service.... Helena died at the age of eighty in 328, and was interred in the imperial mausoleum at Rome.... She is canonized as a Saint by the Roman Catholic Church."

Whatever judgment may be formed of the character of Helena herself, among Protestants there can be but one opinion with regard to the invention of the cross; and the reader will probably think that "this curious piece of deplorable superstition" was scarcely worthy of a serious and elaborate confutation. It has been noticed lately in terms of great severity by a respectable traveller.*

NOTE XII. Page 76

RHEGIUM, now called Reggio, is a considerable town on the coast of Italy opposite to Sicily. The Rhegian crime consisted in an act of treachery committed by a Legion of Roman soldiers sent to protect that city from the danger which its inhabitants apprehended from the incursions of Pyrrhus and the Carthaginian fleet. This Roman legion, which was called the Campanian, and commanded by Decius Jubellius the tribune, after remaining true to their duty for some time, were at last seduced by the commodious situation of the place and the wealth of the citizens, took entire possession of the city, and drove out or killed the inhabitants. The Roman government, indignant at the treachery, besieged Rhegium, and destroyed the greater part of the legion in the assault; and three hundred who were taken alive, were carried to Rome, where they were first scourged, and then beheaded. The city, with all the lands, was restored to its former inhabitants, who enjoyed their liberty and laws as before. By this act of severity, the Romans recovered their character for good faith amongst their allies, and mightily increased their reputation.†

NOTE XIII. Page 84

The Author discovers his usual erudition and accuracy in his minute account of our Lord's CRUCIFIXION, and in the illustrations of that event which he borrows from ancient writers. Those inclined to

compare Witsius with other writers on this subject, may consult Pearson,* and an Article in the Edinburgh Encyclopædia.† From the last of these it may not be improper to subjoin here a few extracts.

—"This was a frequent punishment among the ancients, and practised by most of the nations, whose history has reached our knowledge. It is now chiefly confined to the Mahometans.... Augustin describes the cross on which Jesus Christ suffered as the common cross; but it does not appear on what authority, and as he lived in the fourth Century, his information must have been derived from others. Some succeeding authors have also supposed that his feet were fixed to a projection or bracket below, so that he was crucified in a standing posture; to which the same remark applies. Deviations from the ordinary form and proportions were adopted on particular occasions....

"The criminal was compelled to carry his own cross to the place of execution, which was generally at some distance from the habitations of men.... It was not the whole cross, according to some, which was borne by the offender, but only the transverse beam or patibulum, because they suppose the upright part to have remained stationary in the ground, whereas the other was moveable.... The criminal having reached the fatal spot, was stript nearly naked, and affixed to the cross by an iron spike driven through each hand and each foot, or through the wrists and ancles. Authors are, nevertheless, greatly divided concerning the number and position of the nails in ancient punishments; and it has been conjectured that in the most simple crucifixion, whereby both hands were nailed above the criminal and both feet below, all on one particular post or tree, only two were used. The sounder opinion, and that which coincides with modern practice, bestows a nail on each member; and though the following passage is employed in a ludicrous sense, it sufficiently indicates the truth.

Ego dabo ei talentum, primus qui in crucem excurrerit,

Sed ea lege, ut affigantur bis pedes, bis brachia.*

PLAUTUS Mortellaria.

... "If the cross consisted of two pieces, it is not unlikely that the hands of the criminal were nailed to the moveable part or patibulum, and that being then elevated along with it by the strength of men, his feet were fixed to the bracket. These facts are extremely obscure, and there is reason to believe that crucifixion also took place otherwise....

"The criminal, being fixed on the cross, was left to expire in anguish, and his body remained a prey to the birds of the air. His death, however, was not immediate, nor should it be so in general, considering that the vital organs may escape laceration. We learn from the distinct narrative of the Evangelists, that conversations could be carried on among those who suffered, or betwixt them and the bye-standers: and Justin the historian relates, that Bomilcar, the Carthaginian leader, having been crucified on an accusation of treason against the state, he bore the cruelty of his countrymen with distinguished fortitude, harangued them from the cross as from a tribunal, and reproached them with their ingratitude, before he expired. There are repeated instances of persons crucified having perished more from hunger, than from the severity of the punishment.... St. Andrew lived two or three days, and the martyrs Timotheus and Maura did not die during nine days.

"By the Mahometan laws, certain delinquents are to be punished with crucifixion, and killed on the cross by thrusting a spear through their bodies; and here we find an example of what is narrated in Scripture of the soldiers piercing the side of Jesus Christ with a lance, though he was dead....

"That the object of crucifixion might be fulfilled in exposing the body of the criminal to decay, sentinels were commonly posted beside the cross to prevent it from being taken down and buried. Privation of sepulture was dreaded as the greatest evil by the ancients, who

believed that the soul could never rest or enjoy felicity so long as their mortal remains continued on the earth. Thus it was a great aggravation of the punishment....

"With respect to the persons on whom this punishment was inflicted, we have seen that the Carthaginian leader was not exempt from it. Elsewhere, especially among ... the Romans, only the lowest malefactors were condemned to the cross. It was peculiarly appropriated for slaves.... Crucifixion is always called servile supplicium by the Latin writers."

From these quotations, as well as from the statements of Witsius, it is evident that crucifixion did not always take place in an exactly uniform manner. When speaking of the cross of Christ, therefore, it becomes us to guard against peremptory assertions, with regard to circumstances not clearly determined by the narrative of the Evangelists.—That this form of capital punishment was extremely painful, and among the Romans at least considered ignominious to the last degree, is quite indisputable. The remarks of our Author on its being an accursed death seem scriptural and just.—"The offence of the cross," as it related both to Jews and Gentiles, is ably illustrated by Dr Campbell in his excellent Sermon on 1 Cor. 1:25. Part 1.*

NOTE XIV. Page 87

That the death of Christ was entirely voluntary, or that he most willingly submitted to death in the room of his people, is abundantly clear from the whole tenor of the Old and New Testament. His cheerful resignation, too, was no doubt signified in his expiring moments by his deliberately bowing the head, and by the memorable expression which he uttered with a loud voice, "Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit."

The voluntary nature of Christ's death, however, it may be observed, does not necessarily imply, that he caused his human soul, in a

peculiar and miraculous manner, to depart from the body somewhat prior to the time when his sufferings naturally tended to effect a dissolution. It is certain that, though he continued alive on the cross during the space of about three hours, he expired sooner than was usual. Yet as Secker particularly states, the agonies of his soul in the garden, added to his various bodily sufferings, served to exhaust his vigour. "He had suffered the whole night before, and all that day a course of barbarous treatment, sufficient to wear down the strength of a much rougher and robuster make than probably his was."†

The expression in Mat. 27:50, ἔφηκε το πνευμα, is translated by Dr Campbell—resigned his spirit. In a note on that verse, the Doctor observes, that these words are correctly rendered in the authorized version—yielded up the ghost, though the phrase is somewhat antiquated. With regard to Doddridge's expression—dismissed his spirit, Campbell has the following remarks. "He thinks, after Jerome, that there was something miraculous in our Lord's death, and supposes it to have been the immediate effect of his own volition. Whether this was the case or not, the words here used give no support to the hypothesis. The phrase ἀφιεναι την ψυχην, which is very similar, is used by the Seventy, Gen. 35:18. speaking of Rachel's death. The like expression often occurs in Josephus and other Greek writers. Nay, an example has been produced from Euripides of this very phrase, ἔφηκε πνευμα, for expired."

NOTE XV. Page 98

Our Author appears to consider the Saviour's expulsion from Jerusalem as particularly intended by Moses and Elias, when, on the mount of transfiguration, as we are informed Luke 9:31. "they spake of his decease, ἔξοδος, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem." The term ἔξοδος, exodus, literally signifies a departure, an exit, or going forth. It has been used in different acceptations. It is the expression employed by the Seventy to denote the departure of the Israelites from Egypt. In the Greek writers it often means death, and in this sense too it is used not only in Wisd. 3:2. but also in 2 Pet.

1:15. where the Apostle says; "Moreover, I will endeavour that ye may be able, after my decease, ἐξοδον, to have these things always in remembrance." The Greek classics sometimes employ it to signify a military expedition; and hence Dr Hammond, with some others, has adopted the opinion, that in Luke 9:31. it refers to "Christ's victory over the impenitent Jews in the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans." This interpretation, however, seems quite unnatural. Lightfoot's idea that the expression is inclusive both of the death and the ascension of Christ, is more rational and natural. Our translators, nevertheless, have justly and unexceptionably rendered it his decease.

Our Lord's exit from Jerusalem, when he was led forth as a condemned malefactor without the gates of the city, to which Witsius applies the expression, was no doubt an affecting circumstance attending his decease. But his decease itself, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem, is the point which the Evangelist specifies as the topic of conference betwixt Moses and Elias the holy mount. See Hammond, Doddridge, and Pool's Synopsis on the place.

NOTE XVI. Page 102

The Author does not hesitate to affirm, that our Lord, when hanging on the cross, "saw mount Calvary encompassed with malignant devils raging dreadfully against him." No sound believer in the Scriptures can allow himself to question the existence of Satan and his Angels, those fallen spirits, who having lost their original purity and bliss, discover the inveterate malignity of their character, in their unceasing efforts to frustrate the counsels of God and effect the destruction of man. Nor can it be reasonably questioned, that these infernal hosts not only instigated Judas, the chief priests, and other men that were concerned in the crucifixion of Christ, but also harassed him exceedingly by their immediate suggestions in the concluding scene of his mortal life, and gave him cause to say, "Many bulls have compassed me; strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round."* "When the devil had ended all the temptation in the

wilderness," we read, "he departed from him for a season" † — resolving, it appears, notwithstanding the disgraceful defeat he had suffered, to embrace every favourable opportunity of renewing his subtle and audacious assaults. And universal experience shows, that the enemy is never more ready to shoot his fiery darts than in the day of extreme adversity and sorrow. "Even the chief priests, scribes, and elders," says Edwards, "joined in the cry, saying, 'He saved others, himself he cannot save.' And probably the Devil at the same time tormented him to the utmost of his power; and hence it is said, Luke 22:53. 'This is your hour and the power of darkness.' "‡

The term which Witsius employs in this passage is *dæmences*, literally demons. On the meaning of this expression the learned reader may consult Campbell's Preliminary Dissertations,|| and compare the observations of Parkhurst.§

NOTE XVII. Page 108

The Apostle Paul beautifully expresses the alacrity with which he submitted to suffering in the cause of the Gospel, when he says to the Colossians—"Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church." By "the affliction of Christ," it is clear, we are to understand, not the afflictions which Christ himself suffered, but those which he appointed Paul to suffer. A certain measure of suffering, wonderfully diversified in different individuals, with regard to degree, duration and other circumstances, is allotted to every member of Christ's spiritual body; and Paul, after all the conflicts he had previously sustained, found great pleasure in filling up that which remained of the portion assigned him. To imagine that the sufferings of Apostles, martyrs, or of any class of Christians, are added to the vicarious sufferings of Christ, in order to co-operate with them in making satisfaction to Divine justice and procuring forgiveness, would be to tarnish the Saviour's glory, and to overthrow the sufficiency of that one atoning sacrifice by which "he perfected for ever, them that are sanctified."* When Paul informs us that he

suffered "for Christ's body's sake, which is the church," he is far from intimating, as Popish interpreters contend, that his labours and sufferings were meritorious of pardon for the church. His obvious meaning is, that the magnanimity he discovered under persecution for the sake of the Gospel, while it gave a striking evidence of his own sincerity, served to confirm the faith of his fellow Christians. See Philip. 1:12. et seq. 2:17. 2 Cor. 1:4–7. This interpretation of the passage is supported, amongst others, by Doddridge and Guyae, and by Deillé in his excellent Discourses on the Epistle to the Colossians.

It were to be wished that Protestant writers would uniformly avoid expressions calculated to lead men to place their reliances either on their own performances, or their own distresses, which they ought to build on the finished work of Christ. The following sentences, which occurs in a very pious and useful publication, may be quoted as a specimen of such incautious expressions. When recommending to ministers of the Gospel self-denial and mortification to the present world, the author says; "By the appointment of God, the expiation of sin seems to be made by suffering, and therefore we ought to show out readiness to have a fellowship, and to co-operate with the great Sufferer, by cheerfully bearing what we can of the burden."† Alas! did the slightest portion of guilt remain to be expiated by our own sufferings, its deadly weight would inevitably sink us to the lowest hell. Christian activity and Christian self-denial are highly useful, and indispensably necessary in their own place; but neither of them must be regarded as a make-weight to complete the efficacy of the Mediator's righteousness, or permitted to share with him the honour of effecting expiation, and meriting redemption.—Candour requires it to be added, that, notwithstanding this unguarded passage, the work from which it is extracted deserves a place on the same shelf with Baxter's Reformed Pastor and Burnet's Pastoral Care, and is worthy of an attentive perusal from every candidate for the sacred office.

Proper names that were common among the Jews, were sometimes given with a peculiar emphasis. The name ELIAKIM, accordingly, which signifies, My God will strengthen, establish, or advance me, though borne by many others, was emphatically given to the son of Hilkiah, who was raised by Providence to a very eminent station, and signally supported in the discharge of its duties. Our Saviour's express application to himself in Rev. 3:7. of the remarkable description of Eliakim's power in Is. 22:22. seems greatly to confirm the idea that the prophecy respecting the elevation of Hilkiah's son to the office of treasurer has an ultimate reference to the exaltation and establishment of Christ as the head and ruler of the Church.—Witsius considers the Messiah as the true Eliakim, not only because the Father has advanced and established him as our Mediator, but also because the church is indebted to this Divine Saviour for spiritual establishment.—Although it may admit of dispute whether he be strictly correct in point of taste, when he represents the cross which Jesus bore as the key of the house of David, our Author without doubt ascribes no virtue to the cross which it doth not in reality possess. See Vitringa on the whole passage, Is. 22:20–25; and for an explanation of the manner in which a key could be borne on the shoulder, see Lowth's note on verse 22.

NOTE XIX. Page 119

In the first edition of the original work it is said; "It behoved him not to remain in the grave, lest the curse should seem to continue after death."* But in the subsequent editions the expression is; "It behoved him not to continue unburied"*—; and that this last was the idea intended appears from the connexion. Our Lord's abasement in the grave was indeed part of that humiliation to which he was subjected as the Substitute of sinners. Yet, as the Author shows at the beginning of the 32d section of the same Dissertation, Christ's being taken down from the cross served to give evidence that the curse was abolished by his death.

NOTE XX. Page 121

That in the operation of embalming the Jews did not embowel the corpse as the Egyptians were accustomed to do, is not universally admitted. The ingenious and accurate Harmer is of opinion that in this respect there was no difference betwixt the Egyptian and the Jewish practice. He is far from thinking, however, that in the case of our Lord this part of the ceremony was performed. The expressions in John 19:40. he observes, do not necessarily signify, that every thing was done that was customary on such occasions. The contrary may be justly concluded from the farther preparations made by the women.†

In the common version, it may be noticed in passing, the verse now referred to is thus translated; "Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury."‡ But the words are more correctly rendered by Campbell, which is the Jewish manner of embalming. In his note on the verse he successfully vindicates this rendering, and points out the difference betwixt ἐνταφιαζειν, to embalm, or to prepare for burial, and θαπτειν, to bury.

The largeness of the quantity of myrrh and aloes furnished by Nicodemus is considered as a difficulty, and it has been alleged that an hundred pounds of spices would have been more than sufficient for embalming an hundred bodies. Josephus, however, informs us, that "the larger the quantity of spices used in their interments, the greater honour was thought to be done to the deceased." There seems nothing irrational either in supposing, as Witsius suggests, that Joseph and Nicodemus intended to burn these valuable perfumes over the dead body of Jesus, or in conceiving with Harmer, that they meant only to wrap or strew them about it.|| The expression which the Evangelist employs is perhaps more favourable to the latter than the former idea. But in either case, the deep veneration which these worthy counsellors entertained for the crucified Jesus, as a person of extraordinary dignity, was testified by the magnificent abundance of the spices.

NOTE XXI. Page 127

Our Author justly numbers Psalm 16:9, 10. among the predictions of the Messiah's burial; for whilst these important verses refer directly to his resurrection, they clearly presuppose his death and sepulture. Though in a subordinate sense they are in part applicable to David the son of Jesse and to every genuine saint, yet, as the Apostle Peter shows, in the passage quoted by Witsius, it is in the Messiah alone that they receive their proper and complete fulfilment. Nor does our Author propose a rash or ill-supported version, when he remarks that the first clause of the 10th verse, which our translators have rendered, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell," should be translated, "Thou wilt not leave my corpse in the grave."

Notwithstanding the elaborate reasonings of Campbell,* Bennet, † and others, to the contrary, it is certain that Sheol sometimes signifies the grave. In proof of this, Witsius himself in another passage‡ produces Ps. 141:7. 49:14. Gen. 37:35. See also "Strictures on Dr Campbell's Dissertation on Ἄδμς,"§ where the respectable writer considers particularly Ps. 141:7. Jer. 8:1, 2. Ezek. 32:27. and Is. 14:15. as well as Ps. 16:10. and appears irrefragably to establish his assertion, that Sheol doth sometimes mean the grave. The same opinion, too, is maintained by Pearson.||

With regard to Nephesh, the word which the common version renders soul, Campbell admits that "it is sometimes used for a dead body." But the truth is, that it is often used in this sense, and that it is difficult, if at all possible, to specify any passage where it decidedly means a departed spirit. See the remarks of Witsius in his 16th Dissertation, sect. 13th; Parkhurst on שׁנַּנ VI. and the "Strictures" just referred to.—"Thou wilt not leave my dead body in the grave," appears, therefore, to be a just interpretation of the clause in question.—To this rendering it is vain to object, that ψυχη is the word employed for שׁנַּנ in Acts 2:27, 31. Ψυχη, as Parkhurst observes,* sometimes signifies "the human body though dead," and is the term employed by the Seventy not only in Ps. 16:10. but also

Lev. 21:1, 11. Num. 5:2. 6:6. Besides, the authenticity of the words ἡ ψυχή αὐτοῦ, his soul, which occur in Peter's comment on the Psalm, verse 31st, is at least exceedingly doubtful. They are wanting in the Alexandrian Manuscript, and no expression corresponding to them occurs in the Syriac or Vulgate. Griesbach therefore rejects them, and reads the 31st verse thus;—ὅτι οὐ κατελειφθή εἰς ἄδου, οὐδέ ἡ σὰρξ αὐτοῦ εἶδε διαφθοράν.—Nor is there any force in the objection, that if nephesh does not mean the soul, both clauses of the verse express the same idea. On the supposition that the verse runs thus, "For thou wilt not leave my corpse in the grave, nor wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption;" there is still a manifest and important difference betwixt the two parts of the verse. Both indeed relate to the resurrection of the body; but the first is a general prediction of the event, and the second an intimation of the time when it should happen, namely, before the process of putrefaction should commence.

The interpretation now contended for, or one very similar, is embraced by many respectable writers. Bishop Horne explains the verse thus;—"that after the death of the Messiah, his animal frame (nephesh) should not continue like those of other men in the grave (sheol,) nor should corruption be permitted to seize on the body by which all others were to be raised to incorruption and immortality."† See also Hammond's Paraphrase, and Whitby's Note on Acts 2:26, 27. Beza's Note on the same passage is highly worthy of attention.—Compare Notes xxiv. and xxv.

