R1b

53

Erasm. 14137

THE MORAL AND RELIGIOUS MISCELLANY;

OR,

SIXTY-ONE APHORETICAL ESSAYS,

ON SOME OF THE MOST IMPORTANT CHRISTIAN DOCTRINES AND VIRTUES.

BY HUGH KNOX, D. D.
IN ST. CROIX.

——— hæc ego mecum
Compressis agito labris, ubi quid datur oti
Illudo chartis. HOR.

Quicquid præcipies, esto brevis, ut cito dicta
Percipiant animi dociles, teneantque fideles. HOR. Ars Poet.

Scribentem juvat ipse favor, minuitque laborem,
Cumque suo crescens pectore fervet opus. OVID.

NEW-YORK:
PRINTED BY HODGE AND SHOBER.
M. DCC. LXXV.

52205

THE

PREFACE.

THE following little Eſſays, were drawn up many years ago, partly as helps to moral and divine conference, in a religious ſociety, and partly as the reſult of ſuch conferences. They are generally the reſult of free, and pretty enlarged and comprehenſive meditations on the ſubjects they treat of, and conſiſt of ſuch thoughts as occurred firſt and moſt obviouſly to the open mind, in its free and unfettered diſcurſions on ſaid ſubjects ;---and they were meant meerly as hints to ſtart the converſation, and to keep it alive, and to the buſineſs in hand, that it might not deviate into wild and impertinent digreſſions.

THIS will account for the Nature and Form of the Eſſays, which are very ſingular and uncommon. They conſiſt of a number of looſe, general, and often, unconnected Aphoriſms, or general Maxims, commonly cloſed by ſome practical corollaries or inferences of the greateſt moment.

THE

THE primitive design of them, was to convey the most ample, general instruction to the mind on every subject treated of; yet so, as that instruction might exhaust the subject in Miniature, as it were, or, in the narrowest compass consistent with perspicuity,---and that the method of explaining the subjects, should be calculated, as much as possible, for affecting the heart by proper motives, and stirring up men to the diligent practice of the virtues and duties explained. And I hope the judicious and intelligent Christian reader will find, upon an attentive perusal of the Essays themselves, that they are not ill adapted to this purpose; excepting, perhaps, a few, which are more superficial than the rest.

IT had been easy to have filled up these Skeletons of Doctrine, and lengthened them out to the ordinary size of pulpit discourses. In this form they would have had, doubtless, many advantages which they are now necessarily deprived of: In this form, they would have admitted of Connexion, Argumentation, Illustration, Persuasion, Pathos,

and

and all the Graces and Beauties of fine Compoſition; whereas, their preſent form neceſſarily precludes theſe advantages.

But on the other hand, in ſuch a form, they would have been very volumnious and expenſive: Few would have purchaſed them, and perhaps, fewer read them. The preſent volatile, irreligious taſte, nauſeates every thing prolix in divinity. Five or ſix pages of a religious book is as much as we can, in conſcience expect, that a modern fine Gentleman or Lady ſhould read at one ſitting. The taſte of the times is, therefore, purpoſely conſulted in the ſhortneſs of theſe Eſſays.

A person of this ſqueamiſh diſpoſition, may here read, in eight or ten minutes, ſome of the moſt important things which can be ſaid on each of theſe ſubjects, without breaking off abruptly, in the midſt of the ſenſe, and loſing the whole chain of connexion.

Besides, if the Eſſays are tolerably executed on this plan, the doctrinal aphoriſms contained in them, ſhould be ſo plain and ſelf-evident, as to ſupercede the neceſſity of arguments and illuſtrations; the practical

tical corollaries ſhould flow ſpontaneouſly and conſequentially from theſe aphoriſms, and the whole ſhould be demonſtratively built upon the ſcriptures referred to in the margin.

After having humbly recommended theſe imperfect Eſſays to the public candour and indulgence, and implored the bleſſing of God upon them, for the general good; if I might preſume to offer my advice to my fellow-creatures concerning the beſt way of uſing them,---it would be as follows: That they would read them, in their private and devout retirements, as Hints for Meditation on theſe important ſubjects, laying their minds open, without prejudice, to the influence of divine truth, and earneſtly imploring the Father of lights to write theſe truths and virtues with ſun-beams upon their underſtandings; convey them warm to their hearts, and make them powerfully operative and influential on all the active powers and faculties of their nature.

I have added the Sermons as ſome compenſation to thoſe who may diſreliſh the dryneſs of many of the Eſſays.

THE

CONTENTS.

Essays. *Pages.*

1. OF Conversion, or Regeneration, - - - 9
2. Of Justification before God, - - - 36
3. Of Faith; particularly, as justifying, - - 45
4. Of entering into Covenant with God, - - 48
5. A Form of Covenanting, - - - - - - - 54
6. The Nature, Design and Use of the Lord's Supper, 66
7. Of Preparation for the Lord's Supper, - - 70
8. Our Duty immediately after the Lord's Supper, 75
9. Reflections on the Incarnation of Christ, - 79
10. Of Adoption into God's Family, - - - 81
11. Of Repentance, - - - - - - - - - - 84
12. Of Sanctification, or Holiness, - - - - 88
13. The Nature and Effects of Union with Christ, 91
14. Of the final Perseverance of the Saints, - - 95
15. Of Peace of Conscience, - - - - - - 99
16. Of Joy in the Holy Ghost, - - - - 102
17. Of assurance of God's Love, in this Life, - 104
18. Of the Soul's Immortality, - - - - - 108
19. Of Death, - - - - - - - - - - 113
20. Of the Resurrection of the Dead, - - - 118
21. Of a future Judgment, - - - - - - 119
22. Of Heaven; or the future State of the Blessed, 121
23. Of Hell; or the future State of the Wicked, 125
24. What, as Christians, we should do more than others, - - - - - - - - - - - 127
25. Of Heavenly-mindedness, and the contrary Vices, - - - - - - - - - - 131
26. Of Gospel Sincerity, or Uprightness, - - 135
27. Christian Zeal, and its Opposites and Counterfeits, 140
28. Patience, and the contrary Vices, - - - 146
29. Meekness, and the opposite Vices, - - - 149
30. Charity, and the opposite Vices, - - - 154

31. Contentment,

Essays. *Pages.*

31. Contentment, and the opposite Vices, - - 157
32. Chastity, and the contrary Vices, - - - 162
33. Humility, and the opposite Vices, - - - 165
34. Sobriety, and the contrary Vices, - - - 169
35. Christian Courage or Fortitude, and its Opposites, 172
36. The Christian Uses of the Tongue, - - - 177
37. Unchristian Abuses of the Tongue, - - - 180
38. The best Method of maintaining Peace, Love and Unity among Christian Brethren, - 186
39. The Rule of judging our Brethren; against Rashness and Censoriousness, - - - 190
40. A peaceable Disposition, and the opposite Evils, 195
41. A merciful Temper, and its Opposites, - 200
42. Of Justice between Man and Man, - - - 206
43. Of Christian Hope, - - - - - - - - 211
44. Of the Natures and Person of CHRIST, - 218
45. CHRIST, our Prophet, - - - - - - - 223
46. CHRIST, our Priest, - - - - - - - 230
47. The kingly or regal Office of CHRIST, - 234
48. On the Shortness and due Improvement of Time, 237
49. The Consideration of Eternity, - - - - 242
50. The Duty of Masters of Families, - - - 244
51. The best Way of resisting Temptations, - 247
52. Of public Spirit, - - - - - 251
53. A proper Temper and Conduct towards Enemies, - - - - - - 254
54. Temptations arising from Company, - - 257
55. Temptations arising from Solitude, - - 262
56. The Use and Abuse of Christian Liberty, - 265
57. What Diversions are lawful, and the Way to regulate them, - - - - - 270
58. The Value and Importance of a Child, - 276
59. The Constraints of CHRIST's Love: A Sermon, 282
60. Christians, Lights in the World: A Sermon, 307
61. The aggravated Guilt of Murder: A Sermon, 328

END OF THE CONTENTS.

E S S A Y I.

C H A P. I.

Of Conversion, *or* Regeneration.

1. RELIGION being a *character*, muſt have a *principle*; and this principle muſt ſupremely govern and predominate in the life. We do not call a man *generous* and *friendly*, unleſs generoſity and friendſhip prevail in him above churliſhneſs and unfriendlineſs, and are fixed principles in his nature.---So it would be equally abſurd to call a man *religious*, only becauſe of the performance of a few outward religious duties, while the main of his temper and character is irreligious and immoral. *He* only deſerves the character of being *religious*, who is ſuch uniformly and predominantly, and in whom morality and religion is a prevailing and diſcriminating character!

2. True religion, where it is, muſt govern the man; and nothing can do this but an *inward principle*. Grace, which is this principle, muſt oppoſe corruption, and finally prevail over it.

3. The word of God, and indeed the nature and reaſon of things, place religion primarily and radically in the *heart*, and repreſent it as flowing thence into the life and converſation. The heart, as it is the ſource and fountain of all external corruption, ſo it muſt be of all true religion. The tree muſt firſt be made good before

its fruit can be good. A bitter or polluted fountain, cannot ſend forth pure or ſweet water. Men gather not grapes of thorns, nor figs of thiſtles. Good principles are neceſſarily prerequiſite to *morally* or *formally* good actions. Accordingly, the whole ſtreſs is laid, in ſcripture, upon *heart-religion*; or that which is ſeated and radicated in the heart, and proceeds from pure and right principles and motives there*.

4. As it has been the general opinion of mankind, as well as the voice of ſcripture, that men are born into this world in a *depraved, corrupt* and *irreligious* ſtate, with ſtrong propenſities to vice, and a diſinclination to that which appears to be virtuous and good, by the very law of their nature, written on their conſcience, and manifeſted to them by their moral inſtinctive feelings; ſo it has been generally thought the peculiar work of the Deity, the GOD and *Father* of men, to help them, by his grace and Spirit, to riſe out of this ſtate of depravity and corruption, and to return to his obedience, favour and enjoyment, in the ſteep and narrow path of virtue and piety. This has ever been thought a care and work worthy of GOD the Father of ſpirits, towards his human offſpring; and even a heathen could ſay, *Nullus vir magnus unquam fuit, ſine Divino afflatu.*

5. REVELATION repreſents this change wrought in ſinners by GOD, under the terms, *converſion* †; *repentance* ‡; *regeneration* §; being *born of* GOD ||; *created in Chriſt Jeſus* **; having a *new heart* ††; a *divine nature*

* Prov. xxiii. 26. Ezek. xxxvi. 26.——xviii. 31. Joel ii. 12, 13. Pſal. li. and cxxxix. 1 Sam. xvi. 7. 1 Chron. xxviii. 9. Deut. xiii. 3.

† Matth. xviii. 3. Acts iii. 19. Ezek. xxxiii. 11.

‡ Iſa. lv. 7. Luke xiii. 5.

§ Titus iii. 5.

|| John i. 13. 1 John v. 18.

** Eph. ii. 10. 2 Cor. v. 17.

†† Ezek. xxxvi. 25---28. Pſal. li.

ture * ; *putting off the old man*, and *putting on the new*, and the like †.

6. OUR Lord ſtrongly expreſſes both the *nature* and *neceſſity* of this change in ſinners, by telling them, *That unleſs they are born again of water, and of the Spirit*, and *are converted*, they not only *ſhall not*, but even *cannot*, *enter into the kingdom of heaven* ‡.

7. GRANTING theſe expreſſions of *a new birth by the Spirit*, and a becoming *new creatures*, and the like, to be *figurative* and *metaphorical*; yet if theſe metaphors have any ſignificancy and propriety at all, they muſt imply the following truths; namely, (1.) That the change of a ſinner by converſion or regeneration, muſt be *exceeding great*, bearing ſome analogy to the difference between the circumſtances of a child before and after its birth;---or between a being in a ſtate of non-entity, and after the commencement of its exiſtence, in ſome eſſential reſpects at leaſt.---(2.) That it is not a *partial*, but an *univerſal* change; a change of the whole bent of the heart and drift and direction of the affections.---(3.) That it is not a meer *outward*, *imperfect* change, but one that is *inward*, *eſſential* and *complete*.---(4.) That it is a change not produced by the ſinner's own natural powers and endeavours, but *wholly ſupernatural*, the product of a *divine agency*, effected and produced by the Spirit of God: And (5.) That it is a change abſolutely neceſſary in every ſon and daughter of Adam, in order to their entering into the kingdom of heaven.

8. EITHER theſe inferences are plainly and clearly deducible from theſe metaphors; or, otherwiſe, the metaphors muſt not only be ſuppoſed highly *improper*, but even *pernicious*; tending to miſlead the judgments of men, and obſcuring a doctrine of great importance to men's ſalvation, otherwiſe plain and obvious in itſelf,

 which

* 2 Pet. i. 4.
† Eph. iv. 22, 25.
‡ John iii. 3, 5. Matth. xviii. 3. Luke xiii. 5.

which would be a high imputation on the wiſdom and goodneſs of GOD, and an unanſwerable objection againſt the revelation of *Chriſt*.

9. SELF-LOVE, a *deſire of reputation* and *fame*, and a principle of *terror* and *ſlaviſh fear*, often produce a kind of religious character, which is merely outward and greatly imperfect.

10. ALTHOUGH that ſeed of grace, which is the principle of the ſpiritual life, is infuſed *at once* into the whole nature, in the act of regeneration, and gives it a holy taſte, bent, turn, tendency and direction; yet the fruits of it ſhew themſelves but *gradually* and *ſucceſſively*, in the progreſſive work of ſanctification, as occaſions, trials and opportunities elicit and draw them forth into act and view.

11. IF regeneration, agreeable to the import of the metaphor, be an *inſtantaneous* act or operation of the holy Spirit upon the ſoul, producing a radical, eſſential change in its temper, giving it a new principle of ſpiritual life, a general divine bent and tendency:---And if ſanctification and mortification are only effects of this new and divine principle of life, carrying on a continual conflict and warfare againſt the corruptions of nature, and a gradually ſtrengthening and confirming the habits of virtue and holineſs;---then may we very eaſily and rationally account for an *imperfect Chriſtian* going directly to heaven, at death, without the neceſſity of any *intermediate purgatorial* ſufferings to fit him for that world of perfect purity. The ſoul, from the moment of its regeneration, was holy, and was defiled only in conſequence of its union with a corrupt bodily nature, with which it was carrying on a continual warfare. In the moment of death, it was releaſed from this corrupt bodily nature, and ſprung, immaculate, to its kindred ſpirits, and its native heaven. The grave is a furnace which will *melt down*, *purify* and *refine* this corrupt body, whence it

it will be raiſed a glorious, ſpiritual body, and a fit companion for the glorified ſpirit.

E S S A Y I.

C H A P. II.

The Subject continued. *The corrupt, guilty, loſt and helpleſs State of Man before Converſion.*

1. THE ſcripture evidence of the wretched ſtate of man *by nature*, is very extenſive. Among a vaſt multitude of ſcriptures, the following may be conſulted; Pſal. li. 5. Eph. ii. 1, 3. Job xiv. 4. Pſal. xiv. 1---3. Jer. xvii. 9. Iſa. lxiv. 6. Rom. vii. 14, to the end.

2. CHRIST is ſaid to have come as a phyſician to the *ſick*, and to ſeek that which was *loſt*. The prodigal is repreſented as *dead* and *loſt*, and his converſion is termed a *coming to himſelf*, a *being found*, and a *coming again to life*. Converſion is termed a *new birth*, a *new creation*; and ſinners, before converſion, are ſaid to be *dead in treſpaſſes and ſins*. The unconverted man is ſaid, *not to receive the things of the Spirit of* GOD; *they are fooliſhneſs to him*, neither *can he know them*. Converſion is repreſented as a work of great power; ſuch as GOD exerted in Chriſt when he raiſed him up from the dead.

3. FROM all theſe ſcripture repreſentations we may infer the exceeding *helpleſſneſs* of ſinners, in an unconverted ſtate. A dead perſon hath no power to riſe. We cannot come to Chriſt unleſs the Father draw us. We cannot think a good thought. All our ſufficiency is of GOD, who muſt work in us both to will and to do; and without Chriſt we can do nothing. We cannot be converted

verted without the Spirit: But the Spirit is the Father's free gift in Chrift. He muft open our eyes before we can *fee*, and create us anew in Chrift Jefus before we can *fpiritually live* and *act*. Faith is the firft grace acted by a converted Chriftian; and yet this faith we cannot act of ourfelves, *it is the gift of* GOD. We are naturally corrupt and difinclined to good before our converfion, and *here* lies our helpleffnefs, until God by his quickening Spirit gives life to our fouls, and enables us to will and to do, and creates us anew in Chrift Jefus to good works.

4. FROM *reafon*, *obfervation* and *experience* we have the following evidences of this truth: (1.) We know good and evil by our natural confcience; yet we find in ourfelves a ftrong difinclination to the good which we approve, and a prevailing inclination to the evil which we difapprove.---(2.) We know that we are very unlike GOD, and that we do not cordially love and chufe him and his laws: But GOD could not form creatures with fuch a temper: This therefore proves, that we are now degenerated from our firft ftate, and become corrupt creatures.---(3.) If children come into the world fuch as we may fuppofe that God firft created man, *i. e. holy*, and with a *propenfity to good*, or even in a ftate of indifference to good and evil; fome would furely be virtuous from the womb upwards; fome would furely follow the good principle of their nature, efpecially as *praife* and *happinefs* lie on that fide; but univerfal obfervation and experience prove the contrary, as well as the word of GOD *.---(4.) If men were not born corrupt and impotent, a virtuous and religious education would bring all who are bleffed with it over to the fide of virtue, in fpite of evil example: But do we not plainly fee that children are backward to imitate good examples, and prone to follow bad ones? They greedily fuck in evil advice and the knowledge of wicked things; but it requires much

* Pfal. liii. 1,---3. Rom. iii. 10, &c.

much labour to bring them to learn good; they alſo quickly forget it, and we plainly ſee that their heart is ſtill corrupt and ſtrongly inclined to vice, in ſpite of all the antidotes we can inſtil into their minds againſt it.---(5.) If we attentively examine our own hearts, lives and experiences but for *one day*, we ſhall have an overpowering conviction of our dreadful corruption. How readily do we forget GOD? How averſe are our minds to the contemplation of him and his perfections? How little do we think of the love of Chriſt? We read or hear with unconcern, the amazing ſtory of his love, and feel little or no gratitude for it. Our memories, our thoughts, our meditations, the general bent and tenour of our affections and paſſions, even our religious duties, and our very beſt works, may convince us of the wretchedneſs of our ſtate by nature.