NOTE XXII. Page 129

Interpreters have differed considerably with regard to the precise meaning of the words in Isaiah 53:9. rendered in the common version; "And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death." Calvin is of opinion that the expressions refer to the Father's delivering Christ into the hands of the ungodly,—that both the wicked and the rich are to be understood of those cruel and violent men who took an active part in his last sufferings,—and that

the Messiah is represented as having his grave from the wicked and outrageous of various classes, because he was in a manner overwhelmed and buried by bloody hands.*

The interpretation of Witsius, however, seems more eligible; and, amongst other arguments in its favour, it is worthy of notice that, while the term rendered wicked is in the plural number, the word translated rich is unquestionably in the singular. Bishop Lowth renders the clause thus;—"and his grave was appointed with the wicked, but with the rich man was his tomb;" and he vindicate this translation in a learned Note.

NOTE XXIII. Page 134

The remark quoted by our Author from Isidorus, respecting the possibility of a precise correspondence in point of duration between Jonah's confinement in the belly of the fish and our Saviour's abode in the tomb, discovers at least considerable acuteness. Witsius, however, justly prefers the common interpretation of "the three days and three nights" to the ingenious refinements of Ambrose, Cloppenburgh, and Cocceius. It is much better to rest satisfied with a natural interpretation justified by the established use of speech among the Jews, than to resort to glosses, which, to say the least, have some appearance of being far-fetched, and are calculated to expose the truth to the ridicule of enemies.

This subject is placed in a clear and striking light by Mr West in his excellent "Observations on the Resurrection of Christ." It may suffice here, to cite the following short illustration from Doddridge. "It is of great importance to observe, as many good writers have done, that the Easterns reckoned any part of a day of twenty-four hours for a whole day, and say a thing was done after three or seven days, &c. if it was done on the third or seventh day from that last mentioned, (compare 1 Kings 20:29. 2 Chron. 10:5, 12. and Luke 2:21.) And as the Hebrews had no word, exactly answering to the Greek *νυκτιμεζον*, to signify a natural day of twenty-four hours, they use night and day,

or day and night for it. So that to say a thing happened after three days and three nights, was the same as to say it happened after three days, or on the third day. (Compare Esther 4:16. with verse 1. Gen. 7:4, 12. Exod. 24:18. 34:28.) See the Miracles of Jesus vindicated, p. 6–8."†

NOTE XXIV. Page 143

The Creed, as it has stood for many centuries past, contains beyond doubt this affirmation respecting our Lord—κατελθοντα εις αδου, that he DESCENDED INTO HELL, or rather HADES. Nor is this article to be objected to, if rightly understood.

In order to prevent mistakes, it is of importance to form a correct idea of the meaning of the term ἀδης, Hades, which is rendered Hell in the English translation of the Creed. The meaning of this term has already been slightly adverted to in a Note relative to "the gates of hades," mentioned Mat. 16:18.* That Note, it is acknowledged, should have contained a reference to a passage in another work, in which Witsius particularly discusses the meaning of this remarkable verse,† He states that Hades in Greek, and Sheol in Hebrew, signify, in Scripture style, the place and state of the dead. Αδης, he observes, "properly signifies τον ἀιδῆ τοπον, the unseen place in which they who are, do not appear; and Sheol denotes that place in which he who is, is to seek—whom you may seek, but not find." This account of the primitive sense of Hades is generally admitted. Our author's explanation of Sheol is also substantially the same that is given by Parkhurst, and some other critics, and appears to be embraced by Dr Campbell. But the explication adopted by Whitby in a Note on Acts 2:27, namely, "It craves for all men," seems to be better founded. It is supported by the Author of "Strictures on Campbell" mentioned in a preceding Note, and by Dr Magee. ‡ It indicates, says Magee, insatiable craving,—a character attached to it Is. 5:14. Hab. 2:5. Prov. 27:20. 30:16. It has been thought, he adds, that it signifies to demand in loan, and so implies that what is given is to be returned back.

The Hebrew term Sheol, we have already seen,§ sometimes refers to the body, and denotes the grave. That it sometimes refers to the soul, and signifies the world of spirits, is readily admitted. The Greek word Hades, too, in whatever way it was used by classic authors, appears to have been employed by the Grecian Jews in all the different acceptations of Sheol. Accordingly, it is the term made use of for Sheol in the Septuagint, even in the various passages where that word signifies the grave. It is also employed to signify the abode of departed spirits. That it is frequently taken in the Scriptures in an unfavourable sense, to denote the place of torment, our Author seems to have proved in the passage of his work on the Covenants now referred to, where he directs the attention of his readers to Luke 16:23. Prov. 5:5. 7:27. 15:24. Schleusner also remarks, as was formerly noticed, that Hades sometimes signifies the place of punishment, or the condition of the damned, and refers to Luke 16:23. 2 Pet. 2:4, and Mat. 16:18. Yet it seems indisputable that in some passages of Scripture, particularly Rev. 1:18, Hades denotes in general the world of spirits.

It deserves to be remarked too, that the English word Hell, though in common language it is now exclusively applied to the region of suffering, had originally a more extensive import, and included alike the place of happiness and the place of woe. "In the ancient English dialect," says Lord King,* "the word hell was taken in a larger sense as the general receptacle of all souls whatsoever, and even no longer ago than the old translation of the Psalms, which is still retained in the Common Prayer-book, it was used in this general acceptation, as in Psalm 89:47.... 'Shall he deliver his soul from the hand of hell?' Where hell must be understood as the general receptacle of all souls, or otherwise the words of the Psalmist would not be true, for all souls do not go to that hell which is the place of the damned. And even long before that, as Dr Towerson (Commentary on the Creed) informs us, in a Saxon discourse written above 700 years ago, it is said of Adam, after he had lived 900 years, he went with sorrow into hell.... Which ancient sense of the word hell may be farther confirmed from the primary and original signification thereof,

according to which it imports no farther than an invisible and hidden place; being derived from the old Saxon word *hil*, which signifies to hide, or from the participle thereof *helled*, that is to say, hidden or covered. So in the western parts of England at this very day, to *hele* over any thing signifies among the common people to cover it...." With this extract, however, the curious reader may compare Dr Jamieson's explanation of the word *hell*.†

From what has been said it is evident that no one can justly affirm, that the descent of Christ's soul into the place of torment is a doctrine of the Creed. The article under consideration may be understood, as Witsius observes, merely "to express, in striking terms, our Lord's condition in the grave, and in the state of death." In this sense it is explained in the marginal Note appended, it appears, by the Westminster Assembly—which contains the following paraphrase on the expression, "he descended into hell," i.e. Continued in the state of the dead, and under the power of death, till the third day. Lord King too states, that although in the Articles of the Church of England, as set forth in the reign of Edward VI. the descent of our Saviour into hell was expounded as the going of his soul to the spirits in prison, or in hell, to preach to them; yet ten years after, in the time of Queen Elisabeth, when the Articles were revised by a Synod, it was judged proper to omit that comment, and barely to mention the descent into hell, without any explanation whatever, that on a point so intricate and obscure, every one might be left to embrace that sense which should appear to himself most proper.* Let the reader also attend particularly to what the Author says in the 6th section of this Dissertation, in order to show that Christ's descending into Hades was anciently understood to denote the same thing with his burial.

The doctrine of Christ's soul descending locally into hell for any purpose whatever, has no foundation in the word of God. It cannot be proved, as we have seen in a foregoing Note,† from Psalm 16:10. All the other passages to which its advocates have appealed, are equally inconclusive. Ephes. 4:9. for example, is well explained by

our Author as relating merely to Christ's incarnation, death and burial. † Another passage on which much stress has been laid, namely, 1 Pet. 3:19. will be adverted to immediately.

NOTE XXV. Page 147

Our Author proves, in a manner sufficiently convincing though concise, that our Lord's soul was at his death received into glory, and that to imagine he descended either into the place of torment, or into a supposed adjoining region, denominated by the Roman Catholics Limbus Patrum, is contrary to Scripture. No valuable purpose, he shows, could have been served by the descent of Christ's soul, either into the one or the other.

Witsius seems to have been of opinion, that it may be argued from Heb. 2:10. that "God brought many sons to glory, previously to Christ's being made perfect through sufferings." But whether his view of that verse be correct or incorrect, it is evident from Psalm 73:24. and many other passages, that in the ages preceding, as well as in those which have followed the death of Christ, the souls of believers were not shut up in any Limbus, but immediately after death admitted into the presence of God in heaven.

The supporters of Christ's descent into the Limbus, have considered 1 Pet. 3:19, 20. as very favourable to their opinion. But on this contested passage, let us hear the devout Leighton:* "They that dream of the descent of Christ's soul into hell, think this place sounds somewhat that way; but being examined, it proves no way suitable, nor can it by the strongest wresting be made to fit their purpose: For, 1st, That it was to preach he went thither, they are not willing to avow; though the act they assign is as groundless and imaginary as this is. 2dly, They would have his business to be with the spirits of the faithful deceased before his coming; but here we see, it is with the disobedient. 3dly, His Spirit here is the same with the sense of the foregoing words, which mean not his soul, but his eternal Deity. 4thly, Nor is it the spirits that were in prison, as they

read it, but the spirits in prison; which, by the opposition of their former condition sometimes or formerly disobedient, doth clearly speak their present condition as the just consequence and fruit of their disobedience."—For some further notice of this passage, see NOTE XXX. See also Pearson, † and Whilby, Doddridge and Macknight on the place.

NOTE XXVI. Page 148

The venerable Author is not unwilling to allow that the article respecting Christ's descent into hell may be understood, not merely of his BODY, but also of his SOUL. Let it be observed, however, that he decidedly rejects the supposition of his soul being subjected to any species of pain subsequently to his death, or descending into infernal or subterranean regions for any purpose whatever. He merely considers the phrase in a metaphorical light, and regards it, by way of accommodation, as capable of expressing with energy those agonies of soul which our Lord endured on the earth before he expired on the cross.

In this instance, Witsius agrees with the compilers of the Confession of Faith, which was embraced by the English Congregation at Geneva, and received and approved by the Church of Scotland at the commencement of the Reformation. That Confession consists of a paraphrase on the Creed; and upon the article—dead and buried; he descended into hell, it is said,—"suffered his humanity to be punished with a most cruel death, feeling in himself the anger and severe judgment of God, even as if he had been in the extreme torments of hell, and therefore cried with a loud voice, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' "

The observations of Calvin on this article are to the same effect.* Bishop Horsley, indeed, in his Sermon on 1 Pet. 3:18–20. imputes to this illustrious Reformer "the extravagant assertion, that our blessed Lord actually went down to the place of torment, and there sustained the pains of a reprobate soul." Calvin, it is allowed, uses the

expression, that "not only was Christ's body delivered up as the price of our redemption, but that he gave a greater and more valuable price by suffering in his soul the dreadful torments of a condemned and reprobate man."† But, so far as we can perceive, this venerable Divine doth not affirm that our Lord actually went down to the place of torment. He appears merely to represent him as enduring in his soul on earth torments similar in some respects to those of the wicked in hell. And notwithstanding the strong expressions he employs, Calvin particularly shows that the sufferings of Christ differed materially from those of the reprobate in that place of misery, inasmuch as when sustaining the tremendous pressure of divine wrath, he remained altogether without sin, and far from resigning himself to despair, exercised a firm confidence and hope in God.—Pearson disapproves of Calvin's interpretation; but he does not seem to have understood him to hold that Christ actually descended into the place of torment.‡

Another interpretation suggested by Whitby may be barely mentioned here. "These words," says that Author, referring to the expression, descended into hell, "may be admitted as a distinct article of faith contained in the holy scriptures, in a very good sense, very agreeable to the word descend and to the import of the word hades. For the scripture doth assure us that the soul of the holy Jesus, being separated from his body, went to paradise, Luke 23:43, and thence it must descend into the grave or sepulchre, to be united to his body, that it might be revived; and thus it may he truly said; He was dead and buried; his soul descended afterwards into hades to be united to his body; and his body being thus revived, he rose again the third day.*

NOTE XXVII. Page 150

It was the opinion of Hammond and Le Clerc that Christ's sweat in the garden was not a bloody sweat, but that he only "swet drops of sweat of a strange thickness or viscosness, and consequently as big as the drops wherein blood is wont to fall upon the ground." But

although the expression in the original is ὁ ἰδρῶς ἀντοῦ ὡτεν θρομβοὶ ἀίματος, ὡσει seems to be employed here as an adverb of confirmation rather than of comparison or similitude, in the same way with ὡς its primitive in Mat. 14:5, and John 1:14. Most probably, according to the views of our Author, Doddridge, Macknight and others, the sweat was, in reality, to a great degree mixed with blood. Such perspiration is not altogether unexampled. "Dr Whitby observes," says Doddridge, "that Aristotle and Diodorus Siculus both mention bloody sweats as attending some extraordinary agony of mind: and I find Leti in his Life of Pope Sixtus V. p. 200, and Sir John Chardin in his History of Persia, Vol. i. p. 126, mentioning a like phenomenon, to which Dr Jackson, (in his Works, Vol. ii. p. 819,) adds another from Thuanus, lib. x. p. 221."† History, it may be added, records a similar instance in Charles IX. of France. "Charles IX." says Voltaire,‡ "died in his twenty-fifth year. The malady he died of was very extraordinary; the blood gushed out of all his pores. This accident, of which there are some instances, was owing either to excessive fear, to violent passion, or to a warm and melancholy constitution."—This disease, it is said, has of late been more accurately examined by medical men, and received the name of Purpura Hæmorrhagica.

NOTE XXVIII. Page 159

The account given by the venerable Author of the Causes of Christ's dreadful agony in the garden of Gethsemane, is scriptural and just. On his conflict with the powers of darkness, compare what has been said in NOTE XVI. and on the Father's hiding his face from him, compare NOTE VIII.

The Saviour's agony is, with great propriety, ascribed, first of all, to the weight of the Divine wrath and curse laid upon him on account of our sins. This idea is fully confirmed by Isaiah 53 and by the whole tenor of Scripture. Whether these words, Psalm 40:12. "Innumerable evils have compassed me about; mine iniquities (or as some render the term afflictions, or punishments) have taken hold upon me, so

that I am not able to look up"—ought to be considered as the words of the Messiah, evangelical expositors are not agreed. If they ought to be so interpreted, they are a forcible description of that anguish which our Lord endured from the numberless sins that were transferred to him as the Substitute of his people; and beyond question, he calls them mine iniquities, not because he had committed them, but merely because he had taken them on himself by his surety-engagement. In the 10th chapter of Hebrews, the 6th, 7th, and 8th verses of this Psalm are expressly applied to the Messiah.

Bishop Horne and Dr. Kennicott seem justly to consider the ten first verses as our Lord's song of praise to the Father for "the deliverance wrought for his mystical body the Church by his resurrection from the grave, effecting that of his members from the guilt and dominion of sin." But those to whom it appears harsh and improper to apply the 12th verse to the Saviour, urge that though the inspired Psalmist personates the Messiah in one part of a Psalm, it does not necessarily follow that he does so in every other part of the same Psalm. Besides, Kennicott adduces considerably strong evidence, to show that the seven last verses of the fortieth originally made a distinct Psalm, composed by a person labouring under heavy distress, and imploring immediate assistance. The seventieth Psalm, in his opinion, is preserved complete at the end of the fortieth, whereas the seventieth itself wants the beginning; the first words being only part of a sentence—"O God, to deliver me."*

The adversaries of Christ's substitution and atonement are much at a loss to account for his extreme agony in the garden. They dishonour him exceedingly, by ascribing it merely to the foresight of the sufferings he was about to undergo from the Jews, the prospect of the troubles awaiting his disciples, and other similar causes. But on this subject see the warning against Socinianism by a Committee of the (late) Associate Synod, † Moir's Scripture Doctrine of Redemption,‡ and Socinianism Unmasked, by a Friend to Truth.§

NOTE XXIX. Page 165

The expression in Heb. 5:7. rendered in the common version "and was heard in that he feared," namely, και είσακουσθεις άπο της έυλαβειας, has been thought susceptible of two interpretations. The one is being heard on account of his religious reverence; the other, being delivered from fear. In support of the former it is alleged that έυλαβεια often signifies reverence, as in Heb. 12:28, and that the preposition άπο sometimes means by reason of, on account of, as in Luke 19:3. John 21:6. This sense appears to have been preferred by our translators, as well as by several expositors; for though in that he feared is a phrase somewhat ambiguous, they have said on the margin, for his piety. The latter interpretation, however, which is the one adopted by our Author, is not unsuited to the words, and is more in unison with the scope of the passage. Several critics have shown that έυλαβεια is used to signify fear of any sort, as by the Seventy in Joshua 22:24. and in Acts 23:10. and that είσακουειν is employed to denote a deliverance granted answer to prayer, as in Ps. 54:2, 3.

The Apostle, in this passage, represents our great High-priest as acquainted from experience with the affections and sinless infirmities of human nature. He no doubt alludes to the fear and amazement with which Jesus was seized in the garden, and which the evangelists describe in expressive terms, Mark 14:33. Luke 22:44. —Christ was delivered from fear, as his trust in God was kept firm and unshaken amidst his distressing amazement, and as he was preserved from the thing feared and deprecated, to wit, fainting and perishing under the wrath of God. Although he did not obtain exemption from a bitter and accursed death, for which indeed he did not absolutely pray, yet his Father assured him that he should not be overwhelmed by his sufferings, nor left to continue under the power of death. See Beza, Dr Owen, Whitby, Doddridge, and Macknight on the place; all of whom give their suffrage in favour of the interpretation which our Author prefers.

NOTE XXX. Page 173

In maintaining that the expression in 1 Pet. 3:18. "quickened by the Spirit," as well as the parallel phrases in Rom. 1:4. and 1 Tim. 3:16. is to be understood of Christ's Divine nature, the Author's views appear to be correct. The meaning of Rom. 1:4. was formerly adverted to.* When it is said (1 Tim. 3:16.) "God was manifest in the flesh," justified in, or by, the Spirit, ἐδικαιώθη ἐν πνεύματι, we are taught that, notwithstanding the debasement to which he submitted, and the calumnies with which he was loaded, his character as the true Messiah and the Mighty God, was completely vindicated. This important idea, it is certain, may be aptly illustrated, whether the expression the Spirit be referred to Christ's own Divinity, or to the Holy Ghost.* Yet, agreeably to the opinion of Beza, our Author, and many others, it seems most natural to conclude, that the Apostle here contrasts the Divine nature of Christ with the human, and intimates that he was justified by those beams of uncreated glory which broke forth through the dark cloud of humiliation and suffering, and, in particular, by his resurrection from the dead—a most illustrious miracle, effected by himself as well as by the Holy Spirit.

It is equally clear that the expression just quoted from 1 PETER should be referred to our Lord's Divinity. Horsley and some others, indeed, contend that it ought to be applied neither to Christ's divine nature, nor to the Holy Spirit, but to Christ's human soul. The Bishop, in his Sermon on the passage, affirms, that the word which our translators render quickened, denotes not the resuscitation of life extinguished, but the preservation and continuance of life subsisting: "Being put to death in the flesh, but quick in the Spirit, i. e. surviving in his soul, by which, or rather in which (surviving soul,) he went and preached unto the spirits in prison." But what writer could ever have allowed himself to hazard such a translation of the word ζωοποιηθεῖς, unless his judgment had been warped by predilection for a favourite hypothesis? This term, beyond question, does refer to "the resuscitation of life extinguished;" and the true meaning is very well stated by Pearson in the following words:† "The spirit by which he is said to preach was not the soul of Christ, but that Spirit by which he was quickened; as appeareth by the

coherence of the words, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit, by which also he went and preached to the spirits in prison. Now that Spirit by which Christ was quickened is that by which he was raised from the dead, that is, the Power of his Divinity; as St Paul expresseth it 2 Cor. 13. Though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God; in respect of which he preached to those who were disobedient in the days of Noah."

NOTE XXXI. Page 183

Of the splendid circumstances which graced the Saviour's RESURRECTION, it was one of the most remarkable, that a company of departed saints arose after him from their graves. This wonderful fact is so expressly recorded, that its certainty must be admitted by all who acknowledge the inspiration of the Evangelists. Nor was it improbable in itself that the power of the risen Saviour should be straightway displayed in raising a select band of saints, as a prelude of the blessed resurrection of his Church at large to take place at the end of the world. It was the opinion of the Jews, we are told, that when their Messiah came, there should be a resurrection of some pious men.*—The graves were opened, it appears, at the moment our Lord expired on the cross; but the bodies of the saints that slept did not arise and come out of their graves, till after the resurrection of Christ; for He is the First-born from the dead, and the first-fruits of them that slept. Who these privileged saints were, it is perhaps vain to conjecture. Many have supposed, with Ignatius, that they were some of the most eminent mentioned in the Old Testament. But Whitby, Pierce, Pareus, and Guyse, deem it more probable that they were a number of devout persons, believers in Jesus, who had recently departed this life, and were personally known to many of the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Whether these saints afterwards returned, like Lazarus, to their graves, or rose to immortal life, is a question which it is not necessary that we should be able to determine. Pareus, however, considers it likely that they were finally exempted from the power of death, and ascended in

triumph to heaven with the ascending Saviour.†—"It is unprofitable," says Doddridge, "too particularly to conjecture on circumstances which are not recorded. For this reason also, I pretend not to say what became of these persons; though as one can hardly imagine they either immediately returned to their graves or that they continued to live on earth (because it is only said they appeared to many,) it seems most natural to imagine that they ascended into heaven with or after our Lord; perhaps from some solitude to which they might be directed to retire during the intermediate days, and to wait in devout exercises for their change; for surely had they ascended in the view of others, the memory of such a not could not have been lost."*

NOTE XXXII. Page 185. line 4

Our Author proves, in a concise but satisfactory manner, that there can be no reasonable pretence for regarding the Apostles of Christ either as weak enthusiasts or artful impostors. In bearing testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, they announced a fact, which they themselves had been compelled by invincible evidence most firmly to believe; and the publication of which, instead of raising them to worldly honour or opulence, served only to expose them to hatred, reproach, persecution, and death. This subject has been ably illustrated by many writers, among whom a conspicuous place is due to the late Dr Beattie, who treats it particularly in his elegant compend of "The Evidences of the Christian Religion."†

APOLLONIUS was a celebrated impostor, born about the Christian era, at Tyana, a town of Cappadocia. After having studied at Tarsus, he became a rigid disciple of Pythagoras, determined to pass seven years in silence, and practised every species of austerity. He travelled to Babylon, thence to India, in order to converse with the Brahmins; and after returning to the cities of lesser Asia, proceeded to Rome. He hazarded predictions, and pretended to work miracles, and even to raise the dead to life. He is supposed to have died at Ephesus, after having nearly reached an hundred years. ‡ —Hierocles had the

audacity to draw a comparison betwixt this man and our blessed Saviour, but was answered by Eusebius.—Philostratus, who wrote the life of Apollonius in Greek in eight Books, was secretary to Julia, the wife of Alexander Severus.—That Apollonius really existed, is probable; but Witsius styles him a fictitious hero, with reference, apparently, both to the man's own impostures and to the fictions of his ambitious biographer. There is a wide difference, indeed, between Philostratus and the Evangelists; and between the miracles ascribed to Apollonius, and those which were performed by Jesus and his Apostles. §

NOTE XXXIII. Page 185. line 20

It was once intended to suggest a few remarks here on the seeming contradictions in the accounts of the Resurrection of Christ, which the different Evangelists have given us. But the illustration of this topic "would lead us beyond the bounds" of these Notes. Let it suffice, therefore, to refer to Dr Doddridge,* and in particular, to the Observations on the Resurrection of Jesus, by Gilbert West, Esq. one of the most valuable writers on the subject. A short view of Mr West's scheme for reconciling the Evangelists may be seen in Doddridge's Preface to the 3d Volume of his Expositor. Amongst the many excellent works on the general evidence of our Lord's Resurrection, the young inquirer might consult Saurin's Sermons translated by Robinson,† the Trial of the Witnesses of the Resurrection of Jesus, and Dillon's accurate and elaborate Treatise.

NOTE XXXIV. Page 187

It is not without reason that the last verse of the 110th Psalm is referred to the bitter sufferings of the Messiah, and the glorious resurrection that was to succeed. That the expression "he shall lift up the head," means, he shall be delivered from his sorrows and abasement, and exalted to the highest glory and felicity, is admitted by all. With regard to what is intended by his drinking of the brook in the way, there are two opinions. The Hebrew term לָנַח , which,

according to Parkhurst, literally signifies a torrent or rapid stream, being sometimes employed to denote abundance of comforts, as in Psalm 36:8, Bishop Lowth, and several other respectable interpreters, apprehend that the word here denotes those refreshing consolations, by which our Lord's humanity was supported amidst the labours and conflicts of his mortal life. But this word is frequently used to express severe afflictions, as in Psalm 18:4, 5. 144:7. and in this sense it is understood here by Pool, Bishop Horne, and many others, as well as by our Author; who consider the Messiah's drinking of the brook in the way as an expression of the same import with his undergoing his sufferings. Compare Ps. 60:3. Jer. 25:15. Mat. 20:22. Now, either of these interpretations is admissible, and furnishes a good sense; but the latter seems entitled to the preference. The following spirited comment by Horne deserves to be quoted.‡

"Verse 7. He shall drink of the brook, or torrent, in the way; and therefore shall he lift up his head. The means by which Christ should obtain his universal kingdom and everlasting priesthood seem here to be assigned. In his way to glory, he was to drink deep of the waters of affliction; the swollen torrent occurred in the way, and presented itself between him and the throne of God. To this 'torrent in the way' the Saviour descended; he bowed himself down and 'drank' of it for us all; and therefore, did 'he lift up his head;' that is, he arose victorious, and from the valley in which the torrent ran, ascended to the summit of that holy and heavenly mount where he reigneth, 'till his enemies be made his footstool.' St Paul hath expressed the same sentiment in literal terms; 'He humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; wherefore $\delta\iota\omicron$, God also hath highly exalted him.' Philip. 2:8."

NOTE XXXV. Page 188

No one passage of ancient prophecy contains clearer predictions either of the sufferings of Christ, or of the glory that should follow, than the 53d chapter of Isaiah. The first part of the 8th verse, "He

was taken from prison and from judgment," has been variously understood. Some suppose it to mean that our Lord was led from prison and from the tribunal of judgment to the place of execution. Closely correspondent to this view, is the marginal reading in the common English version, "He was taken away by distress and judgment"; with which Lowth's version agrees, namely, "By an oppressive judgment he was taken away." This interpretation receives support, it is admitted, from the reading of the Seventy, which is adopted in Acts 8:33. "In his humiliation his judgment was taken away;"* that is, in his state of humiliation he did not receive that righteous judgment from men to which he was entitled, but was condemned to die, though they found in him nothing worthy of death.

Our Author's view of the expression, nevertheless, is not unnatural; and it is embraced by Calvin, Pool, and other judicious expositors. Although it is at the 10th verse that the Prophet begins to speak particularly of the blessed results of Christ's humiliation, yet, in order to obviate the offence of the cross, it was not impertinent to insert a short notice of his glory in the midst of the detail of his sufferings. The Prophet informs us, says Calvin, "that Christ was taken, that is, rescued, from prison and from judgment or condemnation, and then exalted to the highest honour, that none might imagine he was quite overwhelmed by his dreadful and ignominious death."*

Different senses have also been put upon the clause immediately following, viz. "And who shall declare his generation?" The word rendered generation דור usually "signifies," says Lowth, "age, duration, the time which one man or many together pass in this world." Several ancient writers applied this expression to Christ's eternal generation as the Son of God; and Chrysostome understood it of the miraculous conception of his human nature. But however wonderful and ineffable those sacred mysteries are, it was injudicious to expound these words of Isaiah as relating either to the one or the other. Witsius assigns a much more probable and natural

meaning, when he refers them primarily to the duration of the Mediator's life subsequent to his death and resurrection, and secondarily to the numbers and the perpetuity of his spiritual seed. Christ was not only to be released from the prison of the grave, but to rise to immortal life; Psalm 21:4. Rom. 6:9. Rev. 1:18. In this interpretation, our Author again coincides with Calvin. With far less appearance of probability, some have conceived the meaning to be this: Who can declare that generation of mankind among whom Jesus lived? Who can express their unparalleled wickedness in condemning and crucifying so worthy and illustrious a person?—Lowth renders the clause thus: "And his manner of life who would declare? That is, at the trial and condemnation of Jesus, all were backward to attest his innocence. "No proclamation was made for any person to bear witness to the innocence and character of Jesus, nor did any one voluntarily step forth to give their attestation to it." The arguments which the Bishop employs to confirm this interpretation, have considerable weight.†

With regard to the translation of the first part of the 10th verse proposed by Cocceius—although it is favourably noticed by our Author, it does not appear to be so natural as that in the authorised version; "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief." Nor is it so proper as the one which Lowth, in conformity with the reading of the Vulgate, adopts; "Yet it pleased Jehovah to crush him with affliction." Cocceius, it is well known, though a man of vast erudition and ardent piety, indulged his fancy to excess, and was immoderately attached to mystical and allegorical interpretations of Scripture. Nor have the most sincere admirers of Witsius hesitated to admit, that several of his expositions discover somewhat of a leaning towards the Cocceian plan. His illustration of Zephaniah 3:8. in the 36th Section of this Dissertation, might perhaps be referred to as one instance of this propensity.—"It has been always a principle with me," says Dr Witherspoon, "to preach the doctrines of redemption where they are, and not to attempt to find them where they are not, by a boundless allegorical interpretation."*

NOTE XXXVI. Page 194

The reader will observe, that, when quoting Job 19:25. where our English Bible makes the expression—"that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth," the Author says, *novissimus in pulvere slaret*—"stand last on the earth," or on the dust. The truth is, that the original is susceptible of both interpretations; and Witsius is not singular in his view of the meaning. He agrees in this instance not only with Cocceius, but with the celebrated Scultet, and others. According to Scultet, the sense is; "Having vanquished and survived all his enemies, he shall stand as an illustrious conqueror; and shall display his glorious power in raising up the dust, to which mankind were reduced." Grotius, too, observes, that it belongs to a conqueror to stand last on the field, and that Job accordingly affirms that God will overcome his adversaries.†

The entire passage, of which these words are a part, is uncommonly interesting and sublime; and it has given rise to much critical discussion. Whilst some contend that Job anticipates a restoration to prosperity during the remainder of his life, others more successfully urge that he expresses his firm persuasion of a blessed resurrection after death; and Kennicott, who differs from both, maintains that Job declares his conviction that while he was singularly oppressed with anguish of mind, and tortured with pains of body, yet still, out of that miserable body, nearly dropping into the grave, he should see God, who would appear in his favour, and vindicate the integrity of his character.‡ It is not intended, however, to discuss this subject here.

NOTE XXXVII. Page 207

There is some appearance of contradiction, it must be owned, between the account of the place where Christ began his ascension, which we have in the Gospel by Luke, and that which the same Evangelist gives us in the Acts. But it is only an appearance. Our Author's solution of the difficulty is quite satisfactory; and it coincides, at least in substance, with the remarks of later writers on

the subject. See Whitby, Doddridge,* and Dr Wells.† "Note here," says Whitby on Acts 1:12. "that St Luke does not intend to give us the distance of the place of Christ's ascent from Jerusalem, (that being from Bethany, Luke 24:50. which was from Jerusalem fifteen furlongs, John 11:18.) but only from the foot of mount Olivet, which was, says the Syriac, and Theophylact from Josephus, (An. l. 20. c. 6.) seven furlongs; though now we read in Josephus only five furlongs. Now, say the Jews, a Sabbath day's journey is two thousand cubits, that is, a thousand yards, which is about eight furlongs or a mile." "It is manifest," says Dr Doddridge, "he did not ascend from the town of Bethany, where many others must have seen him, but from the mount of Olives, where none beheld him but his own disciples."

NOTE XXXVIII. Page 211

To every intelligent reader, the pretended miracle of the impression of our Lord's foot upon mount Olivet, must appear altogether fabulous; and the absurdity of applying the Old Testament expressions quoted by our Author to any such circumstance, is perfectly evident. Yet modern travellers in the Holy Land assure us, that this ancient piece of superstition still keeps up an extensive credit. "At a short distance from the summit," says Dr Clarke, speaking of mount Olivet,‡ "we were desired to notice the famous impression of a man's left foot in a rock, which has so long been shown, as that made by our Saviour at his ascension. Over this, Helena constructed one of her churches. It is not our intention to add a single syllable to all that has been already written on this subject. Those who can receive amusement or edification from the legend in its most interesting form, may be referred to the entertaining work of M. de Chateaubriand, from the perusal of which the reader rises as from a pleasing romance. So fully is this miracle believed even at this hour, that it is mentioned in the certificate given to pilgrims at the Franciscan convent, as one of the proofs of the sanctity of the place."

NOTE XXXIX. Page 215

The reader will learn from the remarks of our Author, that the critics are not agreed about the precise meaning of the term ANALEPSIS. The only passage of the New Testament in which this word occurs is Luke 9:51. and it is even disputed whether it directly refers to the Saviour's ascension at all. Dr Campbell, in his Version, adopts the general term removal; and in his Note on the verse, he says: "To me it appears very improbable that the Evangelist should speak of the time of his ascension as being come, or just at hand, not only before his resurrection, but even before his trial and death; especially, considering that he continued no fewer than forty days on the earth after he was risen." But other considerations seem to balance, if not to outweigh, the arguments which that learned and ingenious critic employs.

The verb ἀναλαμβάνω, as appears from the section to which this Note refers, is very frequently used by the New Testament writers to denote the ascension of Christ. It is applied also by the Seventy to the ascent of Elijah, 2 Kings 2:10, 11. It is natural then to expect, that when analepsis, a noun confessedly derived from that verb, is applied to our Lord, it should mean his ascension. Campbell indeed affirms, that this word "is equally applicable to any other method of removing." It is certainly worthy of notice, however, that in all, or at least nearly all, the passages where ἀναλαμβάνω occurs in the New Testament, to whatever subject it relates, the idea of elevation, or of being taken up, is less or more involved.* It may be urged that, even admitting this, and allowing that the noun analepsis is peculiarly applicable to a removal upwards, still the expression in Luke 9:51. might be understood to refer, not to Christ's ascension into heaven, but to his being lifted up on the cross. But to this reasoning we reply, that when mention is made in other passages of his elevation on the cross, the term employed is not ἀναλαμβάνω, but ὑψοω, John 3:14. 8:28. 12:32, 34. Besides, when our Lord gave prophetic intimations respecting himself to his disciples, and even to the people at large, we find him, in some instances, passing over intervening events, how important soever, and bringing his ascension directly into view, as in John 6:62. 14:2, 28. To travel from Galilee to Jerusalem was a

necessary step towards his ascension, as well as crucifixion; and, without doubt, the prospect of "the joy that was set before him" animated his resolution and courage, at the moment when "he stedfastly set his face" to accomplish that interesting journey, and to expose himself to all the sufferings that awaited him in the garden of Gethsemane and on the hill of Calvary. Why then should it appear "very improbable," that the Evangelist refers immediately and expressly to Christ's being received up into heaven? "We all know," says Campbell himself, "that, in popular language, a time is often said to be come, which is very near." Although Luke says, therefore, "the time was come that he should be received up," and although he did continue "no fewer than forty days on earth after he was risen," it should not on this account be deemed unlikely that the phrase refers to the ascension. The Doctor's remark, with regard to the indefinite turn of the expression, τας ἡμέρας της ἀναληψεως αὐτου, the days of his analepsis, has no weight; for, according to the Hebrew and Hellenistic idiom, this indefinite form of speech is often employed, even when a certain particular day is intended, as in Gen. 25:24. 29:21.* Even Campbell states, that the old Latin translator renders the word ἀναλπις assumptio, and that by this "he probably meant the ascension." Dr Doddridge, in fine, at the conclusion of his note on this term, has expressed himself in the following words: "I scruple not at all, with the most ancient versions and the generality of critics, to follow the usual interpretation, which refers ἀναλπις to Christ's ascension."†—

Witsius, therefore, seems right, in conceiving the word analepsis to relate to the ascension of our Lord. It is certain, too, that when the Father received him up into heaven and placed him at his own right hand, he did, by the very act, recognize him as his Son, and give the brightest evidence that he had accepted his work, and justified him from every charge to which he had become liable, as the Surety of his people. But whether this idea is expressly conveyed by the terms ἀναλαμβάνω and ἀναληψες, when applied to his ascension, may admit of dispute. On this point, Beza is possibly more correct than our excellent Author.

NOTE XL. Page 219

Our Author, with sufficient propriety, refers to the testimony of STEPHEN and of PAUL, in confirmation of Christ's ascension. Each of these highly-favoured individuals expressly declared, that he saw the exalted Redeemer. The validity of their testimony, however, doth not depend on the precise manner of their seeing him. Witsius appears to be decidedly of opinion, that, in both instances, their bodily eye-sight was miraculously strengthened, so that objects exhibited in the highest heaven became quite visible on the earth, to Stephen at Jerusalem, and to Paul on the way to Damascus. But is it not much more probable, on various accounts, that Jesus was presented to their view, by a visionary representation, similar to those which were made to Isaiah, Ezekiel, and the Apostle John? In this light the matter appeared to Doddridge;* and Mr Andrew Swanston, in his excellent Lecture on Paul's conversion, though he does not expressly discuss this question, seems evidently to proceed upon the principle that Paul saw the Lord in a symbol or vision. "I am disposed to think," says that truly evangelical and amiable writer, "that along with the spiritual light which at this time broke in upon the Apostle's mind, there was a certain visible effulgence, or manifestation of that light and glory in which the human nature of our Redeemer resides, and which he will communicate to the bodies of his saints at the resurrection."†

Whether there is reason to conclude from what the Apostle states at the beginning of 2 Cor. 12 that he was literally caught up to heaven, we shall not here inquire. On this point, the reader may examine Whitby, who favours the opinion that Paul experienced "a real rapture." Macknight, too, has some judicious observations on the passage.