5. WE ſee that a virtuous and Chriſtian education cannot, of itſelf, recover our natures, or remove their corruption.---We ſee that the ſtudy of philoſophy and the knowledge of the ſcriptures, cannot accompliſh this. ---We ſee that the moſt powerful preaching, and beſt adapted means of grace, cannot effect this great change. ---We ſee men making many vows and reſolutions, and labouring hard in the way of outward means, to riſe from their corruptions, and yet all prove ineffectual.---We have often, in an unconverted ſtate, been convinced of our guiltineſs and danger; we have often reſolved to do better, and we have bound *our reſolutions* with *ſolemn vows*:---We have even ſet a time to begin a better life; but before that time came, our reſolutions have proved as the morning cloud. And even when we have attempted to mend our life and conduct, have we not found ourſelves ſo exceeding feeble, as to be unable to effect any thing to purpoſe? Have we not felt, as it were, a dead weight pulling us backwards, and ſinking us down into the bed of ſloth, carnal ſecurity and inaction?

Deplorable

Deplorable but pregnant proofs, and convincing demonſtrations, both of our *corruption* and *impotency* by nature!

ESSAY I.

CHAP. III.

The ſame Subject continued. *Corruption and helpleſſneſs, cannot juſtify Sloth in the unconverted Sinner.*

1. THOUGH GOD hath reſerved in his own hands the great work of Converſion, as his *own proper work*, and we cannot therefore convert ourſelves; yet we ought not to ſay that we can do nothing. GOD hath given to unconverted ſinners a great deal of important work to do, and put it in their power to do it;---hath obliged them by commands, perſuaded them by exhortations, awed them by threatenings, engaged them by motives, encouraged them by promiſes, and given them reaſon to expect that he will meet with them and convert them in the performance of this work. He hath alſo laid their help on one who is mighty to ſave.

2. ALTHOUGH unconverted ſinners are *ſpiritually dead*, yet they are not *naturally ſo*. They have an underſtanding, a will and a memory: They may know ſomething of their guilt and danger: They may underſtand ſomething of Chriſt and his ſaving deſign: They may read and hear, think and meditate on GOD's word; frequent his houſe, and attend his ordinances. But if ſinners will not do theſe things, they will not do what they *may*, and *are able* to do, and therefore are inexcuſable.

3. A DISPENSATION of GOD's Spirit attends his goſpel, and he hath promiſed to give his Spirit to them that

that aſk him; to *all* that aſk him, without limitation or reſerve. He hath even made it the duty of ſinners to aſk this Spirit, and to attend diligently on divine ordinances, which are the walks of the Spirit. Now, if ſinners know that they cannot be converted without this Spirit, and that they cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven, unleſs they are converted; and if, notwithſtanding they know this, they do not diligently aſk it of GOD, nor attend on thoſe inſtrumental duties and means of grace, in the uſe of which this Spirit is diſpenſed, then they are wholly to blame for continuing unconverted.

4. GOD is following ſinners with the common influences and operations of his Spirit; ſtriving with them, and ſeeking admittance into their hearts. Now, if ſinners would obey and cheriſh this common operation, and aſk the ſpecial and converting influences of the Spirit, he has obliged himſelf by promiſe to give it them *: But if, on the contrary, they reſiſt and grieve this holy Spirit, which would have ſealed them to the day of redemption, they themſelves are wholly to blame for continuing unconverted.

5. IF the caſe were even otherwiſe, and there were but a *bare probability*, or even a *poſſibility*, that the humble and earneſt endeavours of a ſinner might meet with acceptance, and be crowned with ſucceſs, he is wholly inexcuſeable and condemnable in neglecting theſe endeavours.

* Luke xi. 9,---13. Rev. iii. 20.——xxii. 17.

ESSAY I.

CHAP. IV.

The ſame Subject continued. *The Duty of unconverted Perſons.*

1. SUCH ought often and ſeriouſly to conſider, That it is impoſſible they ſhould ever go to heaven in their preſent ſtate. The ſcriptures expreſsly preclude them*; and in the very reaſon and nature of things, they are wholly diſqualified both for the *employments* and *enjoyments* of the heavenly ſtate.

2. THEY ſhould labour to obtain a deep ſenſe of the danger and miſery of an unconverted ſtate: of the evil and guilt of ſin, and of the torments to which it will unavoidably expoſe the unconverted ſinner, who dies in his iniquities.

3. THEY ſhould frequently conſider the ſhortneſs and uncertainty of the *preſent life*, which is their *only working day*, their only *period of trial* and preparation for eternity, and that death will ſhortly put an end to all their *hope*, *help* and *endeavours*; and therefore, as they value ſalvation, they ſhould not delay converſion.

4. THEY ſhould labour for a deep, convictive ſenſe of their own inability to convert themſelves, and that they muſt periſh for ever unleſs GOD help them, and that ſpeedily.

5. THEY ſhould endeavour after a thorough and firm perſuaſion, that there is *hope* and *help* for them in GOD, and that they *may*, and aſſuredly *will*, obtain the grace of converſion, if they take the right method, and labour diligently in ſeeking it. They ſhould ſet it before them in

* Matth. xviii. 3. Luke xiii. 5. John iii. 3, 5. 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10.

in firm purpoſe and reſolution, as a ſettled and determined point, that by the help of GOD, they *will* be converted, and that they will never give over ſeeking the bleſſing, in all the appointed means of grace, until they find it; ſaying with *Jacob*, "I will not let thee go, until thou bleſs me."

6. THEY ſhould *actually* and *reſolutely* ſet about denying all manner of known ſin, and every tempting companion and amuſement, and attempt the performance of every known duty, as well as they are able, without delay; uncertain how quickly death may cut them off in their ſins, and fruſtrate all purpoſes of future amendment.

7. ALL this ſhould be attempted *in the ſtrength of* GOD, through Chriſt, aſſuredly depending *on*, and confiding *in* his help in the way of duty, and perpetually keeping up a deep ſenſe of their own impotence; that all their ſufficiency is of GOD, and that, of themſelves, they can do nothing; but all things, Chriſt ſtrengthening them.

8. THEY ſhould *inſtantly* and *forthwith* make choice of GOD for their portion and bleſſedneſs, and attempt to enter into ſolemn covenant with him through Chriſt. They ſhould bring themſelves back to him as returning prodigals; give *themſelves*, *their intereſt*, and all their *powers* and *abilities* up to him, as his long-abuſed property, and ſubmit to him in all things.

9. THEY ſhould attempt *daily* and *perpetually* to accept of Chriſt, by faith, in all his ſaving offices, giving up their polluted, diſeaſed ſouls into his hands as their compaſſionate Phyſician and Redeemer; aſſuredly believing, that he will in no wiſe caſt them out or reject them, and firmly truſting both his power and his grace.

10. IF, in the courſe of theſe endeavours, the unrenewed heart riſes up againſt theſe duties, and the *world* and the *devil* tempt the ſinner to ſlight them as *needleſs*, or to neglect them as *impoſſible*, or *too ſevere*, (which will doubtleſs be often the caſe) it would be the wiſeſt courſe

for the perſon, thus tempted, to flee inſtantly to GOD, by prayer, for ſuccour, and to get the temptation removed. One earneſt look unto GOD, upon ſuch occaſions, has been found by experience, to bring more ſtrength into the ſoul, and to be more efficacious againſt temptation, than all the human reaſoning and reſolutions in the world. However, it is the duty of the ſinner to oppoſe the temptation *by all means*, and *with all his might*; and it would be wiſe, beforehand, to be always expecting ſuch trials, and to be pre-engaging the almighty aid againſt the hour of temptation.

11. As the unconverted ſhould never neglect *ſecret prayer*, nor *any one ordinance* which they can attend; ſo, when the *Spirit of* GOD moves upon their ſouls, either in convincing them of ſin and miſery, or in exciting holy thoughts and good reſolutions, they ſhould cheriſh theſe motions, and pray GOD, at the time, to increaſe and ſet home theſe convictions, till they iſſue in an effectual and ſaving converſion: For, if they reſiſt, and quench, and grieve the holy Spirit, he will leave them, and they are in danger of being undone for ever.

12. To help them in theſe duties, they ſhould often ſet a part ſeaſons for more ſolemn meditation, ſelf-examination and prayer.

ESSAY I.

CHAP. V.

The ſame Subject continued. *Symptoms of an unconverted State.*

1. WHATEVER characters the ſcriptures repreſent as under an impoſſibility of entering into the kingdom of heaven, are certainly to be reckon-

ed

ed among the unconverted. Such are *all unbelievers* and *impenitent ſinners*;---all habitual fornicators, adulterers, unclean, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, extortioners, idolaters, envious, malicious perſons, ſtrife-makers, ſowers of ſedition, and the like *. Yet it ſhould be obſerved,

2. THAT in order to pronounce men unconverted, we muſt ſuppoſe them under the dominion of theſe ſins, and to be living cuſtomarily and habitually in the practice of them: Which will appear from their committing them *freely*, and with *delight*; *frequently*; *pleading for them*; *palliating* and *extenuating* them, and hating to be admoniſhed and reproved on account of them.

3. MEN who continue wilfully ignorant of their chriſtian duty, and careleſs about it (which may be known by their undervaluing, deſpiſing and neglecting the means of knowledge and of grace) are certainly in an unconverted ſtate. All church-neglecters come under this predicament.

4. MEN who are careleſs of their *hearts* and *thoughts*, and give themſelves little trouble about their *hidden ſins* and *heart-plagues*, notwithſtanding they may be pretty careful and conſcientious in the outward part of moral and religious duties, are certainly unconverted: For, where there is true grace, it turns the eye inward to the heart, and the true convert is moſt watchful againſt hidden corruptions.

5. THOSE who neglect the duties of *ſecret prayer*, *meditation* and *ſelf-examination*, although they may be ſcrupulouſly punctual in attending the public ordinances of religion, are certainly unconverted: For, ſecret duties, more eſpecially *ſecret prayer*, is the *firſt*, the *continued*, and the *laſt* duty of the converted ſoul.

6. WANT *of reliſh* for *holy actions*, and *religious duties*; a *diſtaſte* to them; a deſire that they were not neceſſary, and

* 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. Gal. v. 19---21. Eph. v. 5, &c. Rev. xxi. 8. Mark xvi. 16.

and a being pleaſed with any excuſe to get rid of them, are very ſure ſigns of an unconverted ſtate; more eſpecially, when this diſreliſh for holineſs is accompanied with an inordinate deſire of, and hankering after worldly enjoyments and ſenſual pleaſures.

7. MEN, who upon impartial examination, find that they are no better than they were many years ago, but rather more vicious and depraved, have all the reaſon in the world to paſs an unfavourable judgment on their ſtate: For grace is of a growing nature, and where it is, carries forward the ſoul progreſſively to higher attainments in virtue and holineſs.

8. MEN who have freely indulged vice in their youth, and can remember no time ſince when they were greatly humbled before GOD for their youthful luſts; greatly exerciſed about deliverance from their guilt and dominion, and made to abandon them with indignation; and who are not very ſenſible of ſome remarkable change for the better, both in their hearts and lives, may certainly conclude that they are yet in *the gall of bitterneſs*.

9. A MAN who is not *rationally aſſured*, and who does not ſometimes *feel*, that he loves GOD above all things, and that he is ready to part with all things, his moſt valued intereſts, his moſt beloved luſts, and even life itſelf, in obedience to his will, and rather than give up his title to him:---He who loves any creature more than GOD---earth more than heaven---his body more than his ſoul;---who had rather be rich than good, and prefers the pleaſures of this world before GOD's favour and enjoyment, is certainly unconverted.

10. THAT man, who upon the moſt deliberate conſideration, is not willing to deny himſelf the moſt beloved gratifications; to take up his croſs and follow his Redeemer through poverty, contempt, perſecution and even martyrdom itſelf; who does not cordially accept and embrace him in all his characters, ſubmit to him in

all

all his offices, truſt him without reſerve, and give up all things *to* him and *for* him, is certainly ſtill in an unregenerate, unconverted ſtate.

E S S A Y I.

C H A P. VI.

The ſame Subject continued. *The unhappy State of the Unconverted.*

1. SUCH are ſpiritually dead; dead in treſpaſſes and ſins; dead to GOD, and to every good purpoſe *.

2. SUCH are *ſlaves*; *ſlaves* to *ſatan*, who rules in the hearts of the children of diſobedience; blinds their eyes that they cannot diſcern the truth, and leads them captive at his pleaſure;---*ſlaves* alſo to their unruly appetites and tyrannizing luſts †.

3. SUCH are children of wrath, and, if converſion prevent it not, born heirs to that torment, which is the certain effects of this wrath ‡: They are ſtiled in ſcripture *the children of the devil*, bearing his image, poſſeſſing his ſpirit and temper; and conſequently, heirs of that hell, which was prepared for the *devil* and his angels, which is their proper inheritance §.

4. THE unconverted are enemies to GOD by wicked works; full of natural antipathy and enmity againſt his being, nature, will and laws. The principle which prevails in their hearts, would naturally lead them to dethrone

* Eph. ii. 1. 1 Tim. v. 6.
† 2 Tim. ii. 26. Tit. iii. 3. Rom. vi. 17.
‡ Eph. ii. 3.
§ John. viii. 41, 42, 44. Matth. xxv. 41.

dethrone and deſtroy the bleſſed GOD, if they had the power.---And being ſuch, GOD is a conſuming fire to them: His nature and all his laws are againſt them, and ſo are alſo all his perfections, except his mercy, which indeed waits a while to be gracious; but, being abuſed and ſlighted, will in the end aggravate their guilt and miſery.

5. SUCH continue under the guilt of all the ſins they ever have committed. Every law and threatning in the Bible is againſt them: They are condemned already; ſentence is already paſſed againſt them in numberleſs places; ſo that nothing but the ſlender and precarious thread of preſent life ſuſpends the execution.

6. THEY are on the very brink of perdition, momently in danger of dropping into a place and ſtate of endleſs miſery. Every night they lie down, there is even ſomething more than a poſſibility, that before the morning's light, they may lift up their eyes, being in torments.

7. THEY have no covenant right or title to any mercy they enjoy. Every bleſſing they enjoy has the nature of a *curſe* to them, in the manner in which they receive and uſe it. This earth is only their priſon, where they are for a ſhort time, ſupported by GOD, 'till the time of their execution comes. *The wicked is reſerved to the day of deſtruction; they ſhall be brought forth to the day of wrath* *.

8. IF they were perfectly known, their caſe would be pitied, and their nature hated, by every good perſon on earth. And the angels and other holy ſpirits, ſo far as they know them, do thus regard them.

9. IF ſuch did thoroughly know their own wretched and perilous condition, they could not poſſibly enjoy one moment's peace, tranquility or happineſs in this life. And, indeed, whatever of this kind they do enjoy, is only a fatal deluſory happineſs, founded on *falſe hopes*; producing

* Job xxi. 30.

producing a *deſtructive ſecurity*, and iſſuing in *endleſs deſpair*.

10. THERE is only left for them this comfort, that they are yet out of a place of torment, and that there is ſtill hope and help for them in GOD, through Chriſt, if they will ſpeedily embrace the opportunity. The *preſent moment* is all they can rationally rely upon, in which to better their ſtate, and caſt the die for eternity!

E S S A Y I.

C H A P. VII.

The ſame Subject continued. *Miſtakes about Converſion rectified.*

1. IT has been already obſerved, that converſion is a *thorough* and *remarkable* change; and therefore, that thoſe perſons muſt be deceived, who imagine themſelves to have been truly converted, merely becauſe of ſome *outward*, *partial*, and *incomplete* change which they may have undergone, either from difference in age and circumſtances in life; alterations in their health, conſtitution, or intereſts and connexions; the principles of ſelf-love, honour and reputation; legal pannics and terrors, or from falſe and incomplete views of religion. It may now be obſerved *negatively*,

(1.) THAT *chriſtian baptiſm* cannot be that converſion or regeneration, to which the promiſe of heaven is annexed: For we are expreſly told, that unleſs a man is born again of the *Spirit*, as well as of *water*, he *cannot* enter into the kingdom of GOD. Beſides, many baptized perſons, are amongſt the wickedeſt of men, and have evident and abſolute need of ſpiritual regeneration.

(2.) THE *bare profession*, even of a *true religion*, however ſpecious, is not converſion: Elſe all the profeſſors of a true religion would be *true converts*; which we know is far from being the caſe in fact. Much leſs,

(3.) CAN it conſiſt in a man's changing his religious profeſſion: For this may be, and often is done from *worldly*, *intereſted*, *lucrative* motives, and *falſe*, *erroneous* principles, and not from convictions of truth and duty.

(4.) STRONG convictions of ſin, and great fear of GOD's wrath, cannot, of themſelves, prove a ſinner to be truly converted. If ſo, we muſt conclude, that *Cain*, *Herod*, *Pilate*, *Simon Magus* and *Judas Iſcariot*, were true converts, which is not true in fact; becauſe the terrors of theſe unhappy men did not iſſue in true repentance.

(5.) AN *external ſober*, *moral conduct*, a life free from the groſs outward acts of ſin, and a regular attendance on the ordinances of religion, are no certain evidences of converſion, though they may juſtly command the reſpect and eſteem of our fellow-men. This was the righteouſneſs of the *Phariſees*: It is alſo the righteouſneſs of moſt hypocrites and formaliſts: And yet our Saviour, who knew and detected the real characters of theſe men, has aſſured us, that unleſs *our righteouſneſs* ſhall *exceed theirs*, we ſhall in no wiſe enter into the kingdom of GOD *.

(6.) A MAN's really renouncing and abandoning ſome ſin or ſins, to which he has been addicted, cannot prove him a true convert, while he continues in the love and practice of other ſins. *Herod* heard *John Baptiſt* gladly, and did many things in obedience to his miniſtry, which were not much againſt his natural inclination; but would by no means part with his beloved luſt, his darling *Herodias* †. Men do many things of this kind from meer prudential motives, and becauſe theſe ſins are deſtructive of their health, intereſt and reputation:

* Matth. v. 20.
† Mark vi. 20, 23.

putation: But he who offends *wilfully*, *allowedly* and *perſeveringly* in one point, is guilty of the whole law *; and plainly ſhews that he deſpiſes the authority by which it is enjoined, and obedience to it enforced.

(7.) A MAN's ſhewing remarkable zeal in religion, is no certain proof that he is a true convert, or a real Chriſtian. Zeal is either *good* or *bad*, according to the *objects* about which it is employed, the *motives* from which it originates, and the *ſpirit* and *temper* with which it is exerciſed. If zeal be *according to knowledge*, it can hardly exceed in the meaſure of it; for it is always good to be zealouſly affected in a good thing †: But a *blind*, *ignorant* and *miſguided* zeal, is the moſt furious, miſchievous and deſtructive of all the paſſions. The apoſtles knew not what manner of ſpirit they were of, when in a paroxiſm of their frantic zeal, they called for fire from heaven to deſtroy the *Samaritans* ‡. As touching zeal, *St. Paul*, when *Saul*, perſecuted the church of Chriſt, and deſtroyed that which he ſhould have built up §.