NOTE XLI. Page 221

The testimony of the Apostle JOHN with regard to the reality of Christ's ascension, is no less justly appealed to, than that of Stephen

and Paul. Yet the vision related in the first chapter of the Revelation would have suited the Author's purpose, more perfectly than that in the twelfth. In the five first verses of the 12th, there is an allusion indeed to the manner of our Saviour's birth, the persecution he met with in his infancy, the protection he experienced from his Father, and the state of security and power at the right hand of God to which he was ultimately advanced. But, though these events are alluded to, the vision, beyond question, is prophetic, and refers to events posterior to the ascension of Christ. The "man-child" spoken of, verse 5th, is not to be understood of Christ personally, but of the spiritual seed of the church, (compare verse 17th;) and his being "caught up to God, and to his throne," has a reference to some striking display of Jehovah's special care for the offspring of the church. On this subject, see Durham,* and Dr Johnston. † "The woman," says Johnston, "signifies the Christian Church, as an organized and constituted church, consisting of a fixed system of doctrine, precepts, worship, and discipline, conformable to the sacred Scriptures of the New Testament. Her child signifies all those individual Christians, who, by their belief and obedience of these, are rendered the real votaries of that church. The first attempt of the Roman power should be, not to corrupt the Christian church, but to kill and destroy individual Christians, and these it should persecute in a very early period of the church. The church should produce a manly race, whom no danger should intimidate, and no sufferings depress. A race, who, at a distant period, should subdue all nations with a rod of iron, and who, upon the overthrow of the various kingdoms and nations mentioned in prophecy, shall reign triumphant on the earth."—This is a much more probable interpretation than that proposed by Bishop Newton, who considers Constantine as particularly intended by the man-child, because he escaped the many snares that were laid for him by Galerius, and was advanced to the imperial throne.‡

Those who wish to be acquainted with the different views which have been taken of the Dragon, and of the period to which this chapter

refers, must consult the Authors who have written fully on the subject, as Faber, Fuller, and Culbertson.

NOTE XLII. Page 227

John 3:13. is a remarkable verse, and has attracted much attention. Some excellent Divines are of opinion, that the expression "No man hath ascended up to heaven"—or, as Campbell renders it, "None ascendeth into heaven"—is not to be understood of a local ascension at all, but to be interpreted figuratively, as denoting an intimate acquaintance with the Divine counsels and administration; and in vindication of this sense, they refer to Deut. 30:11, 12. Rom. 10:6. and Prov. 30:4.* But if a local ascension is intended, the expression, though in conformity with the prophetic style, it exhibits as past an event which was then future, relates, without doubt, to our Lord's ascending into heaven after his resurrection from the dead; and, as our Author suggests, the meaning may be, that Christ is the only person who ascends into heaven by his own power and his own merit. The Socinian notion of his actual ascent into heaven to receive full instruction in the will of God before he commenced his public ministry, is an absurd and unfounded fancy, which it is unnecessary here to refute. The last expression in the verse, "even the Son of man, who is in heaven," clearly intimates, that while Christ was on earth as the Son of man, he was at the same time in heaven as the Son of God. It may be compared with Acts 3:15. 20:28. and 1 Cor. 2:8.†

NOTE XLIII. Page 242

When Job says, "Upon my right hand rise the youth," (Ch. 30:12.) he doubtless complains of the arrogant conduct of young men. But the Author's comment—"Youths not yet arrived at years of discretion, are not ashamed wantonly to prefer themselves to me," does not appear to express the precise meaning of the words. In the following part of the same verse, the afflicted patriarch immediately adds; "they push away my feet, and they raise up against me the ways of their destruction." The sense, therefore, seems to be, not merely that

they preferred themselves to him, or seized the precedence; but that they assumed an attitude of presumptuous hostility, and aimed at his ruin. They may be said to rise on his right hand, because they attempted to disable his right hand, which is the principal seat of corporeal strength, and the chief instrument of active exertion; or rather, the expression may allude to the established forms of judicial procedure, in which it was customary for accusers to stand at the right hand of the pannel. See Psalm 109:6. Zech. 3:1.‡

Our Author, nevertheless, adduces a sufficient number of passages to show that, at least amongst the Hebrews, the place on the right hand was deemed more honourable than that on the left. His illustration of the terms by which our Saviour's present glory in heaven is expressed, is minute and satisfactory. Some useful observations on this topic may be found in Hurrion's Sermons.*

NOTE XLIV. Page 257

That Christ is sometimes represented as taking possession of his celestial glory by his own authority, is sufficiently evident. Yet the original expression in Zech. 6:13. which our Author renders, and he shall take the glory,† cannot perhaps be better rendered than in our common version—and he shall bear the glory. The term נשׂא has many different shades of meaning;‡ but none of its senses appears more radical than to bear, to sustain. It often signifies to raise, to lift up; and as Matthew Henry suggests, we might read here he shall lift up the glory, that is, he shall restore and advance the glory of Israel, which is now depressed. As the term not unfrequently means to take, to receive, our Author's rendering is certainly admissible. Nor does it seem to differ much from the turn given to the expression in the Latin version by Tremellius and Junius, where the clause is translated, *Idemque reportaturus gloriam*, i.e. "he shall procure, or obtain, the glory." The Messiah, by the great work of building the temple of the Lord, obtained for himself the diversified and unparalleled glories of his exalted state.

The Author very properly ascribes the glory to which Christ is exalted as man and Mediator both to the justice and the grace of the Father. Our Lord had an unquestionable title to those honours to which he is advanced; and it is equally certain that in highly exalting him, the Father acted at once from infinite love to his Son, and from pure and boundless grace to the church. The expression in Philip. 2:9. "He hath graciously given him, ἑχαρισκτο, a name which is above every name"—seems most directly to refer to the Father's love for his dear Son, and to the benignity with which he conferred on him his glorious reward; but it perhaps alludes, also, to that grace towards perishing sinners, in which both the humiliation and exaltation of Christ originate.

The words quoted by our Author from Isaiah 16:5. "In mercy, in grace, shall the throne be established," § seem hardly applicable to the subject. These words, it is granted, though they relate in the first instance to the throne of Hezekiah, have an ultimate reference to the throne of Christ. But the grace spoken of appears to be, not the grace of God shown to the prince, but the grace, or clemency, exercised by the prince, whose throne is established. Piscator, Cocceius, and some others, indeed, concur with Witsius, in applying the expression to the Divine favour and mercy; and in support of this interpretation, refer to 2 Sam. 7:15. Ps. 89:35. Is. 55:3. But Vitringa justly argues, that the Prophet seems to allude to Solomon's expression, Prov. 20:28. "Mercy and truth preserve the king, and his throne is upholden by mercy"—that had he meant the Divine favour and grace, he would probably have expressly termed it the grace of Jehovah—that if the truth and righteousness, mentioned in the following part of the verse, must necessarily be applied to the virtues discovered by the prince in his administration, it is most natural to consider the word grace as relating to another, and a most important and amiable excellence of the prince himself—that, in fine, the benignity as well as integrity and justice of the king of Judah is brought forward as a motive to encourage the Moabites to submit to his sceptre.*

NOTE XLVI. Page 275

In applying Heb. 12:26. to the manifestation of the glory of Christ at his second coming, unless a mere accommodation of the expressions be intended, our Author appears to depart in some degree from his accustomed accuracy. That passage is no doubt quoted from Hag. 2:6, 7. a prophecy which indisputably relates to the appearance of the Messiah, "the Desire of all nations," in the fulness of time, and to the wonderful changes effected amongst Jews and Gentiles by the introduction of the Christian economy. The Apostle has immediately in his eye the abolition of the ceremonial law, and the establishment of New Testament ordinances in its room. The shaking of heaven and earth is a metaphorical expression often made use of in Scripture, to denote the subversion of existing authorities and states, as in Is. 13:13. and Joel 2:10. See Calvin, Owen, and Macknight, on Heb. 12:26. Witsius himself elsewhere more correctly cites this passage with reference to the removal of the Mosaic ritual, and the establishment of the more durable institutions of the Gospel.†

NOTE XLVII. Page 276

Theologians are divided in sentiment, with regard to the proper application of the term ARCHANGEL, 1 Thes. 4:16. That there are various classes of angels, differing from each other in power and dignity, is generally agreed; and it is not uncommon to suppose, that the Apostle here intends some created angel of exalted rank. This appears to have been the opinion of Calvin.* Alphonsus Turretine remarks, that when the Lord shall descend from heaven, "he will make use of the ministry of angels, nay, the chief among angels, who are called archangels, as Michael and Gabriel: For, though we know not particularly what relates to the orders of angels, it cannot be questioned, that some of them are superior to others, and are hence in the Scriptures denominated archangels."† Witsius thought, on the contrary, that the Scripture speaks only of one Archangel, and that this is Christ himself, the Lord of all. The same opinion was held by Cloppenburgh, Vogelsangius, Pierce, and others, of former times;

and of late, it has been strenuously supported by Bishop Horsley. The Bishop agrees with our Author, too, in thinking, that the MICHAEL we read of in Daniel, Jude, and Revelation, is no other than the Son of God. If the learned reader is disposed to investigate this point, he may consult Horsley's Sermons, and the Exercitatio De Michaele by Witsius.‡ At the close of that Dissertation, it is stated by the Author, that some writers apprehend the name Michael to be given to our Saviour in Rev. 12 but to a created angel in Dan. 10 and Jude 9. With his usual candour, he adds, that while he himself believes Christ to be intended wherever we read of Michael, he was not inclined to urge his opinion with great pertinacity or confidence, since the arguments adduced on the opposite side are not destitute of force. "On such questions," he says in conclusion, "I am much better pleased with the modesty of a dubious mind, than with a rash disposition to form a peremptory judgment."§

NOTE XLVIII. Page 283

Our Author denies more decidedly than might have been expected, that 1 Cor. 6:2, 3. as well as Mat. 19:28. has any reference to the transactions of the last day. Whitby and Macknight agree with him in combating the doctrine, that the saints will be assessors with Christ in the judgment; but they differ from each other in their manner of interpreting 1 Cor. 6:2, 3. The former adopts a sense somewhat similar to the one proposed by our Author; and with regard to judging angels, he affirms, that "all the Greek scholiasts say, that this the Christians did gloriously, by expelling evil angels from their seats and their dominions, and forcing them to confess before their votaries, they were only devils." The views of the latter are briefly expressed in his Paraphrase thus.

"Verse 2. Do ye not know that the inspired teachers among you judge the world, by the laws of the Gospel, which they promulgate? And if the world is thus judged by you, are you, who are so well enlightened, unworthy to fill the least seats of judicature? Verse 3. Do ye not know

that we declare the judgment of evil angels, whereby we are strongly impressed with a sense of the justice of God?"—

This learned expositor, however, notwithstanding what he says in his Note 2. on verse 2d, where he refers to Col. 1:26. cannot be justified in limiting the sense of the term saints to inspired teachers, "Know ye not," says Paul, "that we shall judge angels?—obviously including true Christians at large, as well as men that were endowed with inspiration. And to translate the word κρινουσι in the 2d, and κρινουμεν in the 3d verse, which are both confessedly in the future tense, as if they were in the present, was to take a most unwarrantable liberty. The passage is indeed somewhat obscure; but, beyond question, it must relate to some judgment posterior to the date of that Epistle; and, on the whole, it seems most natural to refer it to the saints' judging the world and judging evil angels, in the day of final retribution. In this view it is understood by an host of able and judicious interpreters, including Calvin, Beza, Hammond, Guyse, and Doddridge. Most of these writers do not hesitate to speak of the saints as assessors with Christ at the judgment. The saints, it is true, are to stand before his tribunal, and receive their sentence from him. But, although they are themselves to be judged, it is not impossible for them, after having received a blessed sentence of acquittal, to appear as assessors with Christ; not indeed to give him counsel, but to concur with him in the judicial sentence he shall pronounce on devils and ungodly men—or, in other words, to express their assent to that sentence.

"Why should their assent be necessary," asks Macknight, "more than the assent of holy angels?" The assent neither of the one nor the other, we reply, is strictly necessary. The rectitude, and validity, of the sentence, are quite independent of the plaudits of men, or of angels. But if the Scriptures do teach us, though merely in one or two passages, that the saints shall thus judge the world, it becomes us to believe it, without reasoning on the subject. Whether the holy angels are expressly to give their assent, we are not informed. But can we forget, that the Son of God assumed the human, not the angelical

nature; that in the day of judgment he will gloriously appear in the same nature in which he expired on Calvary; and that, in consequence, certain peculiar honours are allotted to redeemed men, in which elect angels have no share? Is it not also particularly fit and proper, that the saints, in that day of victory and triumph, should solemnly express their acquiescence in a sentence which will not only display the majesty and justice of the Judge, but secure their own complete and final deliverance from a combination of numerous and powerful enemies, by whom they had been long and dreadfully annoyed?—See Horne on Psalm 149:6–9.

Witsius himself, while he understands the expressions quoted from 1 Cor. 6 and Mat. 19 as relating to other topics, candidly allows, that the saints will be assessors with Christ in a certain improper sense of the term, and that they will judge and condemn the wicked, not merely by the example of their virtues, but also "by their approbation of Christ's sentence."

On Mat. 19:28. let it suffice to refer to Doddridge's Paraphrase and Note.*

NOTE XLIX. Page 291

The view taken by Witsius of that representation of the general judgment which we have in Mat. 25 seems, in general, correct. It may be questioned, however, whether the reason he assigns for the prominent place given in that Chapter to the offices of Christian charity, be the cause to which it ought to be ascribed. Even admitting that it was in accordance with our Lord's practice to avail himself in his discourses of those forms of instruction, which had anciently been prepared by devout and intelligent, though uninspired, teachers, and which were commonly made use of in the Jewish Church; and supposing that he had paid particular attention to the Chaldee Paraphrase;—the real importance he attached to the performance or neglect of the labours of love towards his necessitous and afflicted brethren for his name's sake, seems a far more probable

cause of the prominence he assigns to those labours, than a readiness to assimilate his instructions to what was useful in the Jewish formularies.

The venerable Author, who had attained great proficiency in Jewish and Oriental literature, was perhaps immoderately attached to the idea, that Christ discovered his prudent condescension in conforming his manner of teaching to the modes generally adopted by the wise men among the Jews. His fondness for this notion appears not only here, but also in other parts of his works. He defends it, for instance, at some length, in his Dissertations on the Lord's Prayer.* He there states it as his conviction, that the phrases, and almost all the petitions of that Prayer, are derived from the approved forms of the Hebrews. It is exceedingly improbable, he imagines, that so striking a similarity of expressions and petitions as has been pointed out by Drusius, Lightfoot, and others, could ever have happened by accident. Either the modern Jewish Doctors must have borrowed them from the Gospel, or our Saviour must have taken them from the authorised formularies of his time. The former supposition he deems quite unlikely. "It seems more probable," says he, "that Christ, willing to accommodate himself to the taste and customs of the people, in so far as this could be done in consistency with the dictates of wisdom and piety, applied to his own purpose whatever valuable sentiments and proper expressions he found among them, as precious remains of ancient faith and hope. This he did, that he might not seem unduly fond of innovation, and that the instructions he delivered might be the more readily understood and embraced, when it was seen that he presented a collection of the choicest jewels that yet remained in the treasury of the Jewish Church." The keen opposition this notion has met with from Dr John Owen,† is next adverted to; but our Author states, "with all becoming deference to so distinguished a Theologian," that Owen's arguments are far from shaking his opinion. "Nor does this observation," he adds, "derogate in the least from the excellence of our Lord's Prayer. It was not proper that it should commend itself by the charm of novelty, but by the excellence of its matter, the fulness of its

petitions, the exactness of its arrangement, and the conciseness of its diction. And indeed in all these respects it is so admirably superior, that nothing equal or similar can any where be found."

NOTE L. Page 292

Our Author affirms, without scruple, that the punishment of the wicked will be ETERNAL. On this, as well as on every other point, to which Divine revelation relates, we ought to guard against the influence of our own reasonings and feelings, and humbly to acquiesce in the testimony of "God, who cannot lie." "If any person inclines," says the profound and amiable M'Laurin, "to doubt of the eternity of future punishment unless he saw it, that person seeks such a way of being satisfied about it as the nature of the thing does not admit: For, though a man saw the place of punishment with his eyes, he could not see that it is eternal, unless he saw the end of eternity, which is impossible; so that a man can never have evidence of this by sight, if he refuse to give faith to God's word, which is surely the best evidence in the world."*

Notwithstanding the many bold attempts which have been made to impair the energy, and pervert the sense, of those passages of Scripture that relate to this awfully interesting topic, it will be difficult, by the most imposing arts of criticism, to persuade any considerate and candid reader, that the Bible does not clearly and fully teach the eternity of the torments of hell. What can be more unequivocal, than the verses quoted by our Author from the 25th chapter of Matthew? In that passage, the Saviour and Judge himself represents the sentence passed on the wicked as consigning them to "everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels;" and he concludes the account of the judgment thus: "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal."† In these words, the future state of the wicked, and that of the righteous, are directly contrasted with each other in respect to continuance; and we are expressly taught that the duration of both is of the same extent. In the original language, as many writers have

remarked, it is precisely the same term that is employed in the first part of the sentence with regard to the one, and in the second part with regard to the other. To deny, therefore, that the misery of the wicked is of the same endless duration with the blessedness of the righteous, is in reality, however undesignedly, to cast the most odious reflexions upon the great Prophet of the Church. On that supposition, Christ must either have wonderfully misunderstood, or deliberately misrepresented, the matter. But can we dare to impute either error or deceit to Him who possesses "all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," and is "the Amen, the faithful and true Witness?" Is it possible or credible, that he who is Truth itself, and whose whole speech and conduct were characterised by the most guileless sincerity, would ever, and even when illustrating a subject of incalculable moment to mankind, have allowed himself to employ the same word in one sentence, in two senses so widely different from each other, as first to denote a limited period, and then an endless duration, without giving the most distant hint that the expression was to be thus variously understood?

It would be easy to adduce a great number of other passages of Scripture, equally explicit and decisive. This doctrine, too, it might be shown, is intimately connected with many other branches of the Christian system. What is taught us, for instance, in sacred writ, respecting the malignity and demerit of sin, the purity, justice and veracity of God, and in particular the Deity and atonement of Christ, serves mightily to confirm the eternity of future punishment. Those who set aside the perpetuity of the miseries of hell, have accordingly proceeded, in general, to question, and sometimes to revile with the utmost virulence, the proper divinity and the atoning sacrifice of our blessed Redeemer. "Eternal punishment," says an adventurous writer, "may trouble old women; but a bloody atonement and eternal punishment correspond not with the exalted ideas we ought to entertain of God."*—But the reader who wishes to examine this subject minutely, and to see satisfactory replies to the various objections which have been urged against the eternity of future

punishment, may consult Pearson,[†] M'Laurin,[‡] Dr Watts,[§] Dwight,^{||} and especially Lampe,[¶] and Edwards.^{**}

The Creed, as we now have it, contains no explicit notice of the endless misery of the wicked. But the article respecting the general judgment was more largely expressed in some ancient copies. In Tertullian's Creed, for example, it is affirmed, that Christ "shall come in splendour to receive the saints into the fruition of eternal life and the heavenly promises, and to adjudge the profane to everlasting fire."* In the Athanasian Creed, too, it is expressly said: "They that have done good shall go into life everlasting; and they that have done evil into everlasting fire." The opposers of this doctrine have appealed to antiquity, and have attempted in particular to shelter themselves under the authority of Origen. But that celebrated Father, though a man of extraordinary learning and diligence, was, in many instances, betrayed by his predilection for the Platonic philosophy, and embraced a variety of unscriptural tenets. Lampe, and others, have clearly shown, that the eternity of future punishment was taught by Clement of Rome, Irenæus, Polycarp, and almost all the Fathers both before and after the age of Origen.

Suffice it only to add, that, if the everlasting misery of the unbelieving and impenitent forms a part of the counsel of God, it should not be suppressed by the teachers of the Christian religion. The subject indeed is tremendous, and ought always to be approached with much reverence, solemnity, and affection. But utterly to keep back, or very rarely and slightly to notice a topic, so plainly revealed, so frequently brought forward by Jesus and his Apostles, and so powerfully calculated to inspire every mind with a salutary dread of sin, to rouse the sinner from a state of dangerous security and recommend the Saviour to his acceptance, and to inflame the heart of the Christian with fervent gratitude to Him who, at the expense of his own blood, "delivered us from the wrath to come,"—seems quite incompatible with every just idea of ministerial fidelity.

NOTE LI. Page 297

Witsius, with great propriety, endeavours to repress that presumptuous and vain curiosity, by which men are prompted to determine the circumstances of the last judgment, more particularly than the Scriptures warrant. With regard to the PLACE of judgment, it should suffice us to know, as he observes, that "it is designated by the air and the clouds." Many grave and judicious Theologians have considered themselves authorised to conclude, that, whilst the righteous are assembled in the air, the ungodly will remain upon the earth. "The elect," says Boston, "being caught up together in the clouds, meet the Lord in the air (1 Thes. 4:17.) and so are set on his right hand; and the reprobate left on the earth (Mat. 25:40.) upon the Judge's left hand." † "All wicked men and devils," President Edwards observes, "shall be brought before the judgment-seat of Christ. These shall be gathered to the left hand of Christ, and, as it seems, will still remain upon the earth, and shall not be caught up into the air, as the saints shall be."* But whatever probability may attach to this opinion, Witsius justly condemns the fancies detailed by Cornelius a Lapide respecting the valley of Jehoshaphat as the place of judgment, the extending of that valley, &c. The view which our Author presents of the scope and connexion of the 3d Chapter of Joel, appears to be right. Very probably, indeed, it relates, in the first instance, to certain remarkable deliverances wrought for the ancient Church, as those which took place at the destruction of Sennacherib's army, and the overthrow of Antiochus. But the connexion seems to justify the conclusion, that this prophecy refers ultimately to "some signal display of the Divine vengeance on the enemies of the New Testament Church, not unlike that which happened in the time of Jehoshaphat."

Several observations regarding the valley of Jehoshaphat, similar to those of our Author, may be seen in Dr Wells' Geography of the Old and New Testament.†

NOTE LII. Page 298

Our Author very laudably exposes the notion of Grotius, which has been adopted by Whiston and others, that the Apostles in reality apprehended, that the day of the last judgment was to arrive in their own age. Independently of other considerations, it is truly strange, that men of learning should have hazarded this opinion, after the Apostle Paul's explanation in 2 Thessal. 2. From this passage indeed it is not unreasonable to infer, that some Christians at Thessalonica had rashly considered several expressions in his First Epistle to them, as intended to excite or encourage an expectation of the second coming of Christ before the conclusion of the apostolic age. But Paul shows them plainly, that they had completely mistaken his meaning, and that after a very considerable lapse of time, a grand apostacy was to happen in the Church, prior to the glorious appearing of the Son of man. He reminds them, too, that, when he was yet with them, he had given them intimations relative to that "falling away," the careful recollection of which would have served to obviate the misapprehensions they had latterly entertained. On this subject, see Hammond,* Doddridge,† and particularly Whitby.‡

NOTE LIII. Page 305

It is scarcely necessary to remark, that the terms Spirit and Ghost are entirely synonymous. "The name of Ghost or Gast," says Pearson, "in the ancient Saxon language, signifieth a Spirit."§ "Ghost," says Secker to the same effect, "in the ancient use of our language, denoted the same thing, which Spirit doth now; a substance different from body or matter. Indeed we still use it in expressing the departure of the spirit from the body, which we call giving up the ghost; and in speaking of supposed apparitions of the spirits of persons after their decease."||

Our Author does not stop to inquire into the various senses of the word spirit, when employed with reference to creatures; but confines himself to a short statement of its different acceptations with regard to what is strictly Divine.—The proper meaning of this term, and of the corresponding words in Hebrew and Greek, according to

Parkhurst,** is "air in motion," or, as Witsius expresses it, "a gale of wind." Our Author considers this designation as given to the Spirit, not merely on account of the resemblance that may be traced between his agency on the human soul and the agency of air and wind in the material creation, but also on account of the manner of his eternal and incomprehensible procession. In this view, it may be noticed, he agrees with Dr Owen; who, in his elaborate Treatise on the Holy Spirit, when explaining the import of the term, has the following remark: "As the vital breath of a man has a continual emanation from him, and yet is never separated utterly from his person, or forsaketh him; so doth the Spirit of the Father and the Son proceed from them by a continual divine emanation, still abiding one with them."††

We have no cause to be offended at the figurative language regarding the Divine Persons, which occurs in sacred writ. It becomes us, on the contrary, to adore the goodness of God in "using similitudes," relative to those high points which far surpass our comprehension, but some imperfect knowledge of which is of great value and importance. If the terms Father and Son, which the Scriptures apply to the First and Second Persons in the Godhead, carry an allusion to a certain interesting human relation, we need not think it strange, that the designation by which the Third Person in the Trinity is known, and which seems to refer to the eternal relation subsisting between Him and the other two adorable Persons, alludes to a gale of wind, or rather to the human breath. In both cases, the metaphor falls infinitely short of the sublime topic which it is employed to illustrate: and we must guard against abusing the divine condescension, by entertaining gross, unworthy, and erroneous conceptions, which those figurative expressions were never intended to convey. It is necessary, for example, to fortify our minds against every idea repugnant to the true personality of the Holy Spirit. Were any one to allege, that, because the Father is called a rock, a shield, and a consuming fire, a doubt is cast on the Father's personality; or, that, because the Son is represented as the Word of God, the light of the world, a foundation, and a vine, the personality of the Son is

uncertain,—it would be universally acknowledged, that the allegation is utterly false and absurd. But to draw any conclusion hostile to the real personality of the Holy Spirit from those passages of Scripture in which material and irrational objects, as wind, breath, water, oil, a seal, and a dove, are made use of to illustrate his character and operations, would be equally preposterous.

NOTE LIV. Page 309

The PERSONALITY of the Holy Spirit was denied at an early period of the Christian Church. In the fourth Century, the sect of the Pneumatomachians, or Macedonians, was formed by Macedonius, Bishop of Constantinople, an eminent Semi-arian Doctor, who taught that the Holy Spirit is "a divine energy diffused throughout the universe, and not a person distinct from the Father and the Son." This error was solemnly condemned by the council of Constantinople, in the year 381.*

Our Author establishes the personality of the Spirit by solid arguments concisely expressed, and makes satisfactory replies to the most important objections of adversaries. That personal characters and operations are often attributed to the Spirit in the sacred volume, is quite undeniable; but the enemies of the doctrine very boldly and speciously allege, that this is done merely by the figure of speech called personification. The futility of this exception is briefly pointed out by Witsius; and those who are desirous to see a more minute refutation of it may consult Dr Owen,* and also Dr Wardlaw's comprehensive Sermon on the Divinity and Personality of the Holy Spirit.† The learned reader will find an interesting argument for the personality of the Spirit, in Dr Middleton's Note on Mat. 1:18.‡ from which the following is a short extract.

"It may here be briefly noticed, that in the passages, which, from their ascribing personal acts to the πνευμα ἅγιον, are usually adduced to prove the Personality of the Blessed Spirit, the words πνευμα and πνευμα ἄγεον invariably have the article. See

particularly Mark 1:10. Luke 3:22. John 1:32. Acts 1:16. and 20:28. Ephes. 4:20. Mark 13:11. Acts 10:9. and 28:25. 1 Tim. 4:1. Heb. 3:7. &c. The reason of this is obvious; for there being but one Holy Spirit, he could not be spoken of indefinitely. In Matt. also 28:19. where the Holy Spirit is associated with the Father and the Son, the reading is του ἁγίου πνευματος." The ingenious writer goes on to show, that, where πνευμα means not the Person of the Spirit, but his influence or operation, "a remarkable difference may be observed with respect to the Article." "Though the Holy Spirit himself be but one, his influences and operations may be many: hence πνευμα and πνευμα ἄγιεν are in this sense anarthrous," (i.e. without the article,) "the case of renewed mention or of reference being of course excepted. The expressions of being 'filled with the Holy Ghost,' 'receiving the Holy Ghost,' 'the Holy Ghost being upon one,' &c. justify this observation."

NOTE LV. Page 311

It is perhaps somewhat difficult to determine the precise meaning of that expression in Acts 10:32, "The word of his grace." Henry and Guyse seem inclined to apply it both to Christ and to the Gospel: Beza and Doddridge understand it to mean simply the Gospel: but Gomar § and our Author are quite decided in referring the expression to our Saviour. This interpretation is supported by Witsius, not only here, but also in a separate Dissertation on the Logos.* In that Dissertation, his concluding argument is thus expressed:—

"The succeeding words of the verse cannot be referred to God, without imagining an unnecessary hyperbaton;† and they do not suit the Gospel, which neither builds us up on a foundation, nor gives us an inheritance, but is the instrument by which Christ builds us on himself, and by which the inheritance and the way of obtaining it are revealed. But these expressions are perfectly applicable to Christ; for he builds the church on himself, and preserves it, Matt. 16:18. Heb. 3:3. and also gives us an inheritance, Col. 3:24."

Our Author at the same time shows, that, though it were conceded, that not our Saviour, but the Gospel, is intended by "the word of his grace," the passage where this phrase occurs cannot invalidate his argument from Matt. 28:19, in favour of the personality of the Holy Spirit.

NOTE LVI. Page 324

To the Author's able illustration and defence of the argument for the DIVINITY of the Spirit, founded on Acts 5:3, 4, the following excellent quotation from a living writer, relative to the same topic, may fitly be subjoined.

"The conduct of Ananias was farther aggravated by the dignity of the person against whom it was an offence. Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God. He had indeed lied unto men, in attempting to deceive the Apostles; but Peter means that he had not lied only to them. It is observable that, whereas he affirms in the preceding verse that Ananias had lied to the Holy Ghost, he now charges him with having lied to God. It follows that the Holy Ghost is not a creature, nor a rhetorical name for a divine operation or influence, but a person possessed of proper Divinity. It is to no purpose to object to this inference, that an equivalent phrase is used where it is manifest that the same conclusion cannot be drawn from it. When the Israelites murmured for want of flesh against Moses and Aaron, they are said to have murmured against God, Exod. 16:8. The instances are not parallel. In the latter case, the Israelites were guilty of murmuring against God, because they fretted at Moses and Aaron his ministers; but in the former, Ananias is said not only to have lied to the Holy Ghost because he lied to the Apostles who were inspired by him, but to have lied to God in lying to the Holy Ghost; a charge which would not have been true, unless both designations had belonged to the same person. In this then consisted the greatness of his sin, that it was an insult offered to the Spirit of truth and holiness, speaking and acting in the ambassadors of Christ. Every lie which is told to men is an offence against God, of whose law it is an express violation; but

the proper object of this lie was the Holy Ghost, who was present with the Apostles in a manner totally different from the mode of his presence with any other person."*

Witsius, with great candour, admits that in Scripture "it is no where said expressly, and in so many words, The Holy Spirit is the Most High God." † Yet surely, whoever reads with attention Acts 5:3, 4, must acknowledge, it is not without cause that Dr Owen, when proceeding to illustrate the argument which that passage supplies, says of the Spirit, "He is expressly called God—;"‡ nor is it altogether unjustly, that Mr Jones § combats the assertion of Dr Clarke in his Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity, "that the Person of the Holy Ghost is no where in Scripture expressly styled God." The Divinity, as well as Personality, of the Spirit is proved at large by Dr Owen in the valuable work already referred to. Both these points, too, are ably treated by Bishop Pearson,|| and by Dr Barrow.¶

NOTE LVII. Page 335. line 18

The argument for the Divinity of the Spirit, which our Author derives from the representation given in Scripture of the unpardonable sin, is at once cogent in itself, and very judiciously stated. The Personality, also, of the Spirit, is obviously confirmed by the sense argument. On this point, Theologians have properly noticed the use of the same expression with reference to the Son and Spirit. "When the sin of blasphemy is said to be committed against the Holy Spirit," says Dr Barrow, "just in the same form of speech as against the Son, it is signified that the Holy Spirit is in the same manner a Person as the Son is a Person; otherwise the comparison would not seem to be well framed."**

The subject does not render it necessary to attempt any discussion of the various questions that have been agitated relative to the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.—Many writers, as Gouge,* Pool, and Tillotson,† have thought that our Lord, in Matt. 12 and Mark 3 represents the Pharisees as having at that time actually incurred the

guilt of this crime, by perversely ascribing his miracles to diabolical agency. But Dr Whitby, in an elaborate Appendix to the 12th Chapter of Matthew, has endeavoured to prove that Christ intimates, this sin could not be committed till after the commencement of that dispensation of the Spirit which was to succeed his ascension, and that he only gave the Pharisees a necessary warning against the commission of it. In these views, Whitby has been followed by Guyse[‡] and Doddridge.§

Many have supposed, that it was only during the age of miracles, that men could involve themselves in the guilt of this unpardonable sin against the Spirit. This seems to have been the opinion of Secker.|| The remarks of Pool, on the other side of the question, are worthy of attention.¶ Yet it is much to be regretted that, owing to bodily disorders or strong temptations, serious persons have often exceedingly distressed their minds by the rash and ill-founded conclusion, that they had themselves committed the sin against the Holy Ghost, and that consequently their condition was utterly desperate. Peace be to the man, whose benevolent and judicious efforts are exerted to convince such unhappy individuals of their error, to dispel the clouds which obstruct their peace, and to administer that consolation which the rich promises and gracious invitations of the Gospel are calculated to impart! The reader who is disposed to study this subject may consult, beside the writers already mentioned, Owen's Exposition of the Hebrews, Ch. 6:4–6. 10:26–29, and Maestricht's Theology.**

NOTE LVIII. Page 335. line 26

In the authorised English Translation, the passage quoted by our Author from Hag. 2:4, 5, is thus expressed: "I am with you, saith the LORD of Hosts. According to the word that I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt, so my Spirit remaineth among you." The version given by Witsius, however, is equally agreeable to the original; and it corresponds with the manner in which the words are rendered by Tremellius and Junius, who translate them thus: "I am

with you, saith Jehovah of hosts, with the WORD, by whom I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt, and with my Spirit remaining among you."* By giving the term Word in capital letters, these Translators, without doubt, intended to intimate that they consider it as meaning the Messiah; and on this subject, Junius makes the following remarks: "Whoever interpret this passage otherwise, are obliged either to introduce a most unpleasant confusion[†] into these two verses quite foreign to the scope of the Prophet, or to do violence to the particle which the Prophet here makes use of. For our part, knowing that, with the progress of time, the mysteries of God were more and more clearly discovered to the Prophets and declared to the church, we maintain, agreeably to the obvious meaning of the expression and the scope of the argument, that God the Father promises his presence to the church, with Christ, and with the Holy Spirit."‡

Witsius himself particularly vindicates this interpretation elsewhere. "The Son," says he, "is truly the Word in whom God covenanted with the Israelites when they came out of Egypt. The expression אשר ברת is capable of being translated two ways; either in whom or of whom he covenanted.§ If we choose the first, it will be signified that he is the Word, by whose mediation God covenanted with the Israelites when they came out of Egypt. This indeed is the Angel who appeared to Moses in the bush, who called himself the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Exod. 3:2, 6. and whose good-will is mentioned by Moses as the source of every blessing, Deut. 33:16. But if we prefer the last explanation, the sense will be, that this is the Word whom God by a sure covenant promised to send to his people. The expression, too, may then be compared with Exod. 23:20, and Deut. 18:19, where God promises to send to Israel the Angel, in whom is his name; and to raise up to them a Prophet, in whose mouth he should put his words. Whichever of these two ways of rendering the words be adopted, the expression still refers to the Son of God, by whose mediation, and concerning whom, God spoke of old to the people; and who came to that temple of which Haggai speaks, and remained with his Spirit in the midst of the people."*

NOTE LIX. Page 339

The vital and mystical UNION formed between Christ and believers, is one of the most remarkable and happy effects of the Spirit's agency. Although the Author here directs our attention to the "delightful reciprocation of mutual love," probably he did not intend to represent the mystical union as consisting properly and directly in mutual affection. "There is a moral union," says a venerable writer, "of mutual affection between him and believers; which is more properly communion, John 14:21." † By the mystical union, a most intimate relation is constituted betwixt Christ and the persons of his people. The proper bond of this union, on our part, is faith, that faith which firmly credits the divine testimony respecting him, and receives him with all his blessings. Yet it must not be forgotten that "faith worketh by love," and that a blessed fellowship of love is the never-failing consequence of this real and important, though mysterious, union.

Our Author passes over in silence the various natural and artificial conjunctions from which illustrations of this spiritual union are borrowed in sacred writ, and only takes notice of its resemblance to the union of the Three Persons in the same Divine essence. In some respects, indeed, it widely differs from that incomprehensible and glorious union. The three Divine Persons are eternally and necessarily one; but this relation between Christ and his people, though appointed from eternity, is formed in time, and is the effect of the good pleasure of the divine will. The persons in the godhead, besides, are one essentially, having one common essence or nature; whereas the union betwixt Christ and the faithful is by no means an essential union. It makes no change on his or on their essence; for though they are transformed into his image, and advanced in due season to a seat with him on his throne, they still continue men, and he continues Immanuel, God with us. Our Lord's expression, nevertheless, in John 17:21. appears to intimate that the union subsisting betwixt himself and all his genuine followers, doth, in fact, bear some resemblance, in point of nearness and perpetuity, to the

union between the Father and Him; and that the reciprocal love which the Redeemer and the redeemed exercise towards each other, how far soever from equalling, doth, in reality, resemble the mutual love which the Divine Persons unceasingly entertain for one another.

On the reality, nature, and importance of the union between Christ and believers, the reader may consult Maestricht,* the excellent Letters of Dickinson,† and the lively remarks of M'Ewen.‡

NOTE LX. Page 342

In accordance with the practical tendency and design of all his Dissertations on the Creed, Witsius not merely demonstrates the Personality and Divinity of the Holy Spirit, but points out the vast importance of the Spirit's indwelling in Christians, and of his gracious operations on their hearts and conduct.