2. IT has been already ſaid, *poſitively*, and I here repeat it, That converſion is a *great*, *univerſal*, *radical* change of the ſoul, by the regenerating influences of the Spirit of GOD,---not of the *ſubſtance* and *nature* of the ſoul; but of its *temper* and *principles*;---not ſuch as to preclude all ſin and corruption in this life; but ſuch as cauſes piety and virtue to predominate in the character, and as it lays a foundation for *progreſs in holineſs*, and *final perfection*. It is, in ſhort, a *new* and *divine nature* and *principle*, generating a *new* and *divine life*.

3. THE *forerunners* and *concomitant attendants* of this change, are generally, as follows: (1.) This change is preceded by ſuch a conviction of guilt and pollution, as deeply humbles the ſoul before GOD, and makes it

 feel

* James ii. 10.
† Gal. iv. 18.
‡ Luke ix. 35.
§ Read Acts ix. Gal. i. 13, &c. Phil. iii. 5, 6.

feel itſelf expoſed to eternal miſery; that it is *helpleſs* and *lying at undeſerved mercy*, and that it *muſt periſh*, if it receives not *this mercy*.---(2.) By ſuch a ſenſe of the evil of ſin, as cauſes the ſoul to abhor it, and to wiſh above all things to be freed from its dominion and pollution.---(3.) By ſuch a ſenſe of the depravity and badneſs of the ſinner's heart, as makes him ſee the neceſſity of its being changed by divine grace, and makes him wiſh, above all things to be truly regenerated.---(4.) By ſuch a ſenſe of the ſinner's inability to change his own heart and affections, as makes him feel that it never can be done, unleſs GOD is pleaſed to take the work wholly into his own hands.---(5.) By ſuch a ſenſe of the ſinner's *need of Chriſt*, as makes him ſee his help in him alone, ſo as earneſtly to deſire to embrace him; to be united to him, and found in him:---And *finally*, by ſuch a ſight and ſenſe of the power and grace of Chriſt, his all-ſufficiency to ſave unto the uttermoſt, and his fulneſs and ſuitableneſs to all the ſinner's wants and deſires, as engages the ſinner, as a *loſt*, *ſin-ſick*, *periſhing* creature, to caſt himſelf chearfully into the hands of this glorious, compaſſionate Redeemer, with a full and unſhaken confidence, that he will work the great ſalvation *in him* and *for him*, and give him a complete victory over every enemy.

ESSAY I.

CHAP. VIII.

The ſame Subject continued. *The Way of diſcerning true Converſion by its Effects and Conſequences.*

1. AS ſoon as the Spirit of GOD regenerates the ſoul, it is conſcious of a *kind* and *degree* of *light* and *knowledge* which it had not before, and is poſſeſſed with *correſpondent*

correſpondent affections. It knows *itſelf* in a different manner from what it formerly did. Unconverted men do little ſtudy and little know their *inward man*. Their thoughts and obſervations are chiefly employed about *outward circumſtances* and *external accompliſhments*: But the light of grace opens a new ſcene to the ſoul, the eye of which is turned *inward*, *backward* and *forward*; and as light increaſes, it ſtill ſees more and more of its natural *deformity*, *vileneſs* and *guiltineſs*, and more and more admires that *wonderful mercy*, which regarded it in its low condition, and undertook its redemption and deliverance.

2. THE converted ſoul knows and ſees GOD in quite a different manner from what was uſual. A *new* and *glorious* light ſhines now on all his *perfections*, *providences*, *laws* and *works*. In its unrenewed ſtate, it had indeed a ſpeculative knowledge of GOD, which ſtruck it at times, with wonder and admiration: But now GOD appears incomparably glorious and amiable; a fit object of the ſoul's love and choice, and its deſirable portion. Formerly, it could obſerve his wondrous works and adorable providences, without conſidering GOD in them: But now the whole world ſeems full of GOD; GOD appears more or leſs to the ſoul in every work, in every providence, in every mercy, and in every affliction: and the ſoul ſees and approves his *glory* and *beauty*, his *power* and *wiſdom*, his *juſtice* and *goodneſs* in all; is charmed with theſe manifeſtations of him, and follows hard after him as its *only* and *all-ſufficient portion*.

3. THE converted ſoul has quite a new kind of knowledge and apprehenſion of *Chriſt* to what it formerly had. Unconverted perſons, at the very beſt, only conſider Chriſt as a *great* and *worthy perſon*, and a *benefactor* to a guilty world; as ſuſtaining a moſt *heroical* and *benevolent* character, and therefore worthy the admiration and praiſe of men: But the true convert ſees Chriſt, by

faith,

faith, as the *chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely*. There is a kind of secret, unaccountable charm in the very *name*, and *idea* of *Jesus*, that excites his love and draws his affections; whom having not seen, he loves, and in whom, although now he sees him not, yet believing, he exults and rejoices, with a joy unspeakable and full of glory *. He sees an inexpressible beauty in his *person* and *character*, and a wonderful excellency, fitness and necessity in all his *saving offices*; and, in this view, Christ is exceeding dear and precious to him. He regards him as his *Lord*, his *love*, his *life*, his *friend*, his *wisdom*, *righteousness*, *sanctification* and *redemption*. When you speak of Christ to him, his heart leaps with gratitude and joy, and he is ready to cry out, 'This is my 'beloved, and this is my friend, O ye daughters of *Je*-'*rusalem*;---he who hath loved me, and washed me 'from my sins in his own blood;---he in whom I have 'believed, and to whom I have committed my soul, 'against that day;---my Saviour, my Lord, my Judge, 'and my portion!'

4. THE real convert has quite a new knowledge and judgment of GOD's *holy law*, and quite new regards and affections respecting it. The *Psalmist*'s prayer is now answered in him, "Lord, open thou mine eyes, that I "may behold wondrous things out of thy law †." He, indeed, beholds GOD's law with *new eyes*, and regards it with *new affections*. As the very best among unconverted persons have very *false*, *contracted*, *unworthy* notions of the divine law; so neither are they cordial friends to the strictness of its requirements, and that holiness which it enjoins. "The carnal mind is enmity against GOD; "for it is not subject to the law of GOD, neither in-"deed can be: For the law is *spiritual*, and can be on-"ly relished and delighted in by a *renewed*, *spiritual* "mind;

* Pet. i. 8.

† Psal. cxix. 18.

" mind; but *ſuch* are *carnal, ſold under ſin* *." Some of the divine laws, indeed, which do not croſs their beloved luſts, may, in ſome meaſure, gain their liking and approbation, and they may be aſhamed to ſpeak evil of the law in general, which the reaſon of mankind and the ſcriptures of truth, pronounce to be *holy, juſt* and *good* †: But ſtill their corrupt hearts and natures reluctate againſt the *purity* and *perfection* of the divine law; and the more they know of its purity, exceeding broadneſs, and the unabating, unremitting ſtrictneſs of its requirements, ſtill the more do their hearts riſe up againſt it. Now, converting grace reconciles both the *judgment* and *affections* to the purity of the divine law, both by opening the ſinner's eyes to behold the beauty of holineſs, and by conforming and attempering his heart to that purity and ſpirituality which the law requires. " He delights " in the law of GOD, after the inward man;" he conſents that it is *holy, juſt* and *good*; and when his corruptions would lead him to violate its precepts, he wholly condemns himſelf, and approves that law, which, thro' the momentary prevalence of corruption, he trangreſſes ‡. But that I may be brief,

5. THE renewed ſoul has quite a new knowledge and judgment of *ſin*, and his heart ſtands quite differently affected towards it.

6. THE inſtrumental duties of religion; *divine ordinances* and *religious duties*, are regarded in a quite other manner than uſual by the renewed ſinner, and performed and frequented on quite different principles, and for quite different ends and purpoſes; namely, to promote the glory of GOD, and obtain ſpiritual communion with him in the uſe of theſe means.

7. THE *paſſions* and leading *affections* of the renewed ſoul, have quite a *new tendency, bent* and *direction*. His *joys* are

* Rom. vii. 14.——viii. 7.
† Rom. vii. 12.
‡ Rom. vii. throughout.

are quite new, as to their objects; and so are his *desires* and *aversions*, his *cares* and *fears*, his *hopes* and *sorrows*.

8. IN a word, a man, after conversion, may be said to be a *new creature*; he has new *principles*, new *ends*, new *purposes* and *pursuits*, new *friends* and *enemies*, new *interests*, new *pains* and *pleasures*, and consequently, a *new nature*; according to that very plain and emphatical declaration of the Apostle, *Therefore, if any man be in* Christ, *he is a* NEW CREATURE: OLD *things are* PASSED AWAY; *behold*, ALL THINGS *are become* NEW *.

9. IF these things, therefore, be so; if such is the *universal* and *remarkable* change wrought in the sinner by regeneration, Is it possible that such a change can have long passed upon men, and yet they be totally ignorant of the matter?

10. IT may indeed happen, that a few are savingly changed in *infancy* and *childhood*, and under the influence of an early Christian education, before vicious habits have been formed and confirmed in the soul. In others also, the change (as to the sensible effects of it) may have been *slow*, *gradual*, and almost *imperceptible*; and so, neither the *work* itself, nor the *time* when it was performed, may be discerned or acknowledged, in a course of many years. It may also happen, in some cases, that all the symptoms of a *saving* and *effectual* conversion may be felt, and yet those who feel them, may long doubt of their *truth* and *reality*, and suspect that they are *fallacious* and *counterfeit*; until the Spirit himself shines upon his own work, and compels (as it were) a convictive evidence of its truth; "The Spirit witnessing with their "spirits †:" However, it is next to impossible, but that all must know, that a *great work has been wrought upon them*, and *a mighty change* has passed *in them*; and that "whereas they were once blind, now they see ‡."

11. IT

* 2 Cor. v. 17.
† Rom. viii. 16.
‡ John ix. 25.

11. IT may be laid down as a general maxim, to which experience and obſervation have furniſhed very few exceptions, That the *greater ſinners* men have been, the *deeper* and more *humiliating* have been their convictions of ſin, and the *more ſenſible* and *remarkable* this great change in them, both to themſelves and others.

12. WHAT muſt we rationally and probably infer concerning perſons of this character, who have never yet experienced any ſuch remarkable change in themſelves? ---Either, that they are total ſtrangers to *ſelf-examination* and *ſelf-knowledge* (which is a ſure mark of a graceleſs ſtate;)---or that *no ſuch change* has ever as yet paſſed upon them!

13. WHAT then muſt we neceſſarily conclude, concerning the ſtate of the generality of nominal Chriſtians? ---That they are not converted, nor born again of the Spirit; and conſequently, that, in their preſent condition, they *cannot* enter into the kingdom of heaven *!

* John iii. 5.

E S S A Y I.

C H A P. IX.

The ſame Subject continued. *The Motives to Converſion.*

1. THE converſion of a ſinner gives joy in heaven. It gives pleaſure to the heart of GOD, and of his *dear Son*; and *every benevolent ſpirit* of that upper world, partakes in the joy, that a co-heir is born to glory *.

* Ezek. xxxiii. 11. Matth. xxiii. 37. Luke xix. 41, 42. xv. 7, 10, 32.

2. As far as it is known, it rejoiceth the heart of every good perſon upon earth. The whole church militant rejoice in it.

3. To bring ſinners to *repentance* and *final happineſs*, is the chief deſign of all the manifeſtations of GOD to men, and of all his great and memorable tranſactions on earth.

4. To effect this was the grand deſign of Chriſt's *incarnation*, *miniſtry*, *miracles*, *labours*, *ſufferings*, aſcenſion to glory, and pouring down the gifts and graces of the Holy Ghoſt, on his apoſtles and on the church.

5. To accompliſh the converſion of human ſinners, the apoſtles of the Lamb *laboured*, and *wrote*, and *travelled*, and *ſuffered*, and *died*; and this is the grand buſineſs of all the labour and expence of a goſpel miniſtry in the world.

6. GOD's merciful nature invites, allures, and encourages ſinners to repentance and converſion. He hath no pleaſure in the final miſery of ſinners, but that they ſhould turn from their way and live.---*This* he *ſolemnly ſwears* by his ſacred life†. He is not willing that any ſhould periſh, but that all ſhould come to repentance ‡. He is merciful and gracious, ſlow to anger, and of great compaſſion, pardoning iniquity, tranſgreſſion and ſin §. See this merciful diſpoſition of GOD to repenting ſinners, illuſtrated with an inexpreſſible beauty and energy, in the conduct of the *father* towards the *returning prodigal*, Luke xv.

7. GOD's moſt gracious *calls*, and exceeding many great and precious *promiſes*, ſhould have an irreſiſtable force to induce us to converſion; eſpecially when conſidered in conjunction with thoſe riches of his goodneſs, and forbearance, and long-ſuffering patience, which ſinners are deſpiſing and abuſing, to the unſpeakable aggravation of their own guilt and miſery ||.

8. THE

† Ezek. xxxiii. 11.
‡ 2 Pet. iii. 9.
§ Exod. xxxiv. 6.
|| Rom. ii. 4, 5.

8. THE gates of heaven are ſet open, and all the riches of its beauty and glory diſplayed before ſinners, for this very purpoſe, that they might be allured by the proſpect of celeſtial glory, to converſion and repentance.

9. WE are apt to think the deſcriptions given in ſcripture of hell and everlaſting miſery and torment, very diſguſting; but the ſole deſign of *theſe repreſentations* is to alarm the fears of ſinners by the proſpect of this miſery, that ſo they may be brought to a ſpeedy and effectual converſion. *Hell* would never have been revealed to ſinners, had it not been, that knowing theſe terrors of the Lord, they might be perſuaded to repentance.

10. THE *ſafe* and *happy ſtate* which converſion puts us into, and the *rich* and *glorious privileges* which it confers upon us, even in this life, ſhould be a powerful motive to our getting into this happy ſtate: Pardon, peace and reconciliation with an offended GOD; deliverance from the indwelling power, curſe and condemnation of ſin, adoption, protection; an intereſt in GOD as our portion, and the comfortable hope of his eternal enjoyment.

11. GOD's having brought down the terms of his great ſalvation ſo low, and made it ſuch a poſſible, feaſible and practicable thing for ſinners to be ſaved, will render them wholly inexcuſable, if they continue unconverted, and ſo come ſhort of ſalvation. They are commanded and invited, by a ſoleciſm in language, to buy the great ſalvation without money or price, to come and drink of the water of life freely *; only to look unto Chriſt, from the ends of the earth, and be ſaved; to come unto him, to receive him, and to believe in him †.

12. ALTHOUGH we cannot fulfil theſe reaſonable and eaſy conditions of the new and gracious covenant, by any ſtrength of our own, yet GOD hath promiſed, that

* Iſa. lv. 1, 2. Rev. xxii. 17.
† Iſa. xlv. 22. John i. 12. Matth. ii. 28.

he will put his Spirit into us, and help us, and work in us both to will and to do the things that are pleasing to him, if we *sincerely* and *importunately* solicit this divine agent by prayer *.

13. BUT the most *cogent* and *necessitating* motive of all is, That we either must *be converted*, or must *perish eternally*! The scripture is *clear*, *decisive*, and *peremptory* in in this matter: so that we are under this *dilemma*; 'We 'must either *turn* or *burn*; either be *converted* to GOD, 'and born again of the Spirit, or take up our residence 'for ever with devils and damned spirits!'

* Luke ii. 9---14.

E S S A Y II.

C H A P. I.

JUSTIFICATION: *Or the method of a Sinner's being justified before* GOD.

1. JUSTIFICATION no where in scripture signifies a sinner's being *made righteous*; but it every where signifies his being *esteemed*, *manifested*, or *pronounced* righteous.

2. THIS word, although it has always this signification, yet it has *three* different senses in the scriptures; either, *first*, it is taken for our *present* justification *in the sight of* GOD, our being *pardoned*, and accepted into a state of favour and friendship with him:---Or, *secondly*, for our justification *before men*, and *our own consciences*:---Or, *thirdly*, for our *public sentence of acquittance and approbation*, on the day of judgment, in the presence of the assembled world *.

3. JUSTIFICATION

* Psal. xxxii. 1, 2. Rom. iii. 22. &c.——iv. 2, &c. Gal. ii. 16. ——iii. 1, &c. Jam. ii. 20---26. 1 John iii. 21. Job xxvii. 6. Matth. xxv. 34.

3. JUSTIFICATION is a forenſic or law-term, oppoſed to *condemnation*. Now condemnation never ſignifies the *making of men guilty*, but only *pronouncing them ſo*; in like manner, juſtification never ſignifies making men holy, but only declaring them to be ſuch in the eye of the law.

4. WE are ſaid to be juſtified by the imputation of Chriſt's righteouſneſs: Now, to *impute*, is to eſteem any character or quality to belong to a perſon as his.

5. A THING may be imputed to a perſon, which was always his own: So *ſin* is imputed to a ſinner, when he is treated as an offender; in like manner, *righteouſneſs* is juſtly imputed to a perſon, who has always obeyed the law.

6. A THING, *quality* or *character* may alſo be imputed to a perſon, which was not *always* or *originally* his own, but is only eſteemed to belong to him, in the eye of the law: Thus, a debt is imputed to the *ſurety*, and his payment of it is imputed to the *debtor*, and reckoned *his act* and *deed*.

7. THIS ſeems to be the proper notion of *imputation* in the preſent doctrine. Chriſt as our ſurety, has undertaken to *pay our debts*, i. e. *to atone for our ſins*. Our ſins are, therefore, imputed to him, and accordingly he ſuffers for them, as though they had been his own: And his righteouſneſs is freely and graciouſly imputed to us, if we are indeed believers, ſo that we may plead it before GOD as *our juſtifying righteouſneſs*: And *therefore* it is that GOD juſtifies and acquits us as righteous, even for the ſake of his dear Son's righteouſneſs, which we accept and plead by faith.

8. As *ſinners* we may be ſaid to owe a *double* or *twofold debt* to GOD, which muſt be paid before we can be juſtified. We owe him *perfect obedience* to the law, through the whole of our lives; and *this* would indeed juſtify us, if we were innocent creatures, and did perfectly fulfil

this

this condition of the firſt covenant: But being now *ſinners*, we owe the debt of *eternal puniſhment*, and the debt of *perfect obedience* alſo, (our obligations to which, as the creatures and ſubjects of GOD, can never be cancelled:) Now, we are equally unable to pay *either* of theſe debts. As the puniſhment which we owe is *eternal*, we muſt be *ever* paying it, and never ſhall have paid off the ſcore. No moment ſhall arrive in the courſe of eternal duration, when we ſhall be able to ſay, *This debt is paid.* And as to the *other debt* of *perfect obedience*, the payment of it becomes impoſſible to thoſe who have *once ſinned*; ſeeing that obedience can never be *perfect*, in which there is *one failure* or *defect*.