The agency of the Divine Spirit in the work of redemption is extensive and diversified. What he did immediately with regard to the Saviour himself, in forming his holy human nature in the womb of the Virgin, furnishing him with every requisite endowment, and resting on him during the whole period of his abasement to animate and strengthen him in the prosecution of his arduous work; and what he has done, and continues to do, with reference even to the external means of salvation, in the inspiration of the Scriptures, in calling, qualifying, and directing Prophets, Apostles, and ordinary teachers, and in the various outward confirmations by which he establishes the truth,—is highly deserving of attention. On these subjects, and other points connected with them, which are not included in the plan of our respected Author in this Dissertation, much solid instruction is contained in Dr Owen's excellent Treatise on the Holy Spirit.§—On the reality and necessity of the influences of the Spirit, and their salutary effects in the regeneration, and the progressive holiness and comfort of the elect, see Owen, M'Laurin,|| and Wardlaw.¶

In the Section to which this Note is annexed, the Author speaks of the Spirit as a COMFORTER, and mentions several ways in which he discharges this office. The Greek word rendered Comforter,** it is well known, generally signifies an Advocate in the classic writers; and the term is, with propriety, thus translated in 1 John 2:1. where it is applied to our Saviour, who pleads the cause of sinners with his Father. In those passages of Christ's consolatory discourse to the disciples (John 14; 15; 16) where it is used with reference to the Holy Spirit, Beza has thought proper to render it Advocatus. Whitby, in a Note on John 16:7. explains it, when applied to the Spirit, as meaning both an Advocate and a Comforter. But Dr Campbell, in an excellent Note on John 14:16. strongly objects to the rendering of the word in that passage an Advocate; and whilst he considers the term Comforter, which our translators have employed, as preferable, he adduces apparently cogent arguments to show, that it should be rendered a Monitor, instructor, or guide.

Our Author states, that the Spirit comforts believers, 1st, as he is the seal of the divine love to them; and 2dly, as he is the earnest of their inheritance. These characters are explained somewhat more fully in his work on the Covenants;* and the remarks of Dr Owen on the same topics may be compared with those of Witsius. He observes, 3dly, that the Spirit comforts the saints by secretly witnessing with their spirits. On this subject also he dwells more particularly in the work just referred to.† It is treated largely by President Dickinson, in a Sermon entitled, the Witness of the Spirit.‡ The celebrated Walker, too, avows his sentiments on this topic in the following terms:§ "Believers have not all of them an equal assurance of their salvation. Though they are all persuaded that he who believeth shall be saved, yet every one cannot say for himself, I am persuaded that I believe, and therefore I shall be saved. Before a person can say this, there must be a farther work of the Spirit of God, even a divine light shining upon our faith and other graces, and making them visible to ourselves. We may derive a good ground of hope|| from a strict and careful examination of our own temper and practice, but cannot arrive at a full assurance, till, as the Apostle expresses it, Romans

8:16, 'the Spirit himself bear witness with our spirits, that we are the sons of God.' But when this divine Witness concurs with his testimony, irradiating his own workmanship within us, and discovering to our own minds such lineaments of the new creature as plainly evidence that we are born of God, then our assurance is full and complete." Even Whitby has the following expressions with regard to the consoling operation of the Spirit: "In respect of the apostles and the faithful, he also did the part of a Comforter, as being sent for their consolation and support in all their troubles, filling their hearts with joy and gladness, and giving them an inward testimony of God's love to them, and an assurance of their future happiness, Rom. 8:15, 16."*—Witsius remarks, 4thly, that the Spirit, in fine, takes hold of believers as if by the hand, and introduces them to the chambers and embraces of the King. But these expressions, it is evident, must not be literally understood. They no doubt refer to that efficacious operation of the Spirit, which accompanies the spiritual light he imparts, and by which the saints are happily determined to receive the heavenly consolations brought near them in Christ and his ordinances. The Scripture itself represents the children of God as led by the Spirit.

It is matter of sincere regret, that the doctrine of the sanctifying and comforting operations of the Holy Spirit has ever been disfigured, or exposed to suspicion and obloquy, by the ridiculous notions and enthusiastical extravagances with which it has sometimes been blended. † No man of intelligence, however, will reject the wheat, because it has been mingled with chaff. Those "hard speeches" and contemptuous sneers relative to the Spirit and his work, in which some professed Christians have indulged, are truly deplorable. Whether men are pleased to believe or disbelieve, to approve or revile the doctrine, the gracious and sovereign agency, as well as divinity and personality of the blessed Spirit, must rank among the most undoubted and essential articles of our holy faith. Let every individual, who feels the least concern respecting his own eternal interest, be solicitous to obtain the presence and saving operations of the Holy Ghost; and let it be the earnest and unceasing prayer of the

pious, that the Spirit of God may be "poured out upon all flesh." It is delightful to think, that the attention of Christians has of late been more than usually directed to the character and agency of this Divine Person, and that they have united to a great extent, in presenting their fervent supplications at the throne of grace for a copious effusion of his influence, to accompany the generous and active exertions now happily employed for the propagation of Christianity throughout the earth.

NOTE LXI. Page 344

The Author's illustration of the impossibility of the true Christian's utterly losing the invaluable gift of the Holy Spirit, clearly shows his belief of the doctrine, that all genuine saints are effectually preserved from total and final apostasy. This topic is discussed at some length in his Economy of the Covenants.* Specious objections have been urged against the final perseverance of believers; but they have all received satisfactory replies.† The conscientious vigilance against apostasy discovered by eminent saints, and the cautions against it contained in the Scriptures, have in vain been referred to by the opposers of this doctrine. The Apostle's expression in 1 Cor. 9:27. seems to be quoted by a distinguished writer on the truth of Christianity as "a full answer out of the mouth of Paul himself," to the evidence which his writings afford in support of immutable election and final perseverance.‡ But Paul's meaning, we presume, has been mistaken. Although he says, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means when I have preached unto others, I myself should be a castaway," his words are far from implying that he lived under continual apprehensions of total apostasy and final reprobation. Paul, on the contrary, maintained the cheering persuasion, that nothing whatever could separate him from the love of God in Christ.* The words intimate merely, that the Apostle knew that the practice of true holiness, and the possession of future happiness, are graciously and inseparably connected; and that there is a connexion equally inseparable between living under the dominion of corrupt propensities on earth, and suffering the

miseries of hell; and that he was aware of the necessity of due self-control as an appointed means of escaping the doom of the impenitently wicked. In this high concern, Paul only conducted himself on principles similar to those which influenced his behaviour in less momentous affairs. While he was a prisoner in the castle of Antonio at Jerusalem, the Lord assured him in a vision by night, that as he had testified of him in Jerusalem, so he should bear witness also at Rome. Yet, when he received information that forty men had bound themselves by a dreadful oath that they should neither eat nor drink till they had killed him, he employed his nephew to communicate the intelligence of this black conspiracy to the chief captain, and used every proper means in his power for the preservation of his life.[†] Thus, in matters relating both to this world and the world to come, Paul, while he firmly relied on God's absolute promises, did not neglect the proper means of safety. But the strong terms in which he expresses his holy vigilance, involve nothing prejudicial to the doctrine of final perseverance.

Nor is a shadow of doubt thrown upon this doctrine by the numerous exhortations to constancy, and cautions against apostasy, contained in the Scriptures. Many of those exhortations and cautions refer to the partial falls and temporary declensions to which true Christians are in reality liable, and against which a regard to the glory of God, as well as their own comfort, should induce them strictly to guard. But even when total apostasy is referred to in such passages, let it be observed, that all these cautions proceed on the principle, that while the decree and promise of God infallibly secure the perseverance of real Christians, there are nevertheless instituted means of perseverance, which must be carefully improved. In the gracious purpose and promise of Jehovah, as has been often observed, the means and the end are inseparably connected. The continued activity of Christians themselves in prosecuting a course of faith and holy obedience, in humble dependence on the powerful aids of the Spirit, is the proper and appointed means of perseverance. Angels in heaven are confirmed in holiness, and assured that they cannot sin; yet it is still their indispensable duty to persist with care in their course of

obedience; and were it possible for them to lay aside this care, that very security would effect their destruction. Our Lord himself discovered a holy solicitude to accomplish the work which the Father gave him to do on the earth. Who will dare to affirm, that the perseverance of Christ was, in any degree, uncertain? His unwearied fidelity was infallibly secured by his personal dignity, by the Father's promises,* and by the Spirit that rested upon him without measure. So certain was his perseverance, that, on the ground of his honourably finishing in due time the work of redemption, thousands were justified and glorified before his coming in the flesh. Yet what activity and zeal did the Saviour discover in offering up prayers and supplications to his Father; in resisting the numerous temptations to which he was exposed from devils and men; in exercising faith and patience; in short, in making every exertion to persevere to the end and finish his work! In like manner, though the final perseverance of real converts is absolutely certain, it is incumbent upon them, after the example of their Lord, to watch and pray, and make a diligent use of every mean of perseverance. And since this is their unquestionable and necessary duty, it is highly proper that they should be earnestly and repeatedly excited to perform it, by such cautions and exhortations as those that have now been referred to.

It is not intended, however, to prosecute the subject further. The replies to objections which have just been given, by way of specimen, are in a great measure due to Edwards.

NOTE LXII. Page 348

The term *Συναγωγή*, synagogue, is sometimes used to signify a public assembly of any description, or the place where any public meeting is held. † Most generally, however, it means a Jewish assembly for worship, or a building where the Jews met for public prayer and the reading of the Scriptures. The greater part of interpreters, in common with our Author, allow, that in one passage, namely, James 2:2. ‡ it is employed to denote a Christian place of worship, or else an assembly of Christians. "The word *συναγωγή*,"

says Dr Macknight, "sometimes denotes an assembly of persons, sometimes the house in which such an assembly is held. Here, your synagogue, does not mean a Jewish synagogue, but the house or room where the Christians assembled for worship. And as the Jews held courts of judicature in their synagogues (See Vitringa De veter. Synag. lib. 3. part. 1. c 11. p. 174. Luke 21:12.) and there also punished offenders by scourging, (Mat. 10:17. Acts 21:11.) it is probable that the first Christians, after their example, held courts for determining civil causes in the places where they assembled for public worship, called here, Your synagogue. For that the apostle speaks not of their assembly, but of the place where their assembly was held, is evident from his mentioning the litigants sitting in a more honourable, or in a less honourable place of the synagogue."*

Hammond and Whitby also consider the Apostle as referring in this passage, not to the worshipping assemblies of Christians, but to meetings for civil judicature. Whitby, however, after assigning several reasons for this opinion, adds; "Yet, because the Jewish Christians had then no distinct churches of their own, much less any with such distinct seats for men of rank as the Jews had (Mat. 23:6.) ... but rather assembled still in the Jewish synagogues, where there was a Beth-din, a house of judgment, ... the assembly here mentioned might be a Jewish synagogue. Moreover, the Jews living among Gentiles retained the jurisdiction over men of their own nation and religion ... and so Jewish Christians might be drawn before their judgment-seats (verse 6.) this being long after forbidden by a law of Honorius and Theodosius."

NOTE LXIII. Page 350. line 4

Although our Author justly states, that no one is excluded from the Christian church on account of the meanness of his rank, and although he would have been entitled to confirm this assertion by referring to the worldly circumstances of the Apostles of Christ, it may be questioned whether the text which he immediately produces, namely, 1 Cor. 1:26, has any reference to the external condition of the

private members of the church. According to our common English version, indeed, it runs thus: "For you see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called." But the reader must observe, that there is an ellipsis in the original, and that the expression are called is a supplement. This supplement, indeed, has been approved of by the generality of expositors. Dr Hammond, for instance, has the following paraphrase on the verse: "You may observe who the men are among you that are wrought on, or converted by the Gospel, not principally the learned politicians, the great or noble families." But Dr Whitby suggests another interpretation of these words;—"Not many noble are either called by, or made use of to propagate, the Gospel:" and Dr Macknight refers the passage exclusively to those who were employed in the propagation of the Gospel. In his translation of the verse he substitutes the expression CALL YOU in place of are called, and subjoins the following Note:

"Verse 26. Call you. These words I have supplied from the first clause of the verse. Our translators have supplied the words are called, which convey a sentiment neither true, nor suitable to the apostle's design. It is not true: for even in Judea, among the chief rulers many believed on him, John 12:42. particularly Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea.... John 4:53. Acts 6:7.... At Ephesus, many who used the arts of magic and divination were called, and who were men of learning, as appears from the number and value of their books which they burned after embracing the Gospel, Acts 19:19. And in such numerous churches as those of Antioch, Thessalonica, Corinth and Rome, it can hardly be doubted that there were disciples in the higher ranks of life. There were brethren even in the emperor's family, Philip 4:22.... And on the other hand, though it were true, That not many wise men, &c. were called, it did not suit the apostle's argument to mention it here. For surely God's not calling many of the wise, &c. joined with his calling the foolish ones of the world to believe, did not put to shame the wise and strong, &c. Whereas, if the discourse is understood of the preachers of the Gospel who were employed to convert the world, all is clear and pertinent. God chose

not the learned, the mighty, and the noble ones of this world to preach the Gospel, but illiterate and weak men, and men of low birth; and by making them successful in reforming mankind, he put to shame the legislators, statesmen, and philosophers among the heathens, and the learned scribes and doctors among the Jews, who never had done any thing to purpose in that matter."*

It is unnecessary to add much to what the Author has said regarding the import of the term ἐκκλησια, Ecclesia. This word is employed, as Schleusner remarks,* to signify any kind of assembly, confused or regular, political or sacred. The observation of Witsius, that it is used in the Septuagint to denote an assembly of Israelites, which was called together to one place from all parts of Judea to celebrate the solemn festivals, might easily be confirmed by producing instances of this application, as in Deut. 4:10. 18:16. Neh. 13:1. In this sense, too, it is used by Stephen, Acts 7:38.† But in the New Testament, it is generally applied to the Christian church, and her assemblies. That it sometimes designates particular communities of Christians, as when we read of the church at Jerusalem, Acts 8:1. and the church at Corinth, 1 Cor. 1:2. is commonly admitted. But whether it is ever employed in holy writ to signify a meeting of the rulers or directors of a religious society, has been the subject of keen dispute. Schleusner mentions collegium presbyterorum, a college of presbyters, as one of its senses, and refers to Walæus. In his note on Mat. 18:17. Dr Campbell affirms, that it would be contrary to all the rules of criticism to suppose that our Lord used this term to denote only a few heads or directors. This opinion, however, has been ably, if not successfully, combated in some learned and ingenious papers, subscribed T. T. which appeared in the Christian Repository.‡

NOTE LXIV. Page 350. line 14

The word Πανηγυρις, Panegyris, occurs nowhere in the New Testament except in Heb. 12:23, where it is employed with beautiful propriety. "This word," says Macknight, "signifies a great concourse of people drawn together from all quarters on some public and joyful

occasion, such as a religious festival; annual games; a great market or fair."§ "Both the words here used," says Dr Owen, "πανηγυρις and ἐκκλησια, are borrowed from the customs of those cities whose government was democratical, especially that of Athens, whose speech was the rule of the Greek language. Πανηγυρις was the solemn assembly of all persons of all sorts belonging unto the city, where they were entertained with spectacles, sacred festivals, solemnities, and laudatory orations. Λογος πανηγυρικός (a panegyric speech) is a commendatory oration. Hence is the word used for any great general assembly, as we here translate it, with respect to praise and joy. In these assemblies no business of state was transacted."||

These remarks of Owen and Macknight correspond with our Author's explanation of the term. The Panathenea, which he specifies as an example, were festivals held at Athens, at certain stated times, in honour of Minerva. On occasion of these festivals, races, gymnastic exercises, and contentions for the prizes for music and poetry, were succeeded by a general procession of persons of each sex and of every age and class, in which the warlike actions attributed to that goddess were celebrated, and the verses of Homer sung. For a particular account of the Panathenea, see Rollin's Ancient History.*

NOTE LXV. Page 358

The Author adverts to the qualities HOLY, CATHOLIC, and CHRISTIAN, as ascribed to the Church. Of these three, HOLY appears to be the character, most anciently mentioned in the Creed. The appellation CATHOLIC, that is, universal, seems however to have been added at a considerably early period. It was contained in the Creed of Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem, who died in the year 386; and in that of Alexander, Bishop of Alexandria. † Augustine, when speaking of the true Church as Catholic or Universal, says; "It is not like the churches of heretics, confined within certain places and provinces, but large by the splendour of one faith, from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof."‡

To the epithets Holy and Catholic, the copy made use of by Witsius seems to have added CHRISTIAN. Of this, accordingly, he gives a short explication in Section 21st; nor having, in a preceding part of the work, made the designation Christians the subject of a whole Dissertation, was it requisite for him to insist largely on this character of the church. In this article of the Creed, considerable diversity of expression has prevailed in the different copies; nor are these three, the only qualities expressed in some of them. In the Creed of Constantinople it is said, "I believe one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church;" and Alexander, Bishop of Alexandria, has thus expressed it,—"the one and only Catholic and Apostolic Church." §

NOTE LXVI. Page 360

Our Author here repeats an observation which he had occasion formerly to make||—that the epithet Catholic was intended to distinguish the Church of Christ from heretics and schismatics, such as the NOVATIANS and the DONATISTS.—The NOVATIANS derive their name from Novation, a presbyter of the church of Rome, a man of uncommon learning and eloquence, but of an austere and rigid character. He strenuously opposed the restoration to fellowship with the Church, of any of those who had apostatized, during the persecution set on foot by Decius. In this he differed from Cornelius, another eminent presbyter of the same church, who was chosen to succeed Fabianus in the see of Rome. About the middle of the third century, Novatian separated himself from the jurisdiction of Cornelius, and became the founder of a new society, which subsisted till the fifth century. In point of doctrine, there was no difference betwixt the Novatians and other Christians. Their chief distinction was their refusing to admit to communion, notwithstanding the most satisfactory appearances of penitence, those who, after baptism, had committed any heinous crime. They assumed the title of Cathari, that is, pure; and obliged all that came over to them from the general body of Christians to submit to a second baptism.*

The DONATISTS were a sect which arose near the beginning of the fourth century. They owe their name to Donatus, Bishop of Casæ Nigræ in Numidia, a vehement opposer of Cæcilianus, Bishop of Carthage; and probably also to another Donatus, the successor of Majorinus, who was chosen Bishop of Carthage in opposition to Cæcilianus, and surnamed the Great. The controversy between the friends and the opponents of Cæcilianus was brought under the consideration of two successive assemblies of Bishops, and ultimately submitted to Constantine the Emperor; by all of whom the Bishop was acquitted, and the Donatists condemned. The Donatists, however, complained loudly of injustice, and were in consequence treated with great severity. Their liberties were restored by Julian, on his accession in the year 362; and towards the conclusion of the fourth century, they had no less than four hundred Bishops. But at the commencement of the fifth century, their strength was considerably weakened by means of the efforts of Augustine, who zealously opposed them in his discourses and writings. They gradually declined till the sixth century, after which no traces of them are to be found. Like the Novatians, they agreed in doctrine with other churches, and distinguished themselves chiefly by an excessive rigour. In their estimation, all churches that held communion with the followers of Cæcilianus were corrupt; and sacred institutions administered among them, void of efficacy. This schism was almost entirely confined to Africa.*

NOTE LXVII. Page 362

To distinguish between the exercise of faith with regard to the Divine Persons, and its exercise with reference to the Church, and the other articles recognised in the concluding part of the Creed, is by no means unnecessary. That supreme and implicit confidence which is due to God, cannot be safely or innocently transferred to any creature, or number of creatures, whatever excellencies they may possess. "In this holy catholic Church," says Archbishop Secker, "our Creed professes belief. But the meaning is not, that we engage to believe all things without exception, of which the majority of the

church, at any time, shall be persuaded: and much less, what the rulers of it, or, it may be, a small part of them, who may please to call themselves the church, shall at any time require: for then we must believe many plain falsehoods, uncertainties without number, and contrary doctrines, as contrary parties prevail.... As believing in God means only believing that there is a God; and believing in the resurrection, means only believing that there shall be a resurrection; so believing in the holy catholic church, means only believing that by our Saviour's appointment there was founded, and through his mercy shall ever continue, a society of persons, of what nation or nations is indifferent, who have faith in his name, and obey his laws: not indeed without being deformed and disfigured, by mixtures both of sin and error; but still, without being destroyed by either."[†]

In this passage, indeed, Secker affirms, that "believing in God means only believing that there is a God." But that our Author understood the expression, "I believe in God," as including much more than a mere persuasion of the existence of the Deity, we have seen at large in his fifth Dissertation. The same remark applies to our believing in Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost; with regard to each of whom as well as the Father, the preposition *ἐἰς* in the Greek, and in in the Latin are distinctly made use of in the Creed.[‡] Witsius considers the careful omission of this particle, when the holy catholic Church falls to be mentioned, as intended to intimate, that our faith is not exercised with respect to the Church, in the same manner as with respect to God. In this opinion he agrees with some of the Fathers, as Augustine and Rufinus. "The Creed obligeth us," says Augustine, "to believe the church, but not in the church; for the church is not God, but the house of God."* Rufinus illustrates the matter more particularly thus; "It is not said, in the holy church, nor in the remission of sins, nor in the resurrection of the body; for if the preposition in had been added, it would have had the same force with what went before. But now in these words where our faith in the Deity is declared, it is said to be in God the Father, and in his Son Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost; but where the Creed speaks of creatures and mysteries, in is not added.... By this preposition,

therefore, the Creator is distinguished from the creatures, and Divine things separated from human."[†]

Bishop Pearson, however, it may be mentioned, attaches no importance to the use or omission of this preposition. "Credo sanctam Ecclesiam," says he, "or Credo in sanctam Ecclesiam, is the same; nor does the particle in, added or subtracted, make any difference." He shows also that this particle was used in connexion with the church, and the Succeeding expressions in the Creed, by Cyril, Cyprian, Jerome, and some other Fathers. ‡ In the English version, too, of this ancient summary of the Christian faith, authorised by the Churches both of England and Scotland, the expression I believe is not repeated immediately before the clause relating to the Church; nor is any solicitude discovered to avoid the phrase I believe in the Church: For we read, "I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy catholic Church," &c. Though no intelligent Christian is in danger of being misled by this mode of expression, the conscientious scrupulosity shown by our Author is entitled to respect.