9. SINNERS being therefore *thus incapable* and *inſolvent*, Chriſt *undertook for them* as their *ſurety*;---*firſt*, *by ſuffering*, to pay the debt of puniſhment due for their ſins; and *ſecondly*, by his *perfect* and *ſinleſs obedience* to the law of GOD, from his birth to his death, he hath wrought out for them a complete righteouſneſs, anſwering every demand of the law; and thus he is become THE LORD THEIR RIGHTEOUSNESS *.

10. THE righteouſneſs which is imputed to believers for their juſtification, is not the *perſonal* righteouſneſs of Chriſt, as *man*; nor his *eſſential* righteouſneſs, as GOD; but his *ſuretiſhip* righteouſneſs, as GOD-*man Mediator*; and is the whole of his *obedience* and *ſufferings*, from his birth to his death, which he performed in the room and ſtead of believers.

11. THIS imputation, therefore, is GOD's graciouſly making over of this perfect ſuretiſhip righteouſneſs of of Chriſt to believers, and his accepting their perſons, on that account, as righteous.

* Jer. xxiii. 6.——xxxiii. 16.

ESSAY

ESSAY II.

CHAP. II.

The Doctrine of Justification, through the imputed Righteousness of Christ, continued.

1. IN the doctrine of justification, by the righteousness of Christ, we are not to apprehend GOD as mistaking our real characters, and esteeming us perfectly righteous, when indeed we are not: On the contrary, he considers us as being just what we are, *poor, sinful men*, who have fulfilled the demands of his law, only by the obedience of our surety.

2. NOR ought we to esteem ourselves the *more righteous* or *worthy*, on account of our being thus justified, but as unworthy and hell-deserving as ever: Consequently, this doctrine is so far from ministring to spiritual pride, that, when rightly understood, it must tend greatly to humble the justified believer; seeing those who are *thus justified*, are still *ungodly* *.

3. THE righteousness of Christ is imputed to none but *true believers*; *i. e.* such as have truly received Christ, and are united to him by faith: For, in thus receiving him, we receive his *person*, *offices* and *benefits*, and consequently, *his righteousness*, which is one of those benefits, *freely* offered in the gospel to all who will accept it.

4. THIS righteousness is not imputed to a sinner before he has faith, nor is the imputation of it delayed till the fruits of faith appear; but the moment a sinner believes, it is imputed to him, and he is justified †.

5. BUT that this doctrine may appear in a still more *clear*, *convictive* and *unexceptionable* point of light: (1.) It is

* Rom. iv. 5.
† Rom. iv. 24, 25.

is evident, that man is naturally and neceſſarily under law to GOD; and this is equally true of all created beings. (2.) Some kind of righteouſneſs is abſolutely neceſſary to man's juſtification. (3.) That righteouſneſs which juſtifies man, muſt be ſuch as anſwers to the perfection of that law under which man is. (4.) The law was at firſt given to man for *two diſtinct* ends; *firſt*, To ſignify GOD's will, enjoined by his authority for the rule of man's duty; and, *ſecondly*, As a covenant between GOD and man, according to which, man was to expect life or death eternal, as he *ſhould* or *ſhould not* fulfil the terms of it. Now, this law, in the *laſt* ſenſe of it, is abrogated by the bringing in of a *better covenant*; but in the *firſt* ſenſe, the law, as a *rule of duty, obliging to obedience*, is of perpetual obligation. In *this ſenſe*, Chriſt came to *eſtabliſh the law*, and has incorporated it into his goſpel, in its utmoſt purity, as the *law of his kingdom*, and the *rule of his ſubjects*. It is therefore a righteouſneſs anſwerable to the demands of *this law*, which alone can juſtify us. But,

(5.) WE can have no ſuch righteouſneſs of our own; nor can any creature provide ſuch a righteouſneſs for us: And it is expreſsly declared by the Apoſtle, "That by "the deeds of the law, no fleſh living ſhall be juſtified *."

(6.) THE law, an obedience to which the Apoſtle excludes from having any ſhare in our juſtification, is not merely the *ceremonial law*, as ſome have imagined, but the *moral law* alſo:---That law, by which is the *knowledge of ſin* †:---That law which was *ordained to life* ‡:---That law, by the breach of which the whole world was condemned, and from the curſe of which Chriſt came to deliver us ||:---That law againſt which the Gentiles ſinned §;---and that law which we *eſtabliſh by faith* **; all which

* Rom. viii. 3.——iii. 20, 28. Gal. ii. 16.——iii. 21.
† Rom. iii. 20.——vii. 7.
‡ Rom. vii. 10.——x. 5.
|| Rom. iii. 19. Gal. iii. 13.
§ Rom. iii. 9.
** Rom. iii. 31.

which descriptions, are applicable *only* to the *moral law*. *Abraham* is declared to have been justified *by faith alone*, without works done in obedience to *any law* *; and the Apostle expressly excludes *works of every kind* from our justification †.

(7.) No such NEW LAW *of gospel sincerity* (taking in *faith*, *repentance* and *sincere*, though *imperfect*, obedience, as the ground of our justification under the *new covenant*, instead of perfect obedience under *the old*) has ever been given by GOD as the term of our pardon and acceptance: For, if we were justified before GOD by such a *patchwork*, *imperfect* righteousness as this, two absurdities would follow: ---*First*, GOD must be supposed to abate in the demands of his law, in favour of our corruptions; and, if GOD could abate *any thing* of the perfection of his law, he might abate *more*; yea, he might cancel its obligations altogether. In that case, Christ lived and died in vain, who lived and died to *establish* and *honour* the law; and mankind might have been redeemed and saved without his *atonement* and *mediation*!---*Secondly*, We are then still under a *covenant of works*, and *live* by *doing*: For, let the work be *perfect* or *imperfect*, it will still be a *covenant of works*, so long as *works* are the *condition of it*!---Both of which are expressly contrary to the doctrine of the gospel.

(8.) WE cannot possibly be justified by the *works*, or *merit*, or *righteousness* of any *mere creature*, however holy or dignified; none being able to pay more than that righteousness which he himself owes, as a creature, to the law of GOD: For creatures are obliged to employ all their powers, talents and faculties in the service of their Creator; and when they have done all that they are commanded, and all that they can, they have done only their duty; and therefore can, properly speaking, merit nothing for other creatures ‡.

* Rom. iv. 2, 3.
† Eph. ii. 8, 9. Rom. ii. 6.
‡ Luke xvii. 9, 10.

ESSAY II.

CHAP. III.

The Doctrine of Justification continued.

1. WE have already obſerved, that we have no righteouſneſs of our own whereby we can be juſtified, ſo that if ever we are juſtified, it muſt be by the righteouſneſs of *another*; and *this other*, as the ſcriptures declare, is the *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, who appeared upon earth to fulfil all righteouſneſs; though he owed no ſuch righteouſneſs on his own account, as Mediator (this being an office which he voluntarily undertook, and to which he was by no means antecedently obliged): For this purpoſe alſo, he was *made of a woman, made under the law; appeared in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh; gave his life a ranſom for many, and made his ſoul an offering for ſin* *.

As it appears to me a matter of unſpeakable importance that mankind ſhould well underſtand this doctrine, ſo I take the liberty of entreating the readers of this little Eſſay, to beſtow a cloſe attention to the aphoriſms advanced in it, and to the ſcriptures in the margin, upon which theſe aphoriſms are grounded.

2. CHRIST is expreſsly called the LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS, and we are ſaid to be juſtified by HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS †.

3. THIS *mediatorial* or *ſuretiſhip righteouſneſs* of Chriſt, is expreſsly ſaid to be *made over*, or *imputed* to believing ſinners for their juſtification ‡.

4. CHRIST wrought out this righteouſneſs for us, by the

* Gal. iv. 4. Phil. ii. 7, 8. Matth. xx. 28. Heb. ix. 28. Iſa. liii.
† Jer. xxiii. 6. Iſa. xlv. 24.——liii. 11. Dan. ix. 24.
‡ Rom. iii. 24.——v. 18,---21.——viii. 1,---4.——x. 4.

the appointment of GOD, in consequence of the covenant of redemption *.

5. THIS righteousness was wrought out in the *same nature* which *sinned* and *fell*, and which *stood in need of it*: He assumed not the *nature*, nor undertook *the cause* of *fallen angels*, but of the *fallen* and *lost seed of Adam*, the progenitor of human sinners. So that HE, by assuming *our nature* is become *our kinsman*, to redeem *our lost inheritance* †; and, it is remarkable, that GOD *prepared him a body* for this very purpose; which proves, that the design was originally from GOD, and that he is well-pleased for his righteousness sake ‡.

6. NOTHING can be clearer and plainer from the whole current of scripture, than that what Christ *did* and *suffered in our nature*, as *God-man Mediator*, he *did* and *suffered* properly *in our room* and *stead*, and that both his *obedience* and *sufferings* were properly *vicarious*, i. e. *for us*, and transferable *to us*, upon our being enabled to comply with, and fulfil the conditions of the covenant of grace; *i. e. believe* in such a manner as to *repent* and *return* unto GOD, by a saving conversion §; and *this alone* can account for the greatness of our Lord's *dejection*, *consternation*, *terror* and *agony* in the last scenes of his passion.

7. GOD the Father hath declared his acceptance of this righteousness for all the purposes for which it was intended, and in consequence of which, he is declared to be a *just God*, while a *Saviour* and the *justifier of sinners* who believe in Jesus ||. He is represented as delighting in

* Zech. vi. 12, 13. 1 Pet. i. 19, 20. Prov. viii. 22,---31. Heb. x. 5,---10. Isa. xlii. 6.——xlix. 3,----9——l. 5,----10. ——liii. 10. 2 Tim. i. 9. Tit. i. 2. Gal. i. 4.

† Ruth. iv. 4,---15. Levit. xxv. 24.

‡ Gal. iv. 4. Heb. ii. 14. Psal. xl. 6. Rom. viii. 3.——v. 19.

§ Read and attentively consider Heb. ix. 26,---28. 1 Pet. ii. 24. John i. 29. Eph. v. 2. Matth. xx. 28——xxvi. 28. 1 Tim. ii. 6. Gal. iii. 13. Rom. iii. 25. 2 Cor. v. 21.

|| Rom. iii. 26.

Chriſt, in the very proſpect of his *thus offering himſelf*, and *working out a righteouſneſs* for men *; and as being actually *delighted* and *well-pleaſed* with that ſacrifice which, in the fulneſs of time, he offered †. GOD's *acceptance* and *approbation* of this righteouſneſs, is alſo proved by his raiſing him from the priſon of the grave, and receiving him into heaven ‡.

8. THE way in which we become intereſted in this righteouſneſs, is by *faith*, which will be the ſubject of the following Eſſay.

9. As this mediatorial righteouſneſs of Chriſt is *perfect* and *complete*, ſo if it be imputed to a ſinner for his juſtification, it muſt be every way ſufficient for that purpoſe. It is to the *full ſatisfaction* of all the parties concerned: For, *firſt*, as Chriſt was perfectly holy in his nature, of infinite dignity in his perſon, and *did* and *ſuffered* all that the law required, ſo the demands of the law are fully ſatisfied, and the law itſelf *more* honoured than it could have been by the perfect obedience of innocent men or angels :---*Secondly*, GOD himſelf is *perfectly ſatisfied*, as the whole deſign was *from him*, and all his perfections do moſt illuſtriouſly ſhine out in this way of juſtifying a ſinner § :---It is a method pleaſing to Chriſt: He *freely* offered himſelf; he *glorioufly revived* from under his ſufferings, and is *highly exalted* and *rewarded* in conſequence of them || :---Nor, ſurely, can the *pardoned ſinner* himſelf have any thing to object againſt this method of his juſtification. He had no righteouſneſs *of his own*, nor could the whole univerſe of created beings furniſh him with any which could be available: In *this forlorn* and *deſtitute condition*, GOD pitied him and laid his help upon one mighty

* Prov. viii. Iſa. xlii. 1. Matth. iii. 17.
† Eph. v. 2.
‡ Acts ii. 24. Rom. iv. 25.——viii. 34. Heb. xiii. 20. John xvi. 10.
§ Job xxxiii. 23, 24. 1 John iv. 10. Acts ii. 23.
|| Philip. ii. 6,--11.

mighty to ſave; and Chriſt wrought out a moſt perfect righteouſneſs for his juſtification.

10. As it is undoubtedly true, that we cannot be juſtified by any *inherent, perſonal righteouſneſs* of our own; ſo it is equally certain, that without *ſuch an inherent righteouſneſs*, wrought *in us* by the regenerating, ſanctifying Spirit, we can never enter into the kingdom of heaven. This is a doctrine of vaſt importance alſo, and which is evident from the whole current of ſcripture *. *Holineſs* is that *preparatory qualification*, which is neceſſary in order to our poſſeſſing the inheritance of GOD's ſaints in glory,---in the ſame manner as *faith* is neceſſary in order to obtain an intereſt in the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, for the ſinner's juſtification. *Faith* puts us in a ſtate of favour with GOD: *Holineſs* qualifies us for his enjoyment. Without *faith* we cannot be *juſtified*: Without holineſs we cannot be *glorified*.

* 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. Heb. xii. 14, &c. &c.

ESSAY III.

The NATURE *of* FAITH *in general, and of* JUSTIFYING FAITH *in particular.*

1. FAITH is properly an aſſent of the underſtanding to the truth of ſome teſtimony: It ought always to reſt on *ſufficient evidence*, and is either *human* or *divine*, according to the teſtimony which it reſpects.

2. HUMAN faith is an aſſent to the teſtimony of *men*, and admits of various degrees, from abſolute diſbelief, to a firm perſuaſion.

3. THE

3. THE firmeſt foundation of human faith, is, when a number of men, of good character and competent judges of the matter which they teſtify, perfectly agree in their teſtimony;---when they lay down their lives in confirmation of it, without any view of intereſt in propagating a falſehood;---and when numbers, who are declared enemies to their teſtimony, yet confeſs the principal matters of it. On this foundation ſtands our belief of the truth of Chriſtianity, ſo far as it is a *matter of fact*, which recommends itſelf to our underſtandings by *external evidence*.

4. DIVINE faith reſts on the teſtimony of that GOD, who can neither *be deceived himſelf* nor *deceive us*; and therefore muſt be *infallibly true*. Wherefore, whenever we come to be aſſured that GOD hath *revealed* or *declared* any thing or doctrine, we are as certain of its truth, as that GOD liveth; however *myſterious* or *incomprehenſible* the doctrine or matter revealed may appear to our *limited, finite underſtandings*.

5. HUMAN teſtimony is, in its own nature, *fallible*, becauſe it is the teſtimony of a creature, *whoſe perfections are limited*, and who may poſſibly be *miſtaken, deceived, lie* or *repent*: Yet human teſtimony may, in ſome caſes, be ſo circumſtanced, as to give the *higheſt degree* of *moral certainty*.

6. SAVING faith begins by receiving, and ſubmitting to the *whole teſtimony of* GOD, recorded in ſcripture, as *true, divine* and *infallible*.

7. IF it be true, that we ought to *have reaſon* to believe what we do believe; or, that we ought to believe *only upon ſufficient evidence*, it will follow, that every believer of Chriſtianity ſhould endeavour to be well acquainted with the evidences of the truth of Chriſtianity, both *external* and *internal*.

8. THIS *general faith* of the *truth* and *divinity* of the holy ſcriptures, includes in it a *particular faith* of every *particular*

ticular truth, doctrine promise, law or *threatning*, contained in these scriptures. Consequently,

9. WHEN we have once paid the *obedience of faith* to the whole word of GOD, and known by the contents of this revelation, *our own guilty, miserable, helpless* and *perishing* state by sin, and the glorious remedy provided in a Mediator and Redeemer;---his glorious dignity, power, grace, offices and suitableness to our wants and necessities, we then *believe on him* as the *Son of* GOD, and *our Redeemer*. This is *justifying, saving* faith; the faith required by Christ and his apostles.

10. DIVINES have distinguished faith, as it *assents* to *truth*, or *receives and applies a promise*: The former they call an *act of the understanding*; the latter, an *act of the will*: The former they call *assent*; the latter *consent*. But faith in the simple notion of it, seems to be only 'an act of 'the understanding, firmly assenting to saving truth.' Yet,

11. THE necessity of the *consent of the will*;---the act of *trust* or *reliance*, as it is called, or the *application of the promise*, is, by no means denied: But this I would rather consider as the *fruit of faith*, than as *faith itself*.

12. DIVINES have distinguished and explained *historical faith---temporary faith---faith of miracles---faith of devils*, and the like; but as neither of these is the *true gospel faith*, to which the promises are annexed, the consideration of them is here omitted.

13. TRUE and *saving* faith begins in the belief of GOD, his *providence* and his *word*, and terminates and fixes on *Christ* and *his righteousness*, as the *great, saving object* therein exhibited.

14. FAITH, in the principle of it, is the *gift of* GOD *to us*, and *a grace wrought in us* by his holy Spirit *.

15. FAITH does not *justify* and *save us* as it is an *act of ours* (for so, it is *a work* and has no merit for this purpose;)

* Eph. ii. 8. Col. ii. 12. 2 Thes. i. 11.

pose;) but only as it *credits* the testimony of GOD concerning his Son Jesus Christ, so as to *receive* him in all his offices, according to the gospel offer of him;---to *unite the soul to him*---and to *embrace, rely upon* and *plead* his righteousness, which justifies.

16. FAITH, disposing the soul to embrace Christ and his righteousness, this righteousness is graciously imputed by GOD to the believer for his *justification*, and the Spirit, through Christ, is communicated to the believer for his sanctification;---so that Christ dwells in his heart *by*, or *through* faith; and Christ is made of GOD to the believer, both *his righteousness* and his *strength*.

17. THAT faith which is the *gift of* GOD, ever *purifies the heart, works by love*, and is the fruitful principle of *holy obedience*.

18. THE just *live by faith*. Their whole life is *a life of faith on the Son of* GOD, in which they daily lean and rely on him, and derive strength from him *.

* John v. 1,---16.

ESSAY IV.

CHAP. I.

Of entering into COVENANT *with* GOD.

1. A COVENANT is a *stipulation* or *agreement* between *two* or *more* parties, wherein certain terms and conditions are to be fulfilled, and certain benefits received upon their performance. But if any of the parties fail to perform their stipulations they become *covenant-breakers*; the other party is absolved from its obligation, and the covenant becomes *void*.

2. IN

2. IN all covenants between men, there is a *parity* or ſome kind of *equality* between the parties contracting; and by reaſon of that natural liberty, which is the inviolable, unalienable privilege of every human creature, with regard to his fellow-men, the *contract*, *ſtipulation*, or *agreement* muſt be ſuppoſed to be *free* and with *full conſent*, and the terms and conditions of the covenant, ſuch as both parties ſhall mutually conſent to. So that the moſt dignified or powerful mortal, can have no right to force any conditions upon his fellow-men, or bind them to any duties, which they do not freely and voluntarily conſent to; only upon this proviſo, that they have by ſome crime, *forfeited their natural liberty*.