NOTE LXVIII. Page 368

The history of those faithful men, who, from the first rise of Popery, have successively borne witness to the pure doctrines and institutions of Christ, amidst innumerable perils and sufferings, is particularly useful and interesting. To this branch of ecclesiastical history, the attention of the Christian public has of late years been directed by respectable writers, as Milner, Jones, and several expositors of the book of Revelation, Amongst other authorities of former times, Witsius mentions the Centuriatores of Magdeburgh, whose laborious details are characterized by Mosheim as "an immortal work, which restored to the light of evidence and truth, facts relating to the rise and progress of the Christian church, which had been covered with thick darkness, and corrupted by innumerable fables." The reader will find a succinct account of many important facts relative to Christ's two witnesses, in Bishop Newton's

Dissertations on the Prophecies.* Suffice it to quote here the few following sentences, in which that learned writer explains the names by which they have been known:—

"The true witnesses, and as I may say, the Protestants of this age," namely, the twelfth century, "were the Waldenses and Albigenses, who began to be famous at this time, and being dispersed into various places, were distinguished by various appellations. Their first and proper name seemeth to have been Vallenses, or inhabitants of the valleys; and so saith one of the oldest writers, Ebrard of Bethune, who wrote in the year 1212; 'They call themselves Vallenses, because they abide in the valley of tears,' alluding to their situation in the valleys of Piedmont. They were called Albigenses from Alby, a city in the southern parts of France, where also great numbers of them were situated. They were afterwards denominated Valdenses or Waldenses, from Peter Valdo or Waldo, a rich citizen of Lyons, and a considerable leader of the sect. From Lyons, too, they were called Leonists; and Cathari from the professed purity of their life and doctrine, as others since have had the name of Puritans. As there was a variety of names, so there might be some diversity of opinions among them; but that they were not guilty of Manicheism, and other abominable heresies which have been charged upon them, is certain and evident from all the remains of their creeds, confessions, and writings." The Bishop then proceeds to detail their sentiments, their progress, and "the horrid murders and devastations" that were employed to suppress them.

NOTE LXIX. Page 370. line 3

The Author is quite correct, when he intimates that the expression in 2 Cor. 9:13. rendered in our common English version "your professed subjection to the gospel of Christ," implies more than a verbal profession before men; for it means a real subjection of heart to the Gospel, corresponding to the outward profession that is made. Dr Doddridge, accordingly, renders the phrase, that subjection to the Gospel of Christ which you profess; and subjoins the following Note:

"Ἐπι τῇ ὑποταγῇ τῆς ὁμολογίας ὑμῶν εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, expresses not merely a professed subjection to the Gospel, but a real subjection to the Gospel which was professed; which sense I thought it necessary to preserve by a change in the version."* The subjection of your confession, or profession, is the literal rendering of the original phrase. But, as Beza remarks, this is a Hebraism for that subjection which you profess. The Apostle stimulates the Corinthians to the work of beneficence by the consideration that their necessitous fellow-Christians, whose wants they supplied, would glorify God on their behalf, when they saw this satisfactory proof of their undissembled faith and obedience of the Gospel.

NOTE LXX. Page 370. line 26

It is of importance to consider, that true Christians, notwithstanding that external obscurity and deformity which often conceals the excellence of their character from the carnal eye, are spiritually beautiful; and beyond question, their spiritual beauty consists chiefly in "the hidden man of the heart." Yet the holy principles and dispositions within never fail to produce corresponding effects on the external behaviour; and when the Church represents herself as resembling "the curtains of Solomon," she probably refers to those beauties of holiness which adorned both her heart and her conduct. —"I am black," says she, "but comely; as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon." According to Harmer, "curtains" are to be understood here as synonymous with "tents;" for in the East curtains were not commonly used in beds, and eastern princes often caused elegant tents to be prepared for their residence during the heats of summer. In this verse, then, the Bride acknowledges, that, owing to her swarthy complexion occasioned by the burning rays of the sun, she was black like the tents of Kedar, or of the wild Arabs, whose tents were made of black goat's hair. She asserts, nevertheless, that she is comely as the curtains of Solomon's tents, which were no doubt singularly magnificent. † The Church of Christ is comely through his comeliness put upon her: for she is not only invested with that robe of righteousness which he wrought out for her

justification; but also sanctified in heart and life, and beautified with a rich variety of graces, by the power of his Holy Spirit.

NOTE LXXI. Page 337. line 1

The LUCIFERIANs were the followers of Lucifer, Bishop of Cagliari in Sardinia, a man of prudence, austerity, and courage, who was banished by the Emperor Constantius for having defended the Nicene doctrine concerning the three Persons in the godhead. They scrupulously avoided all fellowship with those Bishops that had declared themselves in favour of the Arians, and even with those who consented to the absolution of such as repented of their error. Their firmness in maintaining the true Divinity of Christ against the oppugners of that essential doctrine was highly laudable; but Jerome deemed it requisite to chastise the overflowings of their zeal.*

NOTE LXXII. Page 377. line 12

The Author's observations relative to the coincidence of the article of the COMMUNION OF SAINTS with the one immediately preceding, appear to be just. It is also an undoubted fact, that several centuries had elapsed before this article was inserted in the Creed. A more particular account of its not appearing in ancient Creeds than that given by Witsius, may be found in Pearson.† It was introduced, as ecclesiastical historians suppose, about the end of the fourth Century; and it is a probable conjecture, that its introduction was occasioned by the deplorable schism of the Donatists, of whom some short notices were given above.‡ This conjecture is expressed in Lord King's History of the Creed.—The same author mentions the following, as some of the methods anciently employed for maintaining mutual fellowship and intercourse between the several churches and congregations of the faithful.§ 1st, Communicatory letters—including the letters which Bishops mutually exchanged, recognising each other in their official capacity; and letters of recommendation given to travelling Christians, which procured their admission to communion with all the churches through which they

passed. These last are called by Tertullian, the communication of peace, the title of brotherhood, and the common mark of hospitality. 2dly, Several practices relating to discipline. Notwithstanding differences in minor points among the churches, a regard to harmony and good order, in general, so far prevailed, that whoever was baptized or ordained in one church, was not required to be re-baptized or re-ordained, when, in providence, he was obliged to become a member of another. Besides, whoever was legally and justly censured by any one church, was not schismatically countenanced and supported by others.

Our Author's illustration of the Communion of Saints, though concise, is pleasant and instructive. Pearson, too, has good remarks on this subject. He adverts to the communion which the saints have with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, with holy angels, with saints on earth, and saints in heaven. The communion which saints have with each other in this world, is no doubt the topic principally intended; and it were much to be wished that the faith of Christians respecting this point increasingly appeared in their brotherly love to one another, and in their readiness to discharge the important duties arising from the intimate and endearing bonds by which they are united. A number of plain, but very judicious and useful hints on this subject are contained in Boston's Discourses on "The Unity of the Body of Christ, and the Duties the Members owe to one another." It was not intended to introduce here any discussion of the keenly agitated questions relative to the extent to which Christians ought to hold church-fellowship with each other, in the various institutions of religion.

NOTE LXXIII. Page 392

Our Author, referring to a remarkable passage in the book of Job, observes, that CHRIST is introduced making intercession in these words, "Deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom." This too is the interpretation which Scultet and Cocceius adopt; nor is it utterly improbable. The expression carries some

appearance of the language of earnest intercession; and Christ might be said to have found a ransom, as he has expiated sin and effected redemption by his own blood. It seems better, however, with Cartwright* and Pool,† to consider these words as spoken by God the Father. "If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to show unto man his uprightness; Then He is gracious unto him," i.e. GOD, whose agency in his dispensations towards man is strikingly described in the whole context, discovers the riches of his grace, "and saith, Deliver—." With peculiar propriety may the Father be represented as saying, "I have found a ransom;" for the propitiation by which we are redeemed is not the invention of men or angels, but the contrivance of God only.* When the Father says, "Deliver," the expression might be understood as intended merely to intimate in general, that he commands deliverance for the perishing sinner. On the supposition that this is an order directed particularly to the "messenger," and that by the messenger we are to understand a human prophet or teacher, the phrase is neither incongruous in itself, nor foreign to scriptural modes of expression; for, in reference to the part which they act as the heralds and instruments of salvation, the ministers of God are often spoken of as saving, or delivering, the souls of men.† But if it be admitted, as assuredly it ought, that the Messiah himself is chiefly and ultimately intended by the Messenger, the Interpreter, one among a thousand; it is with the most evident propriety that the Father is introduced as authorizing Him to dispense the blessings of this great deliverance to the guilty.

See our Author's illustration of Job 33:23, 24. in his Treatise on the Covenants,‡ where he explains the words, "Deliver him from going down to the pit,"—first, as the words of Christ interceding with the Father; and then, as the words of the Father to Christ; and concludes with remarking, that each of these interpretations supplies an excellent sense.

NOTE LXXIV. Page 393

The verse, of which a part is here quoted by the Author, is strikingly expressed—"Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances, that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross." Χειρογραφον, the handwriting, literally signifies a schedule, or note under a man's hand, by which he acknowledges a debt. When the Apostle speaks of Christ's blotting out the handwriting, taking it out of the way, and nailing it to his cross, he alludes, by a beautiful gradation, to the various ways of cancelling a debt-bond; one of which was striking a nail through it on a post in a public place. "The handwriting in ordinances" refers particularly to the ceremonial law. According to some interpreters, this handwriting is spoken of as having been "against us, and contrary to us," merely as it excluded the Gentiles from the privileges of the Jews, "being a middle-wall of partition, hindering them from coming to God, and putting an enmity between them and God's people, which Christ hath taken away by abolishing and dissolving the obligation of it, and admitting the Gentiles fellow-heirs of the same promises and blessings with the Jews, without it."* It is obvious, however, that the handwriting was ὑπεναντιον, ex parte contrarium, in some respect contrary, to the Jews themselves; for, though its rites prefigured the great atonement, they also implied a public confession, on the part of the worshippers, of their own impurity and guilt. On this see Calvin,† Beza,‡ and Witsius.§ Our blessed Lord, by that atonement which he finished on the cross, made full payment of the debt, and thus cancelled the handwriting.

Let it be remarked further, that, according to Guyse, the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, includes the whole law of Moses as a covenant, though with a primary respect to the ceremonial law. See the judicious Note of that writer, on the place. Compare also Macknight on this verse, Notes 2, 3, 4.

NOTE LXXV. Page 395

It is not without ground that our Author represents the blessing of FORGIVENESS as distinguished by different steps or periods.|| The

reader may compare what he says here on this subject, with his more ample statement in another work.¶

It would be easy to show that Justification, of which forgiveness is an essential part, is a benefit which the elect were from all eternity appointed to obtain—that they were justified virtually in Christ as their Representative, when he rose from the dead—that, however, their personal and actual justification takes place only at the moment of their being vitally united to Christ by faith—that they are actually justified once for all, and can never fall again into a state of condemnation—that the more they are blessed with the influences of the Comforter, the Spirit of grace, and the more they abound in the work of faith and the labours of love, their justification becomes the more manifest to themselves, and in some degree to others—and that, in the day of judgment, it will be publicly declared before an assembled world. Much light is cast on this subject by Beart, in his *Vindication of the Eternal Law and Everlasting Gospel*.**

Some worthy Divines have held the notion of a First justification by faith, and a Second or Secondary justification by holy obedience. Something like this seems to have been maintained even by Witsius, which may perhaps be gathered from his speaking elsewhere in this treatise of the First justification of believers,* and is still more evident from a passage in his work on the Covenants.† But whatever solicitude may be shown by our Author and other evangelical Theologians, who have adopted this distinction, to explain it in a manner consistent with the pure Gospel, it seems far more scriptural and correct, to consider the justification of believers as one, while its consequences and manifestations are various.‡

The well-known distinction betwixt judicial and fatherly forgiveness, is by no means arbitrary;§ nor is it unscriptural to affirm, that the forgiveness which those who have been justified freely by the grace of God do subsequently require, is not strictly the former, but the latter. Justification, properly so called, is perfected at once; for whilst, to all those who are clothed with the righteousness of Christ, past sins are

formally pardoned, security is given them against the imputation of their future sins. On this subject, even Fuller, that evangelical and admirable writer, appears to have expressed himself somewhat improperly. A conscientious zeal against Antinomian perversions has induced him, in one of his excellent sermons on Justification, to infringe on the undoubted privilege of the justified believer, by representing him as still liable to have his sins laid to his charge.|| The contrary doctrine is well stated, and satisfactorily proved and vindicated, by an Author referred to above.¶ "Justification," says Dr Owen, "is at once complete, in the imputation of a perfect righteousness, the grant of a right and title unto the heavenly inheritance, the actual pardon of all past sins, and the virtual pardon of future sins." "Future sins," says the same writer, "are not so pardoned as that when they are committed they should be no sins, which cannot be, unless the commanding power of the law be abrogated. But their respect unto the curse of the law, or their power to oblige the justified person thereunto, is taken away."**

On the import of Rev. 2:17, the reader may consult Doddridge.††

NOTE LXXVI. Page 399

The description given by our Author of the right method of proceeding, when by faith we receive the forgiveness of sins, seems rather complicated, and apt to be misunderstood. Every believing sinner, indeed, has been roused to serious consideration and unfeigned solicitude respecting his eternal interest, and deeply impressed with a sense of the number and fearful demerit of his sins. The forgiving mercy of God, also, has a powerful effect on his heart and practice; and leads him, in particular, to resolve to "watch against all iniquity, and be prepared to forgive the offences done him by his neighbour." But we must not entertain the idea, that a certain regular series or methodical set of religious meditations and exercises is an indispensable preparation for the enjoyment of pardon; nor ought we to rely on our resolutions of future vigilance, or our promptitude to forgive the offences done to ourselves, as at all

the ground, or proper condition of forgiveness. Conscious of the utter insufficiency of his own self-abasements, prayers, tears, resolutions, or good inclinations and performances, to atone in any degree for the least of his iniquities, the believer receives a free forgiveness through the blood of Christ.

On this subject, it seems proper to distinguish between the manner in which a judicial, and a fatherly, pardon, is given. When God, in the capacity of a Judge, pardons a sinner at the first moment of his truly believing in Jesus, he pardons him in the most free and unconditional manner. But whilst his grace and mercy are also richly displayed in forgiving, as a Father, the errors and backslidings of his justified and adopted children, this fatherly forgiveness, in general, is not vouchsafed, without suitable preparation on their part for receiving and improving the privilege. They are required to make ingenuous confessions of their offences, to offer up fervent supplications for the removal of their heavenly Father's displeasure and the restoration of his paternal smiles, to form humble resolutions of future vigilance, and to forgive, from the heart, the injuries which they have received from men. To this fatherly forgiveness, our Lord's remarkable expressions in Mat. 6:14, 15. most probably refer; and perhaps they relate also to the declaration of forgiveness in the great day.—It is possible, that our Author, in his account of the right method of proceeding, had his eye chiefly on what is termed fatherly forgiveness.

The learned reader may, with advantage, compare this Dissertation on the forgiveness of sins, with the Author's Dissertation on the Fifth Petition of our Lord's Prayer,* where he illustrates the duty of forgiving our debtors, and, in a most valuable and pathetic improvement, points out the awful danger of unpardoned guilt, describes the felicity included in the remission of sins, and addresses an earnest exhortation to the secure.

The attentive reader will observe, that the 27th verse of JOB 33 is not translated here, exactly in the same way as in the authorized English version. According to Tremellius and Junius, whose Latin is adopted by Witsius, the 27th and 28th verses should be read thus: "He looketh upon men, and saith, I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not. He hath delivered my soul from going into the pit, and my life shall see the light" If this interpretation be preferred, the person, whose dangerous affliction, and merciful deliverance, are described in the preceding verses, is here represented as looking upon men, his relatives and others around him, confessing to them his own perverseness and folly, and at the same time celebrating the goodness of God in granting deliverance.

But whatever may be alleged in favour of this sense of these verses, the interpretation which our translators have adopted, seems preferable. "He," namely God, "looketh upon men," attentively observes their hearts, language and conduct; "and if any say, I have sinned and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not, He," that is, God, "will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light." See Pool's Synopsis, and Annotations, on the place.

NOTE LXXVIII. Page 411

THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY is an article distinctly expressed in the most ancient copies of the Creed, which have reached our times. The vigorous opposition made to this doctrine, both by Pagans and Heretics, as well as its intrinsic importance and utility, served to fix on it the eager attention of Christians, and to inflame their zeal in its defence.†

The precise meaning of Mat. 22:31, 32. and the force of the argument for the resurrection, founded on that passage, would form a proper subject of critical inquiry. But minute discussions are, now in particular, quite incompatible with the limits of these Notes. Let it

suffice, therefore, to state, that Whitby, on the passage, illustrates this argument particularly, and is at great pains to prove that the resurrection is directly intended; while Dr Campbell takes a quite different view of the verses. The expression rendered in our English Bible, Which say that there is no resurrection,* is translated by this eminent Critic, Who say that there is no future life; and he vindicates this version in a very ingenious Note.

NOTE LXXIX. Page 412

Our Author appeals, without scruple, to the profession of JOB, ch. 19:25–27. as a signal proof of the resurrection of the body. When he speaks of having elsewhere discussed this argument at greater length, he seems to refer to his Economy of the Covenants.† Several different views which the critics have taken of the sense of this contested passage, were briefly stated in a preceding Note.‡ Whoever wishes to prosecute the subject, may consult the Critical Dissertation of Peters, and other writers.—Dr Magee, in two of his Explanatory Dissertations,§ subjoined to his Discourses on the Atonement, has favoured his readers with a comprehensive general account of the history, antiquity, and book, of Job.

NOTE LXXX. Page 414

Whether the beautiful passage quoted from ISAIAH, chap. 26:19, ought to be viewed as referring directly to the blessed resurrection of the saints at the last day, or as a metaphorical description of the restoration of the church from a depressed to a prosperous state, it is rest unaptly brought forward by the Author. Bishop Lowth, in his Note on this verse, makes the following pertinent remarks.

"The deliverance of the people of God from a state of the lowest depression, is explained by images taken from the Resurrection of the dead. In the same manner the Prophet Ezekiel represents the restoration of the Jewish nation from a state of utter dissolution, by the restoring of the dry bones to life, exhibited to him in a vision,

chap. 37 which is directly thus applied and explained, ver. 11–13. And this deliverance is expressed with a manifest opposition to what is here said above, ver. 14, of the great lords and tyrants, under whom they had groaned;

'They are dead, they shall not live;

'They are deceased tyrants, they shall not rise:'

that they should be destroyed utterly, and should never be restored to their former power and glory. It appears from hence, that the doctrine of the Resurrection of the dead was at that time a popular and common doctrine: for an image which is assumed in order to express or represent any thing in the way of allegory or metaphor, whether poetical or prophetic, must be an image commonly known and understood; otherwise it will not answer the purpose for which it is assumed."

The Bishop, it may be noted, translates the last part of ver. 19. thus; "But the earth shall cast forth, as an abortion, the deceased tyrants;" which nearly coincides with the second rendering proposed by Witsius. The disputed word רפאים, Rephaim, seems to be used in Scripture in at least three acceptations, giants, ghosts, the ghosts of the wicked. In this chapter it is rendered tyrants by JOHN KNOX,* as well as by the Bishop of London. But on the etymology and meaning of this term, the learned reader may consult Leigh, Parkhurst, and Dr Magee.†

NOTE LXXXI. Page 424

Our Author does not hesitate to represent the saints as receiving in the world to come the REWARDS of those works of faith and exercises of holiness which they performed on the earth. These rewards, indeed, are wholly of grace; but they are justly styled rewards,—because they are conferred after the labours of their pilgrimage are ended,—because a certain, though gracious, connexion is established between a holy life and a happy eternity—

because the joys of immortality will more than compensate for all the toils and sacrifices attending the Christian race—and because there will be a correspondence and proportion, both in kind and degree, betwixt what the believer sows here and what he reaps hereafter. Some writers, as Dr Gill, and Mr Gib, † strenuously oppose the doctrine of different degrees of future glory proportioned to the different measures of holiness and usefulness which, through grace, have been attained in this world. But see our Author's defence of this doctrine in his *Economy of the Covenants*.* See also Fuller's Sermon on the Christian Doctrine of Rewards, and Russell's Letters.

NOTE LXXXII. Page 433

The expression made use of in the Creed, it must be observed, is σαρκος ἀνάστασιν, *carnis resurrectionem*, † which literally signifies **THE RESURRECTION OF THE FLESH**. The modern French translation, accordingly, makes it *La resurrection de la chair*. The author of the *Critical History of the Creed* expresses his wonder that our English translators did not render σαρκος *flesh*, but employed the more general term *body*. There is a particular force and emphasis, he remarks, in the word *flesh*. Whereas some admitted the resurrection, but denied the reviviscence of the same body, it was in opposition to this notion, and to prevent equivocating evasions on the part of its abettors, that this article was expressed by the resurrection σαρκος, of the *flesh*, and not σωματος, of the *body*. Rufinus, who was accused of this error, alleged, in his own vindication, that to remove all suspicion of his being tainted with it, he had frequently affirmed, that not merely the body, but the *flesh*, should rise again. From the writings of the Fathers it appears, that they generally understood that by this form of expression they distinctly declared their belief, that there will be a resurrection of the same body which we now have—the same with regard to its substance, though very different with regard to its qualities.‡

Our Author's comments on the Apostle's expressions in 1 Cor. 6:13, 14. and 15:42–49. seem correct and instructive. It might be useful to

compare them with the remarks of Beza, Pareus, Doddridge, and other expositors. Beza has a very excellent annotation on these words; "It is sown an animal body, it is raised a spiritual body." Macknight, in the middle of a long note on this subject,§ has injured the truth by the unwarrantable concession; "that, if the glorified body of the saints is to have such members and organs of sensation as their new state requires, and if these members are to be of similar form and use with the members and organs of our present body, it will really be the same body, whether its flesh be made of the matter which composed the body laid in the grave, or of any other matter." See an able discussion of this topic in a Sermon on the Resurrection of the dead, lately published.* The writer of that discourse, indeed, in illustrating the spirituality of the glorified body of the saints, may possibly have indulged his imagination somewhat to excess; but, in other respects, he has done great justice to the subject, and treated it in a manner equally scriptural and rational.

NOTE LXXXIII. Page 439

The Author's opinion relative to MICHAEL has been already adverted to.† In applying Dan. 12:2. to the general resurrection of the bodies of men in the great day, he is certainly correct. To his conclusive reasoning on this point here, he adds some further arguments in his Economy of the Covenants. ‡ The same interpretation of the verse, too, is decidedly embraced, and concisely supported, by Bishop Newton in his Dissertations on the Prophecies.§

NOTE LXXXIV. Page 455. line 1

With much reason, doth our candid but conscientious Author characterize the CANONIZATIONS of the Pope as superstitious and idolatrous. To convince every reader of the propriety of these epithets, it may not be improper to give the following authentic instance, as related in Beausobre's History of the Reformation.||

The subject of this canonization was FRANCIS (MARTOLILLA) DE PAULE, (that is, of Paula, a small town in Calabria,) who was the Founder of the religious Society of the Minims, and celebrated for his pretended miracles. At the solicitation of Francis I. he was canonized by Pope Leo X. on the 1st of May 1519, about twelve years after his death. The decree was solemnly pronounced by the Pope, in the presence of his Cardinals, in the following terms.

"To the honour of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for the exaltation of the Catholic faith, for the progress of the Christian religion, and for the comfort and advancement of the order of Minims, under the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, of the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, and of our own, we decree and determine, by the advice and with the consent of our brethren the Cardinals, that FRANCIS DE PAULE, of blessed memory, has been received among the Blessed of the heavenly Jerusalem, and is possessed of the eternal glory which has been given him, and that he ought to be placed in the rank of Saints, as we do place him from this day; ordering that he be hereafter worshipped in public and private, and that his festival be celebrated by the universal Church on the 2d of April, (the day of his death,) and declaring that believers may implore his intercession and hope for it, he being worthy that all the honours should be paid to him that are due to saints."

This decree having been thus pronounced, Te Deum was sung: a Cardinal began the invocation of the new Saint, and the Pope addressed this prayer to God:

"We render to thee, O Lord, the obedience that is due unto thee; we pray thee, by the intercession of the Blessed Francis de Paule, to increase thy gifts upon us, and to preserve us from all evil, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Was not this, in reality, a superstitious and idolatrous canonization? Could such canonization, or the consequent acts of idolatry, be regarded by them who have indeed been numbered among the

Blessed in the heavenly Jerusalem with any other emotions than those of indignation or of pity?* Is any real dignity conferred by such idolatrous and impious, though solemn, decrees? When, in consequence of these decrees, we ascribe the title of Saints to Apostles, Evangelists, Martyrs, and Fathers, do we show an acceptable or becoming mark of respect for their memory? Those Protestants who choose to speak of Saint Peter, Saint Paul, Saint Luke, Saint Augustine, &c.† are surely far from intending to express their approbation of these canonizations. Yet, if Popish errors are renounced, propriety and consistency seem to require the abandonment of Popish modes of expression, to which those errors gave rise. So fascinating, however, is the power of custom, that the members of some Reformed Churches are apt to suppose, that the venerable Apostles, and other distinguished Christians who have been canonized, are disrespectfully treated, unless, at almost every turn, the appellation of Saint be prefixed to their names. These obsequious Protestants, indeed, do not expect to hear of Saint Abraham, Saint Moses, Saint Isaiah.—But their ears must be gratified with the constant repetition of Saint Peter, Saint Matthew, &c. Whence this marked difference betwixt the worthies of the Old Testament, and those of the New? Does not this gratuitous distinction carry the appearance either of a culpable and servile deference for the authority and decrees of the Pope, or of a tame and inconsiderate acquiescence in long established phraseology, received by tradition from the fathers?

NOTE LXXXV. Page 455. line 13

Our Author's interpretation of that difficult passage which we have in REV. 20:4–6. appears, on the whole, to be just; and he seems to make good his position, that there is to be no literal resurrection of Apostles, martyrs, or other saints, prior to the last day. The notion of a literal resurrection is held by some respectable modern writers, as Mede and Bishop Newton. But the great majority of expositors explain the passage in a manner similar to Witsius. See Durkam's Lectures on Rev. 20 and Whitby's Treatise on the Millennium. See

also Dr Bryce Johnston's Commentary on the Revelation, Mr Culbertson's Lectures, and Fraser of Kirkhill's Key to the Prophecies. On Rev. 20:4. Dr Johnston has the following expressions: "Some have understood these words as a prediction that the martyrs, who were slain under heathen and papal Rome, shall be raised to life from their graves at the commencement of the Millennium, and shall personally reign with Christ on earth for a thousand years. Even if the language of this passage had been much stronger in favour of a real resurrection of the martyrs at that time than it is, there are so many unanswerable objections against such a resurrection at that time, that it would not be easy to make candid and intelligent men to understand the words in that sense, if they could possibly bear any other."* Culbertson states particularly a number of strong objections against the doctrine of a literal resurrection of saints at that time.† Fraser, after an interesting account of the different opinions entertained even by those who have agreed in contending for a literal resurrection, proves that the first resurrection is a figurative expression; and judiciously replies to the objections to this interpretation, which have been founded on several terms in verse 5th.‡

Since the Author did not regard it as his "present business" to discuss the commencement and termination of the thousand years during which Satan is to be bound and the saints are to live and reign with Christ, or of the different periods of which that term may be composed, the Translator will not be expected gratuitously to undertake the investigation, far less the decision, of matters which have been so long and so keenly disputed. The most important point relating to the duration of the Millennium, on which diversity of sentiment now prevails, is no doubt the question; Whether the thousand years are to be understood in a civil or prophetic sense? i.e. Whether that glorious period is to last only for a thousand years in the usual and proper sense of the expression, or to continue for three hundred and sixty thousand, or perhaps three hundred and sixty-five thousand years? The first sense is preferred by Bishop Newton and Dr Johnston, as well as by Guyse and Doddridge. But

the last interpretation, though comparatively new, and somewhat romantic in its appearance, has been adopted by some grave and respectable authors. It is strenuously defended, for example, by Mr Culbertson;* and it is more than twenty years since an aged and eminent Minister of the Gospel in Nova Scotia ably contended for the same interpretation, in the first of three lively papers on the Millennium, which appeared in a periodical work.† Suffice it now only to remark, that this topic merits further inquiry; and that, whatever may be the speciousness or the force of the arguments which have been adduced in favour of the prophetic sense, they seem scarcely sufficient finally to decide a question of such magnitude, or to command an unwavering assent.

NOTE LXXXVI. Page 465

That the souls of men not only continue after death, but live, understand, and feel, is sufficiently proved by the Author in this Dissertation, sections 67–70. But he treats this important subject more fully in his work on the Covenants.‡ The reader might also consult Seeker,§ and Dr Walts.|| The beautiful papers of Addison on the Immortality of the soul are well known.¶

NOTE LXXXVII. Page 466

What the Author here says respecting the felicity to which the righteous are admitted immediately after death, is an abridgment of his remarks in the Treatise just mentioned.**

Archbishop Seeker's refutation of the doctrine of PURGATORY, in his Lectures on the Creed,* is so concise, as well as instructive, that it may be right to introduce it here.—"As to the pretence of Purgatory," says that learned writer, "where the greatest part of good persons are to suffer grievous temporal punishments, after death, for their sins, though the eternal punishment is remitted: it hath no ground in the least. Our Saviour's saying, 'that the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven in this world, or that which is to come,'†

is merely saying, it shall not be forgiven at all, but punished both here and hereafter. 'The prison, out of which,' he saith, the person who agrees not with his brother, 'shall not come till he hath paid the last farthing;'‡ is either a literal prison of this world, or the prison of hell in the next, out of which the contentious and uncharitable shall never come, for they can never pay the last farthing. 'The spirits in prison,' to whom St Peter saith, 'Christ by his Spirit preached,' he saith also, were 'the disobedient in the days of Noah,'§ with whom 'his Spirit strove,'|| whilst they were on this earth: and who for their disobedience were sent, not to purgatory, but to a worse confinement. When St Paul bids men 'take heed how they build on the foundation' of Christianity; adding, 'that the fire shall try every man's work; and if any man's work shall be burnt, he shall suffer loss; but still shall be saved, yet so as by fire;'¶ he means, that persons must not mix doctrines of their own invention with the gospel of Christ, which in this instance, amongst others, those of the church of Rome have done: for when 'the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire,'** to judge the world, such notions will not stand the trial; they that hold them will be losers by them; and though still they may be saved, it will be with difficulty and danger; as a person escapes, when his house is burning. When, lastly, many of the ancient Christians prayed for the dead; besides that they had no warrant for so doing, it was only for the completion of their happiness, whom they apprehended to be already in paradise: it was for the apostles, saints, and martyrs; for the blessed virgin herself: whom they certainly did not think to be in purgatory. And observe, if they prayed for them, they did not pray to them. Purgatory, then, is nothing but an imaginary place, invented by men, to give bad persons hope, and good persons dread of being put into it; that they may get what they can from both, by pretending to deliver them out of it again. Fear not therefore such vain terrors."

NOTE LXXXVIII. Page 474

It is beyond question one of the brightest glories and most endearing recommendations of the Christian revelation, that it firmly

establishes the doctrine of "life and immortality," and places it in a perspicuous and most interesting point of view. Witsius justly affirms, that the wisest among the heathen were not only ignorant of the resurrection of the body, but also, that they "rather supposed and conjectured, than knew, something about the subsistence of the soul, after the termination of the present life." The immortality of the soul was not taught by Confucius, or Aristotle; nor was it included amongst the tenets of the Stoics. The insufficiency of the light of nature to satisfy the serious inquirer with regard to this momentous topic, strikingly appears from the vacillation and uncertainty, which, notwithstanding all the probable arguments they were able to collect, the most eminent and judicious philosophers who favoured the doctrine, still discovered. Socrates, for example, concluded his apology to his judges with these remarkable words: "It is now time to depart hence. I am going to die; you shall continue to live: but which of us shall be in a better state, is unknown to all but God." Plutarch speaks of "the fabulous hope of immortality;" and Cicero, after long reasoning on the immortality of the soul, has the following expression: "Which of these opinions is true, is certainly known only to the gods: which of them is the more probable, is a hard question."*

Numerous errors and absurdities, besides, were blended with the doctrine of immortality, by those ancient philosophers, who professed to teach it. They almost universally maintained the pre-existence of the soul, as the ground of its deathless nature. Some of them affirmed that the spirit of man is a portion of the Divine essence, and on that account immortal; whilst the irrational and degrading tenet of transmigration extensively prevailed. Future happiness, too, was considered as nearly the exclusive privilege of those few individuals who are exalted to high distinction in this world, or whose minds have been cultivated by philosophy and science. The rewards of Elysium were regarded as a prize too great for the vulgar and illiterate; and whether a felicity strictly eternal was thought to be prepared even for the noblest or the most enlightened and refined, seems at least exceedingly doubtful. Their views, in fine, of future misery, were extremely incorrect. Even those who assigned

a future state of rewards to the virtuous, appear to have considered the doctrine of future punishment as little better than a fable, engendered by superstitious fears, embellished by the luxuriant fancies of the poets, and supported for political purposes by legislators and judges. It is by the Scriptures alone that the whole doctrine of a coming and eternal world, in which the righteous are for ever happy, and the wicked for ever miserable, is justly stated, incontestably confirmed, and rendered truly efficacious for impressing the mind and influencing the conduct. The death, resurrection, and ascension of the Son of God in human nature, have dispelled the darkness which covered the tomb; and exhibited the realities of a future state of existence, both as to soul and body, in a light equally satisfactory to the judgment and consoling to the heart. On this subject, see the copious and forcible statements of the laborious and intelligent Leland.*

NOTE LXXXIX. Page 478

Our Lord's solemn declaration in MAT. 5:20. respecting a better righteousness than that of the Scribes and Pharisees, has been understood by some interpreters as referring to the necessity of an interest in that justifying righteousness, which Christ, as the Surety of his people, wrought out by his obedience unto death. Dr Guyse, for instance, suggests this interpretation in his Paraphrase on the place, and subjoins the following Note: "As it was prophesied that the Messiah should make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness, (Dan. 9:24.); and our Saviour, in the two next foregoing verses but one, had spoken of his coming to fulfil the law and the prophets; I do not see why what he here says about the righteousness which exceeds that of the Scribes and Pharisees, may not refer back to all those verses, and so take in the righteousness of justification as well as of sanctification, to give a hint of what was afterwards to be more fully explained of his being the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth; and the righteousness of God being by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe, Rom. 3:22. 10:4.

There is some force in these remarks of the evangelical Guyse. But probably, according to our venerable Author's interpretation, the verse more immediately relates to that personal righteousness, which is the undoubted characteristic of all those, who by faith are "admitted to the blessings of the kingdom of grace here, or of the kingdom of glory hereafter." Witsius indeed does not represent our own righteousness, however superior it may be to that partial and external righteousness which was taught and practised by the Scribes and Pharisees, as in any degree the ground of acceptance, or the proper condition of eternal life. In the 89th Section, he states expressly that the heavenly inheritance is the subject of a free promise, and the gift of God, and that our title to eternal life is founded not upon our own works, but upon the satisfaction of Christ. Yet he justly considered it proper earnestly to inculcate the cultivation of true and distinguished holiness, as a necessary preparation for the everlasting kingdom.

NOTE XC. Page 483

In the common English version of PSALM 17:14. we read;—"They are full of children, and leave the rest of their substance to their babes." According to our Author, the sense is,—"Whose children are filled, and leave the rest of their substance (their excellency) to their babes." The original expression is susceptible of either interpretation; and which of the two is the more correct, it may be difficult, and it is not of great importance, to determine. Witsius has here copied the Latin of Tremellius and Junius.* Our translators have followed the Septuagint.† Yet they have mentioned the other sense, in the margin, in these words; their children are full: on which Pool has the following comment; "Their children are filled or satisfied, as well as their parents. There is abundantly enough both for them and for their children, and to spare for their children's children."‡

MONERGISM BOOKS

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