3. IT is the moſt aſtoniſhing act of condeſcenſion, that ever GOD vouchſafed, to enter into covenant with man, as *his creature*, and much more, as his *ſinful, obnoxious creature*. As his *creature* and *natural ſubject*, it was ſufficient that GOD gave to man *a law*, with *a penalty*: As a *ſinful creature*, and *rebellious ſubject*, man had no right to expect any thing elſe but puniſhment, without any covenant-privileges or mercies.

4. GOD, when he created man a moral agent, did, in the ſtate of his innocence, enter into a covenant with him, the equitable terms of which were, '*Do*, and *live*;---'*tranſgreſs*, and *die*.' Man had power to keep this covenant of life; but if he tranſgreſſed it, there was no proviſion made in the covenant of *pardon* for tranſgreſſors, or of *new ſtrength to obey*.

5. WHEN man had broke the firſt covenant, and forfeited all title, not only to GOD's *covenant goodneſs*, but even to mercy,---(wonderful *grace*!) GOD was pleaſed to enter again into covenant with man. And this laſt covenant is well termed a *covenant of grace*; becauſe it is founded on the *free*, *undeſerved* grace of GOD, and the merits of the Redeemer;---and becauſe GOD's grace and Spirit are ſtipulated in it, to enable man to riſe from his fallen

ſtate, and to give him ſtrength to fulfil the conditions of it.

6. GOD being not only the *Maker* and rightful Lord of man, and infinitely *holy, juſt* and *good*; but fallen man having alſo forfeited his life,---GOD, I ſay, has a right to propoſe the covenant to man, and to fix the terms and conditions of it; and it is infinitely right that man entering into covenant with his Maker and Redeemer, ſhould be willing to ſign a *charte blanche*. Yet does not GOD force the will of man to conſent to his gracious covenant, but only propoſes it to him; ſhews him the equity and advantage of his complying with it, and *gently moves* him to his duty and intereſt, by the motives of his goſpel and attractions of his holy Spirit.

7. GOD's freely tendering this covenant to ſinners of mankind, is a ſufficient warrant and encouragement for our taking hold of it, and entering into covenant with him; which, without this warrant, would ſeem dreadful preſumption in ſuch *creatures* as we are.

8. GOD's part of the covenant is all a *free* and *gracious promiſe* of ſomething which we *do not*, and *cannot* properly *deſerve* or *merit* by any thing we can do;---and our part of it is *all duty*, which we were bound to perform antecedently to any covenant promiſe:---And even our *ability* to do this duty, and perform theſe conditions, on which we are entitled to covenant bleſſings, is promiſed and offered in the covenant itſelf. "I will be their GOD, "and they ſhall be my people.---I will give grace and "glory, and no good thing will I withhold from them "that walk uprightly.---I will take away the hard and "ſtony heart, and will give them an heart of fleſh.---I "will write my law on their heart, and put my fear in "their inward part---and I will be their GOD, and they "ſhall be my people."

9. THERE is ſomething very ſingular in all theſe forms of GOD's covenant, '*I will*, and *they ſhall*.' In all

all covenants between men, the parties fulfil their own conditions, independently on each other. But GOD not only *propoſes the covenant*, but alſo *gives ſtrength* and *ability* to fulfil the conditions on their part;---puts his Spirit into their hearts; writes his law in their inward parts,---and often makes them a *willing people in the day of his power*. The very covenant itſelf *offers* and *conveys grace* and *ſtrength* to fulfil it.

10. ALTHOUGH we are not properly at liberty whether we ſhall chuſe GOD as our covenant GOD, or enter into covenant with him, or not;---but are obliged both by *duty* and *intereſt* to do it, and to do it without heſitation or delay; yet our chuſing him, and entering into covenant with him, muſt be a matter of *cordial* and *deliberate choice*. "Chuſe ye this day whom ye will ſerve. "I beſeech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of "GOD, that you preſent your bodies a living ſacrifice, "holy, acceptable to GOD, which is your reaſonable ſer-"vice."---GOD will have *our heart*; the approbation of our reaſon and the free and chearful conſent of our mind in this matter,---that it may not be a *conſtrained*, but a *reaſonable* and *willing* ſervice. If he conſtrains any to be thus happy, it is by the conſtraints of his *grace*; making them a *willing people* in the day of his power.

11. As ſinners, in a natural ſtate, have neither a reliſh for the promiſes of GOD's covenant, nor a heart and inclination to perform the conditions of it; hence it follows, that none but gracious perſons *can* or *will* enter into covenant with GOD; and that all who make a pretence of doing it, without being previouſly diſpoſed and inclined by GOD's holy Spirit, are only *hypocrites* and *ſelf-deceivers*.

12. WHAT GOD, on his part, offers in this covenant, is *himſelf*, principally and comprehenſively: "I will be "their GOD." And this includes *all bleſſedneſs* which any creature is capable of enjoying. When GOD pro-

miſes to be a GOD to us, he promiſes to be a GOD *all-ſufficient* to us, to be *ours*, in *all his fulneſs*, according to our meaſure and capacity: For, if having this GOD, we are *ſtraitened*, it is not *in him*, (as the Apoſtle ſays) but *in ourſelves* *; in the *narrowneſs* of our own capacities, not in his *infinite fulneſs*. He undertakes to *be to us*, and to *do for us*, all that it belongs to him, as an infinitely *wiſe*, *holy* and *good* GOD, to *be* and to *do*, to his covenant people.

13. WE may ſee then that *all good* and *happineſs* is virtually ſum'd up in this covenant offer and promiſe; "I "will be your GOD." Accordingly, in other places of ſcripture, GOD, in condeſcenſion to human weakneſs, is more particular and explicit, in this covenant tender:--- "I will give grace and glory, and no good thing will I "with-hold from my covenant people. All are yours. "All things ſhall work together for good to them that "are in covenant with GOD."

14. As GOD propoſes *himſelf* in all his fulneſs in this covenant, according to the *meaſure* and *capacities* of his creatures; ſo when he makes his demand from us, of what we, on our part, are to *be* and *do*, in entering into covenant with him, he demands *ourſelves* and *our all*, *abſolutely* and *without reſerve*; that we ſurrender *ourſelves* and *ours*; whatever we *have*, *are*, or *can do*, wholly up to his pleaſure and diſpoſal; to do *with us*, *for us*, *in us*, and *by us*, juſt what ſeemeth good unto him.

15. As ſubmiſſion to GOD's *will*, and an unſhaken truſt and reliance on his *power*, *goodneſs*, *veracity* and *faithfulneſs*, are important conditions of this covenant, *on our part*; ſo, being aſſured of grace and glory, we are to leave *all inferior goods*, which relate meerly to our preſent ſtate of exiſtence, wholly and entirely to the *will of God*, endeavouring to ſubject our will, with regard to them, wholly to his, firmly believing, that every thing in our lot is appointed by infinite wiſdom and goodneſs, and being

* 2 Cor. vi. 12.

being only concerned that all things may work together for GOD's *glory*, and our *ſpiritual* and *eternal happineſs*.

ESSAY IV.

CHAP. II.

The Same continued.

1. MEN may be ſaid to enter into covenant with GOD either *indirectly* or *directly*.

2. THE very ſuſtaining of a profeſſion of religion, or appearing not to deny, but rather to avow, that we are the people of GOD, carries in it an implicit acknowledgment of a *covenant tranſaction*. The bulk of whole Chriſtian nations appear to be thus in covenant with GOD.

3. IN every prayer to GOD, and acknowledgment of his authority over us, and right to diſpoſe of us, there is the *matter of a covenant* with him; and though we may not intend, or directly avow any ſuch thing, yet we do *indirectly* and *implicitly* give ourſelves to GOD in covenant, and bring ourſelves under the penalty of the covenant, if we do violate or break it.

4. THE moſt ſolemn acts of directly and explicitly entering into covenant with GOD, are---a private ſurrender and ſelf-dedication of ourſelves to GOD:---The giving up of our children to GOD in baptiſm---and the renewing our baptiſmal covenant at the Lord's table.

5. A PRIVATE and ſolemn ſurrender and dedication of ourſelves to GOD, through the Redeemer, is one of the earlieſt duties we ſhould perform in religion, after we have come to underſtand the nature of our baptiſmal vows, and the obligations we are under to GOD. Forms of this kind may be met with in many devotional books.

6. THIS

6. THIS kind of covenanting ſhould be performed in a very ſolemn and deliberate manner.

7. SOMETHING of the ſame nature ought to be done by every communicant, both in his preparation for the Lord's ſupper, and at the ordinance itſelf; wherein an expreſs recognition ſhould be made, of all the principal and eſſential parts of our covenant with God, through the Redeemer.

8. THE giving up of our children to GOD in baptiſm, is an occaſion upon which we are called to an expreſs covenant ſurrender of ourſelves, and all that is ours to GOD: We do, at that time, expreſsly acknowledge GOD to be *our* GOD, and offer him our children, in virtue of a covenant which is ſuppoſed to ſubſiſt between GOD and us: And the vows we make for our children, ſuppoſe our own vows of the ſame kind.

9. Is it not ſurpriſing, that the ſame covenant which we renew with ſo much ſolemnity at the Lord's ſupper, is generally ſo ſuperficially renewed at the baptiſm of the children of moſt Chriſtians?

10. IF a ſolemn preparation is neceſſary in order to the right renewing of our covenant with GOD at the goſpel ſupper; is it leſs ſo before we give up our children to GOD in baptiſm? Is not *equal ſolemnity, ſeriouſneſs* and *devotion* neceſſary on both occaſions?

ESSAY V.

A FORM *of renewing* COVENANT *with* GOD, *at the* LORD'S TABLE.

AS our great buſineſs in this ordinance is to call into lively and grateful remembrance, the painful and ignominious death of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and to keep

keep up this remembrance of it in the church and world: ---As we are led to remember it not only as a *confirmation of the truth of his doctrines*, but alſo as *a ſacrifice of atonement* for the ſins of the world, and for our ſins, and conſequently as the higheſt and deareſt pledge of his and his Father's love to us, and the ſweeteſt and ſureſt ground of our hope, as believing ſinners:---And as our principal buſineſs at this ſacrament, (this feaſt upon a ſacrifice) is ſolemnly to *enter into*, and *renew our covenant with* GOD, over theſe dear memorials of his Son's death---over theſe ſigns and ſeals of the blood of the everlaſting covenant: ---In which ſolemn tranſaction we do profeſs to take and avouch GOD, to be our GOD---and to become his people, according to the terms of the covenant. I have thought it might be exceeding proper and uſeful upon theſe occaſions, to rehearſe and repeat at large the form of a ſolemn covenant tranſaction, as it ought to be made, in ſubſtance, by every communicant, *at* or *before* this ſacrament.

I SHALL therefore put this form of covenanting with GOD, in the *firſt* perſon of the *ſingular* number---that every one of us may, upon this occaſion, uſe it *for himſelf*, and make it *his own*.

LET me therefore beſeech each of my fellow-communicants, as in the immediate preſence of the GOD of heaven, and over the memorials of his Son's ſacrifice--- and as, on this ſolemn occaſion, about to enter into and renew covenant with GOD, to let their hearts and thoughts go along with this form of a ſolemn covenant tranſaction, and cordially and deliberately to make it *their own covenant*;---each ſaying in his heart with me, and ſaying it *ſincerely* and *feelingly*.

" MOST great and adorable JEHOVAH! Behold! a poor, inſignificant guilty worm of the duſt, here proſtrate before thee, as it were on the bended knees of my ſoul, acknowledging thy glorious majeſty and divine perfections, thine eternal duration, infinity, ſelf-ſufficiency, all-

ſufficiency

ſufficiency, unchangeableneſs, and incomprehenſibility ---thine almighty power, all penetrating knowledge, unerring wiſdom, unbounded goodneſs, unfailing faithfulneſs, impartial juſtice and undiſſembled truth.

" I DESIRE to rejoice (and O! that the whole world would rejoice!) that there is *ſuch a* GOD, and that this GOD ruleth in the heaven and in the earth, and doeth according to his moſt ſacred, ſovereign, and holy will throughout the univerſe.

" LORD, I acknowledge with *gratitude* and *joy*, that I am thy *creature*, thy *ſervant*, thy *ſubject*, under infinite and unchangeable obligations to *know*, *ſerve*, *honour*, *fear*, *reverence* and *obey* thee; yea to *be* and to *do* juſt what thou pleaſeſt. And I would for ever adore thee, that thou haſt ſo cloſely connected *my duty*, with *thine own glory*, and *my higheſt intereſt*: That although my foundation is in the duſt; all my original ſhame, and my nature ſin--- yet thou art giving encouragement to ſuch a *baſe*, *guilty wretch* as *I am* and *have been*, to approach thee the *eternal all*, the fountain of all being, holineſs and happineſs through *Jeſus* CHRIST, the eternal Son of thy love, with hopes of being pardoned, accepted and ſaved by his moſt precious merit and mediation! LORD, what am I? what is my *original*, *lineage*, *deſcent* and *nature*? what my *conduct*, *merit* and deſert, that thou ſhould'ſt once condeſcend to look down from the throne of thy majeſty and holineſs, upon ſuch a creature as *I have been*, and *ſtill am*:---That thou ſhould'ſt once permit me to name thy *venerable name* with my guilty lips--much more, that thou ſhould'ſt ſtoop to enter into covenant with me, or cauſe me to hope for any bleſſing from thee!

" VERRILY, O LORD, I *bluſh*, am *aſhamed* and even *confounded*, at the very thoughts of this matchleſs grace and condeſcenſion!---And were it not that *thou* LORD, haſt ſpoken it;---that *it is thine own* revealed, declared will, to regard ſuch ſinners through Chriſt, and that thou

canſt

canſt never *change*, *lie* nor *repent*, I ſhould even now deſpair of any mercy at thy hands :---For, I muſt confeſs in the preſence of the all-ſeeing, heart-trying GOD, whom the cloſeſt hypocriſy cannot deceive, that I have been an *unprofitable ſervant*, a *prodigal ſon*, a *wandering ſheep*, a *barren fruitleſs tree*, a cumberer of the ground, a *vile obſtinate* rebel, who, by ten thouſand aggravated ſins, have deſerved the hotteſt hell !---How often haſt thou called thy back-ſliding creature, while I have refuſed ?---How often haſt thou ſtretched out thy gracious hand and merciful ſceptre, while I have diſregarded ?---What *commandment* of thine have I not broken ?---What *talent* or *ordinance* have I not miſimproved ?---What *mercy* have I not ſlighted ?---What inſtance of thy grace and favour; what gift of thy providence, have I not turned into wantonneſs ?---How far have I been from uſing this world ſo as not to abuſe it ?---How many duties have I neglected through *ſloth* and *vanity*, and other *baſe*, *low*, *unworthy* motives ?---How many ſins have I committed againſt light, knowledge, and conſcience of duty ? ---How many of my poor fellow-creatures (thoſe immortal ſouls, for whom Chriſt died !) have I tempted and drawn into ſin, by evil example, wicked ſolicitations, and fooliſh, light, vain, unchriſtian behaviour ?---And therefore have *their* guilt to anſwer for as well as *my own* !---How unwatchfully, uncircumſpectly, and unlike a child of light, and a diſciple of Chriſt, I have walked, LORD, thou knoweſt ?---How many *fooliſh*, *idle words* and *vain*, *ſinful jeſts* have proceeded out of my mouth,---and how little of that which was good for the uſe of edifying, or that might miniſter grace to the hearers ? How many of my poor fellow-creatures have I *corrupted* and *defiled*; but how few have I *edified* and *profited* ?---How little have I watched over my *heart*, my *thoughts*, my *lips*, my *paſſions*, my *temper* and *ſpirit* ?---How eaſily have I been provoked to *anger*, to *revenge*, to *envy*,

to *ſlander*, to *raſh* and *uncharitable judging*, and to *injurious* and *abuſive language* againſt my neighbours, yea, againſt my dear chriſtian brethren, whom I ſhould love in the LORD *fervently* and *unfeignedly*, and to whom I ſhould do *good* and not *evil*, all the days of my life! How unthankful, ungrateful, impatient, undutiful, unhumble have I been! How ſhamefully defective and wanting have I been, in all the relative and ſocial duties of life, as a child, a parent, a neighbour, a friend, a huſband, a wife, a ſubject, a Chriſtian!---O, alas! How cold and ſtupid in prayer! How inconſtant and indevout in my attendance on holy ordinances and holy duties! How careleſs in reading thy holy word, and treaſuring it up in my memory!

"O LORD, thou knoweſt theſe things altogether, and now they lie as a heavy burden upon my ſoul! Now I ſee their folly and their *baſeneſs*; their *guilt* and their *treachery*! And O! that I might ſee them clearer and clearer, until the ſight might pain my very heart, and make my ſoul ſink in humility, and overflow with the tears of ſincere, unfeigned contrition and repentance! Behold, LORD, I am vile! What ſhall I anſwer before thee? I put my hand on my mouth, and my mouth as it were in the duſt, and cry out *unclean* before thee. My ſins againſt *light* and *love*; againſt *mercies* and *corrections*; againſt *advices* and *reproofs*; againſt *vows*, *promiſes*, reſolutions and *covenant engagements*; againſt GOD the *Father*, GOD the *Son*, and GOD the *holy Ghoſt*; againſt GOD, my neighbour and myſelf. My ſins of omiſſion and commiſſion; of thought, word and deed; known and unknown; remembred and forgotten; of childhood, youth, and manly age: ---My ſins againſt reaſon and conſcience; againſt the *law* and the *goſpel*---are next to an infinite ſum; they are far beyond my numbering; they are in number more than the hairs on my head, or than the ſands on the ſea-ſhore, which cannot be reckoned:---They have gone

over

over my head ;---they have aſcended up even unto heaven, and bear witneſs againſt me, crying for vengeance, like the blood of righteous *Abel*.---And whereas the very ſmalleſt of this number is ſufficient to ſink me into hell, and for ever to ſeparate me from thy gracious preſence, ---yet, O LORD, they are all ever before thee and in the light of thy countenance, accompanied with every circumſtance of their guilt and aggravation :---For there never has been a thought in my heart, a word in my mouth, or an action in my life, but thou, O LORD, knoweſt it altogether. Although I have often ſtudied to conceal and forget my ſins, yet they are ever in the light of thy countenance, and recorded in the book of thine infinite knowledge and remembrance, as though they had been but juſt now committed !

" LORD, be thou therefore merciful unto me a *ſinner* ; a *great* and *guilty* tranſgreſſor ! *Mercy*, *mercy*, is my only ſuit ; my only plea ! *Mercy* and *pardon* through the blood of Chriſt, is *all my hope* and *all my ſalvation* !

" O LET the King this day at his table grant me the forfeited life of my ſoul at my requeſt, of *mere undeſerved mercy* : For what profit is there in my blood, O thou GOD of ſalvation ?

" I HAVE no righteouſneſs of my own to plead, wherefore I ſhould be *pardoned*, *juſtified* and *accepted* of thee to mercy ! All my righteouſneſſes, even the whole ſum of them taken together, are but *filthy rags* ! They need pardon, but cannot deſerve favour. I do, therefore, from my very heart, *renounce* and *diſclaim* every kind and degree of *truſt* and *dependance* on my *prayers*, *tears*, *charities*, *repentances*, *good frames*, *holy duties*, and *all* my other *beſt works*, for pardon and juſtification with thee, my GOD. Every duty which I have done ſince I was born, has been mixed with ſo much *ſin*, *infirmity* and *imperfection*, that they are utterly unworthy to be accepted and rewarded by a holy GOD ; unleſs it be through the

merit, and for the ſake of Jeſus CHRIST. I therefore put my whole truſt in CHRIST the Mediator, as my *ſurety* and *atoning ſacrifice*; as my *wiſdom*, *righteouſneſs*, *ſanctification* and *redemption*; as my Lord and Redeemer; my Prophet, Prieſt and King; for *pardon*, *ſalvation* and *glory*: For I know of no other name given under heaven, whereby I can be ſaved.

"I BLESS thee, O LORD of heaven and earth, that thou art well pleaſed with ſinners, in him the Son of thy love;---that, in him, thou art reconciling a guilty world unto thyſelf, not imputing their treſpaſſes to them;---that through him ſinners have acceſs unto thee the Father;---that thou haſt exalted him by thy right hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give *repentance and remiſſion of ſins*;---that whoſoever believeth in him, ſhall not periſh, but have everlaſting life;---that through his blood we have remiſſion, even the full forgiveneſs of all ſin; that whoſoever cometh unto him by faith, he will in no wiſe caſt out,---and that I, even I, have liberty to enter into an everlaſting covenant with thee, through him, who is the *way*, the *truth*, and the *life*; the *true* and *living way* unto thee the Father.

"BEHOLD, therefore, with an eye of compaſſion thy *returning prodigal*, thy *loſt ſheep*, deſiring to come unto thee *in this way*, which thou thyſelf haſt appointed. I deſire to *come*, LORD draw me by thy holy Spirit! I deſire to *believe*, LORD help thou mine unbelief! I deſire to come *weary* and *heavy-laden* under the burden of my ſins; Lord increaſe a ſenſe of their inſupportable weight, and give me *that reſt*, which thou haſt graciouſly promiſed! I deſire to ſurrender my ſoul and body to thee, with all their powers and faculties---all that I *am*, *have*, and *can do*, ſenſible of thy right to them by creation, preſervation and redemption; and ſorry, heartily ſorry, that I ever ſtrayed from thee in any inſtance, or ever ſerved ſatan or my own luſts. LORD, do thou graciouſly accept the ſurrender through CHRIST, and make me

me in all things, juſt what thou would'ſt have me to be. Make me *worthy of thee* and *fit for thy enjoyment*.

" I CALL heaven and earth, thyſelf, thy holy angels, and my fellow-communicants, to witneſs *this day*, that *here*, over the memorials of thy Son's ſacrifice, I do *take* and *avouch* thee, O thou eternal GOD, to be my covenant GOD, and my heavenly Father through Chriſt.--- O ſave thy creature, thy ſervant, thy ſubject, thine unworthy child, who putteth his truſt in thee, and chuſeth thee as his chief good and everlaſting portion! O lift upon me the light of thy countenance; be reconciled unto me through Chriſt; manifeſt thyſelf unto me, ſo as thou doſt not unto the world: Let all thy divine perfections be engaged for my protection, ſupport, comfort and direction, through the ſtraits and difficulties, the dangers and temptations of this wicked world; through the dark valley of the ſhadow of death, and into thy bliſsful and happifying preſence, in the world of ſpirits above. Let no evil ſpirit, or evil luſt, be ever permitted to pluck me out of thy gracious hands; but lead me by thy counſel here, and afterwards receive me to glory. And now, O GOD, that I am *thine* by this *expreſs ſelf-dedication*, employ me wholly in thy ſervice, and uſe me as an inſtrument of thy glory. Make me faithful unto the death, and give me a crown of life. Not *my will* but *thy will* be done, both by me, in me, and concerning me. I truſt thy wiſdom and mercy with my temporal and eternal *all*, and only deſire a will to ſubmit and reſign to thee in all things, and to acquieſce in all thy dealings and diſpenſations, as knowing them to be infinitely the *wiſeſt* and the *beſt*.

" I CALL heaven and earth to witneſs *this day*, over theſe ſolemn pledges of redeeming love, that I do take the LORD JESUS CHRIST, the ſecond perſon of the bleſſed Trinity, to be my LORD and *Saviour*; my *head* and *huſband*; my *ſurety*, *propiciation* and *advocate*; my *prophet*,

prieſt

priest and *king*; my *righteousness* and *strength*; my *mediator*, *example* and *almighty friend!* O blessed Jesus, thou Son of GOD, have mercy upon me! I desire to commit and betrust my guilty, precious, perishing soul, with all its everlasting concerns, into thy *faithful*, *powerful*, *compassionate* hands; and would desire above all things, a farther and more experimental knowledge of thy *power* and *grace*, whom I thus trust with mine eternal all, that so my faith and hope may be yet stronger, and my doubts and fears fewer in number and of less strength. Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief!---I know that the Father hath committed *all power* to thee; hath made thee head over all things for the good of the church; hath constituted thee a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins:---I also *know* and *believe*, that thou thyself art the *all-sufficient* GOD; and, as Mediator, art *perfect* GOD and *perfect man*, and therefore art every way qualified to be a Saviour for lost and undone sinners:---And as thou art *perfectly qualified*, so thou hast often declared thy *great willingness* to *seek* and to *save* those that are lost.---LORD, save *me*, thy *lost sheep*.---Save me from my sins which are many, and from thy fearful divine judgments which they have deserved; for thou, LORD, art mighty and able to save unto the uttermost, all sinners that come unto GOD by thee.---I *take* and *avouch* thee for my *prophet*: O reveal thy word in my heart---write thy law there---put thy fear there, and give me the spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of thyself, and of thy Father.

"I TAKE thee for my *priest*:---O plead the everlasting merit and efficacy of thy sacrifice and of thy blood with the Father, on my behalf, who have no merit of my own.---O thou beloved *Son of* GOD, thou *Lamb of* GOD who takest away the sin of the world, whom the Father always heareth, and who never prayest in vain---intercede for me with thy Father, that my sins may be pardoned

for

for the ſake of what thou haſt done and ſuffered, and that I may be clothed with thy moſt perfect and ſpotleſs righteouſneſs. I would receive thee this day, O thou *bleeding Lamb of* GOD, into a *broken* and *bleeding* heart ;--- a heart pierced with ſorrow for my ſins, and flaming with gratitude for the precious fruits of thy dying love.

" I TAKE and *avouch* thee this day, O bleſſed Jeſus, for my *King* and *Lawgiver* : LORD, take the poſſeſſion and dominion of my heart ;---rule ſupreme there ;---caſt out all thine enemies, my luſts, my evil and ungoverned thoughts and paſſions ;---bring my will and every affection under the authority and direction of thy laws and thy Spirit.

" I TAKE thee, O bleſſed Jeſus, this day, for my *head* and *huſband* :---O make me a living member of thy myſtical body.---May I daily and hourly derive ſtrength, vigour, ſpiritual nouriſhment and growth in grace from thee, the living head of divine influences.---Let this be the day of my ſpiritual eſpouſals.---Betroth me unto thy ſelf :---Adorn me with the wedding garment of thy righteouſneſs :---Let me, with the king's daughter, be all glorious within; clothed with the garment of holineſs, even that white raiment of needle work, which is the righteouſneſs of the ſaints, that my ſoul may be as a bride adorned to meet her huſband :---Take me into thy banqueting houſe, and let thy banner over me be love.---
" Awake, O north wind ; come thou ſouth, and blow
" upon my garden, that the odorous ſpices of divine
" grace may flow forth ; and then let my beloved come
" into his garden, and eat his pleaſant fruits. Kiſs me
" with the kiſſes of thy mouth, for thy love is better
" than wine!" Prepare me for thine eternal embraces ; and make me a welcome and happy gueſt at the wedding ſupper of the Lamb.

" I DO

" I DO this day, take thee, O bleſſed Jeſus, for my *elder brother* and *forerunner*, who haſt taken poſſeſſion of the promiſed inheritance, in the name of all thy followers :---O do thou prepare a place, even one of the loweſt and humbleſt manſions in thy Father's houſe for me; that I may be for ever with thee, to ſee thy glory, and be a humble and thankful partaker of thy happineſs.

" I AVOUCH thee, this day, for mine *almighty* and *everlaſting friend*;---as a friend who art here giving me an amazing and aſtoniſhing proof, both of the reality and greatneſs of thy friendſhip, in theſe memorials of thy *bitter paſſion*, and *bleeding*, *dying love*: O do thou enkindle in my heart ſuitable returns of love and friendſhip. Let me die, rather than not to love thee.---Let me be anihilated, rather than be thine enemy.---Stand by, and ſupport me, in a courſe of faithful, perſevering obedience.---Stand by, and ſupport and comfort me, when all my earthly friends muſt leave me, and when all their kindeſt wiſhes and warmeſt affections, can afford me no ſuccour or relief.---Stand by, O almighty friend, in the chilling hour of death.---Let thy ſtaff and thy rod then comfort me; and do thou, who haſt the keys of death and of the inviſible world, be my gracious guardian and conductor, into the cloudleſs regions of *joy*, *ſerenity*, *peace*, and *glory*!

" I DO call heaven and earth, and all my chriſtian brethren to witneſs this day, over theſe dear and ſolemn pledges of redeeming love, that I do take the HOLY GHOST, the third perſon of the ever-bleſſed Trinity, to be my *ſanctifier*, my *enlightener*, my *renewer*, my *guide* and *comforter*; praiſing GOD for the ineſtimable gift of his holy Spirit: O thou *heavenly dove*, do thou deſcend upon my ſoul, as a *fuller's ſoap* and *refiner's fire*:---Deſcend, bearing the olive branch of peace, love, joy and comfort. Make thine abode

abode in my ſoul, as in thy ſpiritual temple :---Shed abroad thy divine influences in my heart :---Baniſh every luſt thence :---Renew, ſanctify, quicken, comfort and ſeal it, to the day of redemption : Be in me, a Spirit of peace, love, joy, and of a ſound mind ; and do thou, I humbly beſeech thee, never be provoked to leave or forſake me, until thou haſt ſanctified me throughout, and fitted me for heavenly glory.

" AND now O bleſſed LORD, behold I am *thine* !--- *Thine* by *creation*, *preſervation*, and *redemption* !---*Thine* by this expreſs covenant engagement, which I deſire in the moſt ſerious, ſolemn and affectionate manner to renew at thy table, over the dear pledges of that blood, by which it was ratified and ſealed on thy part ! I would now embrace the *precious promiſes* of it, and chuſe them for my portion.---I would now reſolve, in thy ſtrength, to perform the duties and conditions of it ; and to wait upon thee day by day, for freſh ſupplies of this ſtrength. I wait, O LORD, for thy ſalvation ! I crave not great things in this world. Order all things relating to my body and temporal concerns, juſt as thy wiſdom and goodneſs will judge moſt meet for me ; only let my ſoul be ſaved in the day of the Lord Jeſus.

" AND as, after I have renewed this my covenant at thy table, I am again to go forth into a *ſinful*, *deluding* world, where I ſhall be ſurrounded with freſh temptations :---O let me ever bear this ſolemn covenant tranſaction in my mind, that I may not prove treacherous to my *deareſt* LORD ;---that I may not add the guilt of perjury to that of unfaithfulneſs. O ! let me ever bear about with me ſuch a ſenſe of the dying love of my dear Redeemer, as may engage me to the moſt chearful and univerſal obedience to his laws.---Let me never prove a ſcandal and diſgrace to the Chriſtian name, by apoſtacy, or infidelity ;---and to thy name ſhall be the praiſe and glory, through eternal ages. Amen."

E S S A Y VI.

The NATURE, DESIGN, *and* USE *of the* LORD'S SUPPER.

1. SACRAMENTS are ſolemn ordinances inſtituted by Chriſt, *repreſenting*, *ſealing* and *applying* Chriſt, and his purchaſed benefits to the ſouls of believers.

2. THERE are *two* ſuch in the New Teſtament, *viz.* *baptiſm* and the *Lord's ſupper*, anſwering to *circumciſion* and the *paſcal lamb* in the Old Teſtament diſpenſation of the covenant of grace.

3. THESE ſacraments are inſtitutions of a poſitive, and not of a moral nature; deriving all their worth from the authority which enjoins them, and as binding upon us as any moral duties whatever.

4. THESE goſpel ſacraments are not burthenſome, expenſive and laborious; but cheap and eaſy, and yet of uſeful ſignificancy.

5. BAPTISM fitly repreſents our need of being *waſhed by the blood*, and *ſanctified by the Spirit* of Chriſt, which are both emblematically ſet forth by the cleanſing, purifying nature of the element of water made uſe of in that ordinance; and it is to be *but once* adminiſtred as an *initiatory ordinance*, on our firſt entering into the church of Chriſt.

6. As, in baptiſm, we take upon us the profeſſion of Chriſtianity, and ſubmit to the whole religion of Chriſt, we do virtually oblige ourſelves in this ordinance, to receive the Lord's ſupper.

7. THE Lord's ſupper obliges us to the ſame duties as baptiſm, and no more, nor any other: Both are *ſigns* and *ſeals* of *the ſame covenant*. The ſpecific difference ſeems to lie here: Baptiſm is but *once* adminiſtred as an

initiatory

initiatory ordinance ;---the Lord's ſupper often, as a ſtrengthening and nouriſhing ordinance: Baptiſm has a more ſpecial reference to the *religion of Chriſt* :---The Lord's ſupper, to CHRIST, the author and founder of it. How falſely then do many baptized Chriſtians imagine themſelves under *fewer obligations* to holineſs, than *communicants ?*

8. 'THE Lord's ſupper is a ſacrament, wherein, by 'giving and receiving bread and wine, according to 'Chriſt's appointment, his death is ſhewed forth ; and 'the worthy receivers are (not after a corporal and car-'nal manner, but by faith) made partakers of his body 'and blood, with all his benefits, to their ſpiritual 'nouriſhment and growth in grace *.'

9. THIS ſacrament is enjoined on all Chriſtians, as a pledge of their duty, obedience and allegiance to Chriſt, the glorious captain of ſalvation ; and to keep up in their hearts a grateful remembrance of his dying love.

10. IT was inſtituted by Chriſt, juſt before his death, after he had eat his laſt paſſover ; is enjoined upon his followers by his dying command, and is to be continued by them to the end of the world.

11. THE *ſpecific nature* and *proper notion* of this ordinance, is, 'A memorial of Chriſt's ſacrifice ; or a keep-'ing up the freſh remembrance of his death in the 'church, together with the cauſe, deſign and benefits 'of it ; all which benefits are ſealed and applied to be-'lievers in receiving it :' *This do in* REMEMBRANCE *of me, and as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, you do* SHEW FORTH *the Lord's death,* 'TILL HE COME †.

12. BOTH the ſacraments are ſtanding evidences of our

* See the Aſſembly's ſhorter Catechiſm.

† 1 Cor. xi. 23,---29. Luke xxii. 19, 20.

guilty, polluted ſtate by ſin, and of the hope we have of pardon and cleanſing through Chriſt.

13. IN preparing to receive, and in actually receiving the Lord's ſupper, we are led to conſider the death of Chriſt, on which it is founded, in the following important and intereſting views---In contradiſtinction to Jews, we are led to conſider the croſs of Chriſt as *his* and *our* glory;---we are led to conſider his death as that of a *martyr* or *witneſs*, to the truth of the doctrines which he taught, and as that of our example living and dying;---and alſo as *a ſacrifice*, by which the ſin of man was expiated: And this ſacrament we are led to conſider, as a *feaſt upon a ſacrifice*; from which view of it, many important conſiderations ariſe,---as, (1.) It naturally reminds us of the evil and accurſed nature of ſin, which needed ſuch an expenſive ſacrifice.---(2.) Of the incomprehenſible love of GOD, who furniſhed ſuch a ſacrifice for the expiation of human guilt.---(3.) As thoſe who *feaſted upon a ſacrifice*, were ſuppoſed to be in a ſtate of favour with the Deity to whom the ſacrifice had been offered, and to be in perfect friendſhip one with another; ſo thus feaſting on the ſacrifice of Chriſt, denotes our fellowſhip and communion with the Father and the Son, and that we are united together in the ſtricteſt bonds of Chriſtian charity and love.---(4.) This ſacrament being a *feaſt upon a ſacrifice*, we ought to conſider it as a proper form of renewing covenant with GOD, and a ſign and means of our participating in the bleſſings of this covenant.---(5.) This ſacrament repreſents the death of Chriſt as that of a conqueror, who conquered in dying, and who, by his reſurrection, has ſecured victory for all his followers.---(6.) His death, as repreſented in this ſacrament, ſhould be conſidered as the ground of his exaltation, and of that extenſive dominion and power which he now holds in the heavenly world, for the good of his church:---And, (7.) While we here contemplate

his

his death, our thoughts ſhould ſpring upward to his glo-
ified ſtate, and forward, to his ſecond, triumphant ap-
pearance, when we ſhall have reaſon to glory in a once
crucified maſter.

14. THE chief *uſe* and *deſign* of this ſacrament, is to
erpetuate, and, as it were, to *eternize* the memory of the
ove of GOD and of Chriſt to us; to actuate, enkindle
nd enflame our love and gratitude to them; to bring
frequently into our remembrance the moſt powerful
notives to univerſal holineſs, and to unite the hearts of
Chriſtians in the firmeſt and moſt endearing bonds of
ove.

15. NONE ſeem to have a right to this ordinance, in
he ſight of GOD, but the *true diſciples of Jeſus*.

16. NONE have a right to it, in the ſight of men, but
uch as appear, in a judgment of charity, to be *real Chri-
ians*.

17. NONE therefore ſhould be admitted to it, with-
ut a due, previous examination of their Chriſtian know-
edge, and ſome evidence of their ſincerity in religion.

18. THOSE who have been admitted upon miſtaken
otions of their ſincerity, may be again excluded, when
he church receives proof of ſuch miſtakes.

19. No perſon ought to approach this ordinance,
ithout *actual* preparation for it: Though, if they are *ha-
tually* ſerious, their actual preparation, (when unex-
ected opportunities of communicating offer them-
lves) need coſt them but little time or trouble; and,
is a childiſh and a dangerous ſuperſtition, to imagine,
hat any certain time, or any certain number of devo-
ons, are abſolutely neceſſary in order to our acceptance
this ordinance.

ESSAY

ESSAY VII.

That HABITUAL *and* ACTUAL PREPARATION *which is necessary for worthily receiving the* LORD'S SUPPER, *more fully considered.*

1. DIVINES sometimes distinguish our preparation for the sacrament of the supper, into *habitual*, and *actual*.

2. HABITUAL preparation seems to imply two things; *first*, A *gracious state*; and *secondly*, A *regular*, *pious*, *circumspect life*.

3. IT seems evident from the very nature and design of this ordinance, that it belongs only to *true disciples* and *real Christians*. It is a nourishing ordinance; but such only can be nourished as have *life*: Besides, the graces of faith, love, hope, &c. which are properly exercised in this ordinance, can only be exercised by *real, living* Christians. It is a solemn renewal of our covenant with GOD; but how can those renew a covenant, which they never entered into at all? How can such as are in league with the devil and their lusts, be said to enter into covenant with GOD? What sincerity can there be in such a transaction as this? Does it not imply the most insolent, bare-fac'd mockery?

4. IT implies also a *regular*, *pious*, *circumspect* life, such as becometh the gospel of Christ: That a man's life correspond in some measure with his profession, and the truth and sincerity of his religion appear visible, in the genuine and examplary fruits of it.

5. THOSE who have *this habitual preparation of soul* for holy ordinances, need be under no scruple of approaching the Lord's table upon the shortest warning; because, having the essentials of religion, and a habitual

seriousness

eriouſneſs and ſobriety of ſpirit, their ſincere endeavours o pleaſe GOD in the way of commanded duty, can ne-er be unacceptable to him, nor unavailable to them-elves. It would, therefore, be ſinful in ſuch to abſtain rom a ſealing ordinance, meerly becauſe they have not ad much time to make a formal, actual preparation; ecauſe, having already thoſe good diſpoſitions which uch a preparation is intended to beget, ſuch a prepara-ion is not abſolutely neceſſary; and not to diſpenſe vith it, in ſuch circumſtances, would be ſuperſtition, ot religion.

6. YET where time and opportunity permit, the very eſt men ſhould by no means neglect a careful, actual reparation of ſoul for attending ſo ſolemn an ordinance. or (1.) It is expreſsly commanded: *Let a man examine imſelf, and ſo let him eat of that bread, and drink of that up* *. (2.) The buſineſs to be tranſacted at the Lord's able is of a very ſolemn nature: It is no leſs than en-ering into, or renewing covenant with the great GOD, ver the memorials of his Son's ſacrifice:---And who-ver conſiders what kind of creatures we are; the ature, terms and conditions of the covenant, and how olemnly, and circumſpectly every part of it ſhould be ranſacted, and that this is the principal buſineſs of an ctual preparation (which ſhould by no means be ne-lected 'till we come to the Lord's table) will ſurely ſee eaſon for ſome time and care in this buſineſs, when we an command it. (3.) The very beſt men are not al-ays in a proper frame of mind, for the moſt common nd ordinary duties of religion: Good men find it ne-eſſary to take ſome pains with their hearts for the ght performance of the duties of *prayer* and *hearing the ord*, and ſurely proportionably more care ſhould be ken in preparing for the ſacrament of the ſupper.

7. ACTUAL

* 1 Cor. xi. 28.

7. ACTUAL preparation consists in a careful endeavour, to put the heart and affections in the best frame and posture possible for approaching GOD in this holy ordinance; and is expressed in scripture, under the general notion of self-examination: *Let a man examine himself*, and *so let him eat*, &c.

8. THE things concerning which we ought principally to examine ourselves, are our *knowledge*, *faith*, *love* or *charity*, *repentance*, and *new obedience*.

9. A KNOWLEDGE of *ourselves*, our *sins*, *wants*, *weakness*, *guilt* and *danger*;---a competent knowledge of GOD, his perfections and laws, the obligations we are under to him, and the duties we owe him;---a knowledge of the Saviour, and the way of salvation by the new covenant;---and a competent knowledge of the sacrament of the supper, the graces there to be exercised, and the duties there to be performed, is indispensably necessary, in order to our rightly and worthily partaking of the Lord's supper; lest, *not discerning the Lord's body, we eat and drink judgment to ourselves* †.

10. FAITH in Christ, as the *Son*, and *sent* of GOD; and in his power and grace as an all-sufficient and most willing Saviour, is a grace, the exercise of which is of absolute necessity in this ordinance; and as there is no receiving or applying of Christ, without this grace, it is necessary we should examine ourselves concerning the reality of it, before we approach this ordinance, lest we should be found *mockers of* GOD.

11. As the *eucharist* or *sacrament of the supper*, is founded on the inconceivable love of GOD and Christ, to a lost world, and is intended as a badge, sign, means and cement of love and unity among Christian brethren, ---love to GOD and *man*, is a grace of absolute necessity in all worthy communicants; and therefore, the truth and reality

† 1 Cor. xi. 29.

reality of it in our hearts ſhould be carefully examined into, before we venture to approach this goſpel banquet: For, to approach this *love-feaſt* without *ſupreme love* to GOD, and *cordial affections* for *our fellow-Chriſtians*, or while the contrary temper prevails in the ſoul, would be the vileſt abuſe.

12. WE have already obſerved, that impenitent ſinners, or thoſe who live allowedly in the courſe or practice of any one known ſin, have no right to this ordinance; and this may ſhew the neceſſity of examining ourſelves of the truth and reality of our *repentance*, in order to our approaching this ſacrament worthily.

13. WE can by no means have a ſatisfying evidence of the truth of our *faith*, *love*, or *repentance*, unleſs we are conſcious, that our lives are bettered and reformed, and that we have been enabled, at leaſt for ſome while paſt, to pay a *new obedience* to the divine laws: For, the only ſatisfying proof we can have of the *truth of our graces*, is the *fruit of holineſs* which they produce in our lives and converſations; and ſo from the goodneſs of the fruit, we rationally infer the goodneſs of the tree. It is highly convenient therefore, for all who deſign to approach the ſacrament, to try their ſincerity in religion by this *touchſtone*, ; and not raſhly to believe, that they are poſſeſſed of the ſacramental graces and qualifications, 'till they feel the energy of them warm at their hearts, and experience the fruits of them, in ſome degree of holineſs of life.

14. NOT only muſt worthy communicants have theſe graces *in reality*; but the principal deſign of *actual preparation* is to bring them into *lively exerciſe*, by prayer, meditation, ſelf-examination, reading the ſcriptures, and other proper devotional books. By frequent meditations on the heinouſneſs of ſin; the dignity, ſufferings, ſhame and death of Chriſt, who was the atoning ſacrifice for ſin; the wonderful love of GOD in providing ſuch a ſa-

crifice, and freely delivering him up for us all; the invaluable benefits and bleſſings procured for penitent believers by this ſacrifice:---By frequent meditations of this kind, the *faith* of communicants ſhould be increaſed and ſtrengthened; their *love* inflamed; their ſorrow for ſin, indignation againſt it, and repentance of it perfected, and their reſolutions to holy obedience invigorated: So that when they actually approach the Lord's table, theſe graces may not move heavily and aukwardly for want of uſe, as though the chariot wheels of the ſoul were taken off; but in a briſk, lively, active and vigorous manner, like the *chariots of Aminadab*; each acting in its proper ſphere, and all of them harmoniouſly and in concert, lifting up the ſoul towards heaven.

15. HENCE may be drawn a powerful argument for the *frequent* receiving of the Lord's ſupper: For, if the right receiving of the Lord's ſupper requires the vigorous exerciſe of all the nobleſt graces of the Chriſtian religion;---if it is indeed an *epitome* or *ſummary* of the whole of practical Chriſtianity;---if it be neceſſary for thoſe who would worthily receive this ordinance, to meditate on the *chief, vital* doctrines of our holy religion, and to exerciſe its nobleſt graces, by the way of preparation for this duty.---It may hence be inferred, that the *oftener* we receive this ſacrament aright, *i. e.* the *more frequently* our ſouls are employed in thoſe divine preparatory exerciſes, the more rapidly muſt they grow in knowledge and in grace, and be fitted for every good word and work.

16. SINCE all the benefit to be reaped from holy ordinances, is only to be expected by a *proper preparation* for them, and a due *attendance* on them, it is not at all to be wondered at, that the ſouls of thoſe who receive the ſacrament, without due preparation, do decay and go backwards in religion: For, to trifle with holy things, betrays ſuch an irreverence and atheiſm of heart, as

muſt

muſt needs, in time, provoke GOD wholly to withdraw his good Spirit from ſuch triflers, and leave them totally under the power of *blindneſs of mind* and *hardneſs of heart*. Hence it often happens, in fact, that *careleſs*, *untender* and *uncircumſpect* profeſſors of religion, turn out, in the end, *tenfold more reprobate*, *profligate* and *abandoned*, than other ſinners, who have never thus profaned and abuſed the ſacraments.

E S S A Y VIII.

Our proper DUTY *immediately after receiving the* LORD'S SUPPER, *and that Courſe of Life, in Conſequence of it, by which we may moſt effectually Honour our* CHRISTIAN *Profeſſion.*

1. WE ſhould retire as ſoon as poſſible to examine ourſelves, of our frames and exerciſes of mind at this holy ordinance.

2. IF we find that we have had lively exerciſes of the ſacramental graces, we ſhould humbly and heartily thank GOD for the aids of his Spirit, and importunately beſeech him to continue theſe gracious frames, and preſerve us from forfeiting them by freſh acts of ſin.

3. IF we find that our frames and affections have been dull, dead, or trifling, we ought attentively to conſider from whence this may have proceeded. If we are conſcious that we have been at due pains to prepare our hearts, and that we have indulged no wilful ſin; and if we find that our dullneſs and coldneſs was matter of grief to us at the ordinance, we ought not to be over-much dejected, but hope that it may have pro-

ceeded from bodily indiſpoſition, and that we may have nevertheleſs been accepted. We ſhould alſo beſeech GOD to vouchſafe thoſe comforts now, which were withheld from us at his table, and that he would enable us perſeveringly to ſeek them. But,

4. IF we find that this uncomfortable frame has been owing to careleſſneſs, and a want of due preparation on our part, or has proceeded from a conſciouſneſs of guilt from ſome indulged iniquity or unmortified luſt, we ſhould deeply lament ſuch a criminal circumſtance before GOD, apply earneſtly to the blood of ſprinkling for cleanſing, and implore the divine pardon and mercy through Chriſt.

5. IT becomes us immediately after this ordinance, to renew our holy reſolutions, and to call up all our vigilance, for the two following reaſons: (1.) *Satan* is peculiarly buſy, after ſealing ordinances, in endeavouring to rob us of the comforts of religion; to undo what was done at the ordinance; and either to cajole us into *ſecurity*, or to drive us into *deſpair*; and, generally ſpeaking, the greater ſenſible comfort we have had in the ordinance, the greater danger ſhall we be in of falling into *ſpiritual pride* or *fatal ſecurity* after it. It has been alſo obſerved, that men are liable to fall into the heavieſt temptations immediately after ſacraments. *Satan's* moſt violent aſſaults upon our Saviour, happened immediately after his baptiſm, the viſible deſcent of the holy Ghoſt upon him, and that ſignal honour done him, by a voice *from the excellent glory* *; and it was on the back of his firſt ſacrament, and after the moſt confident and ſanguine reſolutions of *Peter*, that he was tempted to deny his Lord and Maſter, and ſo ſcandalouſly yielded to the temptation †. (2.) It becomes us to renew and ſtrengthen our reſolutions, that our Chriſtian profeſſion may

* Luke iii. 21, 22.——iv. 1, &c.
† Mark xiv. 29,---71.

may be adorned, and that Chriſtianity may not ſuffer by our follies and indiſcretions.

6. THESE good reſolutions ſhould be formed *wholly* and *only* in the ſtrength of Chriſt; and indeed, *this itſelf* ought to be one of our moſt ſolemn reſolutions, that we will *live wholly by faith on the Son of* GOD. This is that all-important doctrine of humility and ſelf-denial which is inculcated upon us, throughout the whole goſpel, and which is indeed the very *ſpirit and genius* of the goſpel itſelf, that, renouncing all ſelf-righteouſneſs and ſelf-dependance, we are to rely wholly on the righteouſneſs and ſtrength of the Redeemer; going forth to perform all duty, and to encounter all temptation, only in his ſtrength and in the power of his might; caſting all our cares upon him who careth for us, and deſiring to be found only in him, clothed with his righteouſneſs. Had *Peter's* good reſolutions been formed in this manner, he could never have fallen: The arm of omnipotence would have been his ſure defence, and his head would have been ſhielded in the day of battle.

7. IF our ſouls have been properly exerciſed at this ſacrament, our conduct and converſation will ſhine afterwards with a peculiar luſtre. Holy exerciſes will probably ſhew themſelves by their natural fruits. Our faces will ſhine like that of *Moſes* when he returned from converſing with GOD on the mount; and we ſhall give the world occaſion to *take knowledge of us, that we have been with Jeſus* *.

8. IT will be advantageous after ſacraments, expreſsly to mention our ſacramental engagements in all our prayers, as an expedient to keep a ſolemn ſenſe of them alive on our minds.

9. WHEN we are called out in the courſe of providence to encounter any trial, temptation or difficult and ſelf-denying duty (which muſt frequently be the caſe with

* Acts iv. 14.

with every Chriſtian) we ſhould call to remembrance, this our ſolemn covenant, ſo publicly tranſacted, and ſo lately renewed; and aſk our conſciences what conduct will beſt become us as communicants, who have bound ourſelves by ſolemn and public vows to be the Lord's, and to live wholly to his honour and glory.

10. THAT courſe of life by which we may beſt honour our Chriſtian profeſſion after this ſacrament, ſeems to be the following. (1.) Our converſation ought in all things to be ſuch as becometh the goſpel of Chriſt *: (2.) We ſhould have a conſtant eye to the example of Chriſt, and carefully ſtudy it, as laid down in the goſpel, with a particular deſign of being conformed to it †. (3.) We ſhould endeavour to ſhew the world by our outward deportment, that we enjoy a ſerene, chearful and happy ſtate of mind: Yet at the ſame time we ſhould guard in a particular manner, againſt diſcovering a reliſh *for ſenſual, ſinful indulgences*, or a diſpoſition to levity, trifling and vanity. (4.) It is of the utmoſt importance to the honour of our profeſſion, that we *govern our paſſions*; as Chriſtian profeſſors, who indulge *anger, malice, envy, covetouſneſs, revenge*, or the like, are the foulleſt blots and ſcandals of religion. (5.) If communicants would not be guilty of crucifying their Lord afreſh, let them be careful of truth in their words, faithfulneſs in their promiſes, honeſty in their dealings, modeſty, ſobriety and temperance in their lives, and that on all occaſions they ſpeak honourably of religion.

* Philip. i. 27. Eph. iv. 1. &c. Col. i. 10. 1. Theſ. ii. 12.
† Matth. xvi. 24. 1 Pet. ii. 21. 1 John ii. 6. Rom. viii. 29.

ESSAY

ESSAY IX.

PRACTICAL REFLECTIONS *on the* INCARNATION *and* BIRTH *of* CHRIST, *proper before or after the* LORD'S SUPPER.

1. FROM the amazing change of circumſtances which our Lord underwent in his incarnation, we have an aſtoniſhing demonſtration of the riches of GOD's love to our world, and of his mercy to loſt ſinners.

2. ALSO of the unſpeakable condeſcenſion of Chriſt: And this is amazingly heightened by his perfect foreknowledge of every circumſtance of *pain*, *ſhame* and *poverty*, which ſhould accompany his incarnation, and the long ſpace of time in which he ſhould ſuffer this eclipſe of glory, and ſeries of ignominious ſufferings.

3. FROM that abaſement, poverty and pain to which Chriſt ſtooped that he might ſave human ſinners, and to which his loving Father freely delivered him up for us all, we may and muſt infer the unſpeakable *importance of a human ſoul*, and of its redemption and ſalvation: Alſo, the *dreadful evil of ſin* and *eternal miſery*, its juſt wages, to deliver us from which, the *Son of* GOD condeſcended to be *born of a woman*, and to *die on a croſs!*

4. FROM this wonderful ſtoop of humility and condeſcenſion in the *Son of* GOD, and thoſe abaſing humiliating circumſtances, in which he choſe to appear in our nature, we learn how little value GOD ſets on thoſe things which are ſo highly eſteemed among men; I mean worldly riches, grandeur, honour and high eſtate.---And hence we ſee worldly pride and vanity, worldly ambition and avarice, or immoderate deſire of worldly riches, in their true light, and have the beſt antidote againſt them.

5. FROM

5. FROM the mean and obſcure birth and humble circumſtances of the *Son of* GOD, compared with his amiable and divine character, we are taught not to deſpiſe men on account of their obſcure birth, or humble circumſtances in life, but to form our eſtimate of them, and reſpect for them, on their moral characters, perſonal worth, and the God-like qualities and perfections of the ſoul and inward man, which alone are eſtimable in themſelves, and in the critical diſcerning eye of GOD.

6. FROM the obſcure birth and humble circumſtances of the *Son of* GOD, the poor, needy and deſpiſed things of this world may borrow an argument of conſolation in their mean and ſtraitened circumſtances. Why ſhould a real Chriſtian be mortified by the contempt of the world, when this was preciſely his Maſter's caſe? Nay, ought it not rather to be an honour to the *pious poor*, that they are in the ſame circumſtances with their divine Maſter, who was deſpiſed of men, and had not where to repoſe his venerable head?

7. OUR Saviour's mean birth and low circumſtances, may teach us how little account we ſhould make of the things of *time* and *ſenſe* in general, and how little all worldly pomp, honour and ſplendor can contribute to our true happineſs. Who ſo happy and bleſſed as the *Son of* GOD? Who ſo contented as he? And yet who *ſo poor* and *deſpiſed?* And this ſhould alſo teach us how we ſhould ſtand affected to worldly things---That *quietneſs* and *ſelf-deniedneſs* of children; that holy indifference with regard to worldly things, and that *meekneſs*, *humility* and *contentedneſs* of mind, which is ſo diſtinguiſhing a characteriſtic of the children of GOD, and the diſciples of Chriſt.

ESSAY

ESSAY X.

ADOPTION *into the* FAMILY *of* GOD.

1. MEN are called the *ſons of* GOD in various ſenſes in ſcripture,---as inveſted with worldly honours and titles *,---as in external covenant with GOD †,---and as GOD's creatures and offspring ‡.---The angels are alſo called *ſons of* GOD §; and Jeſus Chriſt is the *Son of* GOD by way of eminence, and in a very ſingular and peculiar ſenſe: But believing ſinners only are the *ſons of* GOD by *regeneration* and *adoption*.

2. ADOPTION is a word borrowed from the civil law, and ſignifies the chuſing of a ſtranger by thoſe who have an eſtate, and no iſſue, and giving him the political and legal relation of a ſon and heir to their eſtate, and engaging to deal by him as though he were the iſſue of their own body.

3. WE are all, by nature, children of wrath, children of the devil, and ſtrangers and enemies to GOD. GOD's adopting us, is therefore, a more generous and merciful act than human adoption, and differs from it in the following reſpects.---(1.) When men adopt, they fix their love on ſtrangers, becauſe they are deſtitute of children; but GOD need not have done this, ſeeing he ſuſtains the relation of a Father to myriads of holy and happy beings, who have never, by apoſtacy, forfeited his paternal love. (2.) Some excellence or hopefulneſs in the perſons adopted by men, is generally the motive of their adopting them; but GOD ſaw nothing in us amiable, excellent, promiſing or engaging, but every

 thing

* Pſal. lxxxii. 6.
† Exod. iv. 22.
‡ Mal. ii. 10. Acts xvii. 28.
§ Job. xxxviii. 7.

thing just the reverse *. (3.) Men cannot change the temper or disposition of those whom they adopt; but GOD gives a temper and disposition suitable to the relation: They receive from him *the Spirit of adoption*, whereby they cry, *Abba, Father* †.

4. WE are adopted by GOD *in Christ*, and all the blessings which GOD gives us, as his sons, flow to us *in* and *through Christ*, as the channel of their conveyance. Christ, in consequence of *his Sonship* is made *heir of all things* ‡, and the whole inheritance of GOD's *human family*, is put into the hands of their elder brother for them. Indeed, he has purchased the inheritance in their name and stead, and has the right of dispensing it to his human brethren; so that adopted sinners are *heirs of* GOD, and *joint heirs with Christ*, in whom is treasured up all fulness for their supply §.

5. THE privileges of believers, in consequence of their adoption, are exeeding many, gracious and astonishing. Their state and relation is altered: From being children of the *devil*, they are become the children of GOD by faith in Jesus Christ, and have GOD's name, and his Son's name put upon them ||;---from being slaves to the *devil* and their lusts, they are restored to the glorious liberty of the *sons of* GOD; they are taken into GOD's family and houshold, are made fellow-citizens with the saints, and, in consequence of this, are entitled to protection, provision, and communion with their Father. Particularly, they are promised protection **; plentious provision ††; *sweet intimacy* and *communion* with GOD in Christ ‡‡; *bold* and *free access* to him as children to

* Ezek. xvi. 5, &c.
† Rom. viii. 15.
‡ Eph. i. 3.
§ Luk. xxii. 29. Rom. viii. 19. John xx. 17. 1 Cor. i. 5.
|| Isa. lxiii. 19. Eph. iii. 10.
** Isa. xxxii. 2, 18.
†† Psal. xxiii. Isa. xl.
‡‡ John xiv. 21,---23.═══xv. 15. Rev. iii. 20.

to a Father *; and correction when they ſtand in need of it †. They have, in ſhort, GOD himſelf for their portion---"Heirs of GOD: All are yours, and ye are "GOD's, and GOD is Chriſt's." Rich and glorious inventory! They are alſo at length introduced into the immediate preſence of their heavenly Father, in the upper manſions, and fully ſatisfied with his love, being according to the capacities of their nature, perfectly aſſimulated to his image and likeneſs; of which glorious event, the apoſtle *John* ſpeaks with aſtoniſhment and rapture‡.

6. THE marks of the adopted children of GOD, are in general, a *reverential*, *ſubmiſſive*, *loving* and *obedient* temper of mind. If we are indeed the *children of* GOD, we have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. We feel that inward reverence towards GOD, and reſpect and veneration for him, which a dutiful child does to a loving and reſpectable father.

7. IF we have the Spirit of adoption, we feel ſupreme love for our heavenly Father, and this will ſhew itſelf in the following things: (1.) We ſhall entertain worthy and delightful thoughts of GOD, as a moſt kind, gracious, reconciled Father in Chriſt; the thoughts of him will be very precious, and our meditations of him will be ſweet §. (2.) We ſhall delight to draw near to GOD in prayer, with an humble boldneſs and freedom of ſoul---to hear *of him* and *from him* in his word---and earneſtly deſire communion with him in all holy ordinances of worſhip. (3.) We ſhall have a real zeal for GOD's honour and glory in the world; rejoice to ſee *our Father* honoured, and his intereſt flouriſhing, and be grieved at heart to ſee him neglected, blaſphemed and diſhonoured by

 ſinners;

* Heb. iv. 16. Gal. vi. 5. Rom. viii. 15.
† Heb. xii. 6,---11.
‡ 1 John iii. 1,---3.
§ Pſal. cxxxix. 17.——civ. 34.

ſinners: And, (4.) We ſhall earneſtly wiſh and long for a full conformity to our heavenly Father, and the full enjoyment of his love and preſence for ever, in his upper houſe.

8. IF we are indeed GOD's children by adoption, and do ſupremely love him that begat, we ſhall alſo love all them that are begotten of him. We ſhall love the whole *Chriſtian brotherhood*, ſo far as they bear the image of their heavenly Father, by whatever names known, into whatever ſects or parties ſplit and divided.---Yea, we ſhall be linked in bonds of tendereſt affection, to the whole numerous family both in heaven and on earth, whether our *human brethren* by adoption and regeneration, or our *angelical brethren* by creation and unſinning rectitude and obedience. All who, with us, can call GOD *Father*, will have a diſtinguiſhed place in our benevolent and complacential affections *.

* Eph. iii. 15. 1 John v. 1.

ESSAY XI.

Of REPENTANCE.

1. REPENTANCE partakes both of the nature of *converſion* and *ſanctification*. Converſion begins by repentance; and it is the conſtant daily duty of true converts, as long as they have ſinful natures and imperfect characters.

2. REPENTANCE implies in it, a deep and afflicting ſenſe of the evil nature and deſert of ſin; an earneſt deſire to be freed from its guilt, dominion and condemnation, and ſincere endeavours to turn from it to the

the ſervice and favour of a holy GOD, through a Redeemer.

3. THEREFORE the proper ſubject of repentance, is a ſinner in the preſent life: For, in hell there is no place for repentance; and in heaven, though the bleſſed will retain the greateſt hatred of ſin, yet being guiltleſs and ſinleſs, they can have no proper compunction or contrition for ſin, nor any uneaſy afflictive ſenſations of mind on its account. All ſin and ſorrow will be then for ever done away.

4. THOUGH all ſinners will ſooner or later be filled with ſorrow and diſtreſs for what they have done againſt GOD, yet many in this life are *hardened paſt feeling*, through the deceitfulneſs of ſin; have their neck as an iron ſinew, their brow as braſs, and live and die in this *ſtupid, hardened, remorſeleſs* ſtate, after having drowned the voice of conſcience, and grieved the holy Spirit of GOD, which would have ſealed them to the day of redemption.

5. OTHERS have alſo ſome kind of ſorrow for ſin, which is never effectual; ſome kind of repentance which is never true and ſaving; but, as the Apoſtle expreſſes it, *needeth to be repented of*. We have examples of this in *Cain*, *Pharaoh*, *Ahab*, the *Iſraelites*, *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Judas*, and many under our own obſervation.

6. WE ought, therefore, carefully to diſtinguiſh between a *falſe* and *true* repentance; one that is merely *legal*, and one that is *evangelical*. Theſe are diſtinguiſhed by their *names* in the *Hebrew*, *Greek* and *Latin* languages, and by their *motives* and *effects*.

7. THE words *necham* in the Hebrew, *metameleia* in the Greek, and *pœnitentia* in the Latin, are rendered *repentance* in the Engliſh; yet they only ſignify, *trouble* and *vexation after ſin*, accompanied with *anguiſh* and *torment* of mind. The words *ſhevah* in the Hebrew, *metanoia* in the Greek, and *reſipiſcentia* in the Latin, are alſo tranſlat-

ed

ed *repentance* in the Engliſh, though they are of very different meaning from the former, and ſignify a *change of mind*; a *becoming wiſe after ſin*, and conſequently, a *doing better than before*. And *this laſt* only, is *ſaving*, *effectual*, *evangelical* repentance. In the former ſenſe only, wicked men are ſaid *to repent*, when the dread of GOD's wrath breaks in upon their conſciences, and fills them with the terrific apprehenſion of their guilt, danger and miſery.

8. CONVICTION of every kind, whether *legal* or *evangelical*, *effectual* or *ineffectual*, is wrought by the *Spirit of* GOD, who *convinces the world of ſin* *.

9. THE Spirit uſes various *inſtruments* and *means* in awakening the ſoul to a diſtreſſing ſight and ſenſe of ſin, ſuch as reading and hearing the word; afflictive providences, dreams, public and private remonſtrances, reproofs and admonitions, or ſerious reflections excited by ſome of theſe.

10. THE word of GOD works remorſe in the hearts of ſinners, by diſcovering to them the purity of the divine nature, the extent of the divine law, the evil and danger of ſin, and by leading the ſinner to compare his own temper and actions with the law of GOD; while the Spirit enlightens the underſtanding, and ſets home theſe things on the conſcience †; and this is called a *law work*.

11. REPENTANCE *unto life*, or evangelical repentance, is wrought by the *law* and *goſpel* in conjunction, acting under the influence and energy of the holy Spirit. The *law* is made to ſhew the ſoul its guilt and danger, while the *goſpel* points out a remedy: The *law* wounds; the *goſpel* heals: The *law* is made to enter, that ſin may abound and appear exceeding ſinful; the *goſpel* ſhews how grace much more abounds through Jeſus Chriſt ‡.

12. A

* John xvi. 8.
† Jer. xxxi. 19. Rom. vii. 12. Acts ii. 37. 2 Cor. vii. 10.
‡ Rom. v. 20.

12. A MERE *legal repentance* may be, and often is ineffectual, as in the cases of *Pharaoh*, *Judas*, and others; yet it is often preparatory to, and issues in *an evangelical repentance* †.

13. FALSE and true, or effectual and ineffectual repentance are best distinguished by their concomitant circumstances and effects; as, (1.) A mere legal repentance, is a *terror of conscience*, arising from a *sense* of *guilt* and *danger*, which often consists with the love of sin, and a hatred of holiness: But the real gospel penitent truly hates and abhors sin, and himself because of it ‡. (2.) The true penitent forsakes sin and flees from it, not chiefly as it is *damning*, but as it is contrary to the *nature* and *will* of GOD, and a vile abuse of gospel grace; and he turns from it to GOD, with a full purpose of, and hearty endeavours after new obedience ||. (3.) True repentance is ever accompanied with *hope of mercy*; with an apprehension of the mercy of GOD in Christ, and a trust in this mercy §.

14. IT is vile and unwarrantable presumption in sinners to hope for pardon or mercy without repentance.

15. REPENTANCE is sadly mistaken by those, who imagine that it consists in being sorry or troubled for sin, while they still continue to commit it.

16. LET not distressed mourning penitents despair of GOD's mercy, which is particularly promised to such, throughout the whole scriptures *.

17. As we daily sin, repentance is our daily duty: No person in this world will ever be above the exercise of this grace, or above the need of pardon.

ESSAY

† Acts ii. 37, &c.——xvi. 27, 34.
‡ Psal. cxix. 104. Job xlii. 6. Jer. ii. 34, 35.——iii. 25. Ezek. xxxvi. 31.
|| Hos. xiv. 8. Acts xi. 23. Luke xv. 18, 20.
§ 2 Cor. vii. 10, 11.
* Matth. xi. 28. Psal. li. 17.——xxxiv. 18. Isa. lvii. 15. Isa. lxvi. 2.

ESSAY XII.

Of SANCTIFICATION.

1. TO *sanctify* is to *make holy*, and to *be sanctified* is to *be made holy*; so that *sanctification* and *holiness*, are, for the most part, synonymous terms. Sometimes, indeed, to sanctify, signifies, to *set apart a person for the service of* GOD *; which has a near relation to the former sense.

2. SANCTIFICATION, as we are here to consider it, is a being *really* and *heartily devoted to* GOD *through Christ*: It is the health, beauty and vigour of the soul, whereby all its faculties being renewed, are enabled to *turn from sin to* GOD, and to exert and exercise those graces by which the sanctified person walks before GOD in righteousness and holiness all the days of his life, until *grace* is perfected in *glory*. In this sense all Christians are *called to be saints*, or to be sanctified; however the devil, aided by human blindness and stupidity, may have turned the term, *saints*, into ridicule among men †.

3. REGENERATION is an *instantaneous work*, or rather *act* of GOD's Spirit, giving a *new* and *divine* principle of spiritual life to the soul. *Justification* and *adoption* are *acts* of GOD's grace *without us*, whereby a *relative* change passes on our state: But *sanctification* is a *continued progressive work* of GOD's Spirit *within us*, influencing and co-operating with our endeavours, from the moment of our regeneration, until our dying day, and the complete perfection of our holiness.

4. SANCTIFICATION

* John xvii. 19. Exod. xxviii. 41.
† Rom. i. 7, &c.

4. SANCTIFICATION is begun in *converſion* and perfected in *glory* : and includes in it the exerciſes of *repentance*, and of all the *graces* and *virtues* of the Chriſtian life. 'Tis a progreſſive work, begun, carried on, and perfected by the holy Spirit of GOD in the human ſoul; carrying it on from light to light, from ſtrength to ſtrength, and from one degree of holineſs to another, 'till at length it appears perfect before GOD in *Zion*.

5. THE two principal branches of ſanctification, and which comprehend all the reſt, are *mortification* and *vivification* ; or, as the ſcriptures expreſs it, a *dying daily to ſin, and living unto righteouſneſs* *.

6. DYING *unto ſin*, or *mortification*, implies in it our utmoſt endeavours to guard againſt the prevailing power of ſin, and to extirpate or root it out of our ſouls, by all goſpel methods, and by all the inſtrumental means of religion which GOD hath appointed for that purpoſe. And this duty ſeems to imply in it the following things : (1.) Hearty endeavours to keep up a conſtant, lively, believing ſenſe and apprehenſion of the evil nature and deſert of ſin, both as *defiling* and *condemning*.---(2.) Conſtant watchfulneſs againſt the outbreakings of corrupt nature ; with frequent careful examinations whether ſin is gaining or loſing ground in our ſouls.---(3.) Conſtant application to GOD in Chriſt, and in the uſe of the means and ordinances of grace, for help againſt the power and love of ſin :---And this *firſt*, by faith in the propitiation and merit of Chriſt for juſtification, and a ſenſe of pardon ;---and *ſecondly*, by faith or truſt in the promiſes, and more directly, in Chriſt himſelf, for power and ſtrength to conquer every luſt.

7. VIVIFICATION, or a *living unto* GOD, or unto *righteouſneſs*, as a diſtinct branch of holineſs or ſanctification, conſiſts properly in obtaining, cultivating, and improving in all the virtues and graces of the Chriſtian life,

* Rom. vi. 11,---19.

upon gospel motives and principles. In order to this, our natures must be changed by regeneration; our religious actions must be performed according to the rule of GOD's word; in obedience to his divine authority; in faith; to the glory of GOD as their chief end, and with a humble stedfast reliance on Christ both for *assistance* and *acceptance*:---And this course must be *habitual* and *persevering*; or, as the scriptures beautifully express it,--- *a walking with* GOD.

8. WE must act in religion on the following motives, in order to the advancement and perfection of our sanctification:---(1.) We must have the example of Christ habitually in our view as the pattern and model of our temper and behaviour *.---(2.) The love of Christ displayed in our redemption, and the application of it in all its steps should constrain us to love him: This is the most powerful inducement to universal gospel holiness †. ---(3.) Our relation to GOD as his children; our professed subjection to his laws and government; the glorious hope and inheritance set before us, and the many great and precious promises made unto us in the gospel, are all of them so many *powerful motives inducing* and *urging* us on *to perfect holiness in his fear* ‡. (4.) Our union to Christ, and our bodies and spirits being, in consequence, members of his mystical body, and temples of the holy Ghost, is a wonderful cogent motive, both to *mortification* and *vivification*; and, to this purpose the Apostle most beautifully and forceably uses it, 1 Cor. vi. 15,---20.

* 1 Pet. ii. 21. Philip. ii. 5.
† 2 Cor. v. 14.
‡ 2 Cor. vii. 1.

ESSAY

ESSAY XIII.

The NATURE *and* BLESSED EFFECTS *of an* UNION *with* CHRIST.

1. UNION with a perſon or thing, ſignifies *ſuch a connexion*, as, in ſome ſort, conſtitutes *ſameneſs* or *oneneſs*; to be united therefore to Chriſt, implies, that the perſon ſo united, is in ſome ſenſe, *one with him*. Chriſt is in ſome ſenſe *one with him*, and he *one with Chriſt*. This is a great myſtery, as the Apoſtle tells us; but it is a myſtery plainly revealed and taught in the ſcriptures, and upon the right knowledge of it depends our right conceptions of vital religion, and much of the comfort of every Chriſtian.

2. THIS union is not *eſſential*, like that of the three perſons in the Godhead; nor perſonal, like that of the divine and human natures of Chriſt in the perſon of the Mediator;---nor *thirdly*, *relative*, *civil* or *political*, like that which ſubſiſts between a king and his ſubjects, or a maſter and his ſervants or diſciples: If this were the nature of *this union*, as ſome Chriſtians underſtand it, then would it be no myſtery as the Apoſtle repreſents it*; but the plaineſt and moſt comprehenſible thing imaginable: For the weakeſt underſtanding can eaſily underſtand how it is, that a king and his ſubjects make *one body politic*, or a maſter and his ſervants *one body domeſtic*. But,

3. IT is a *myſtical* union. It is a *myſtery*, and therefore the *modus* or *manner* of it can admit of no clear and and full illuſtration or explanation, in the preſent imperfect ſtate. It is however ſhadowed forth to us under many *figures* or *metaphors*, which prove, that it is a very

* Eph. v. 32.

ry close and intimate union, and such as transforms and assimulates the soul into the very *temper*, *likeness* and *Spirit* of Christ, and makes it *one with him*, in some very important respects. It is compared to the union of a *vine* with its *branches* †, between a *husband* and his *wife* ‡; the *corner-stone* or *foundation* and the *building* §; the *head* and *members* of the same natural body ||; the union of *meat* and *drink* with *the body*, which they nourish **; and the union between GOD the Father and *Christ* ††. Believers are called *the body of Christ*, and *members in particular*, and are powerfully dissuaded from the sin of uncleanness from this very consideration. In other scriptures, believers are represented as *one Spirit with Christ*; Christ is *in them the hope of glory*, and *their life* is hid with Christ in GOD. St. *Paul* did not live, but *Christ lived in him*. Christ and believers are represented as having *one common interest*; *one* GOD *and Father*, and *one common inheritance* as joint heirs ‡‡.

4. WE are not to form any gross conceptions of this mystical union between Christ and believers, as though it implied any *physical mixture* or *confusion* of the two beings thus united; and yet these very expressive metaphors prove, that this union must be something exceeding *close* and *intimate*, such as makes the soul truly a partaker of the divine nature and image of Christ; as *leavens*, *transforms* and *assimulates* it; such by which the soul imbibes (if I may so speak) the Spirit of Christ; derives strength, and vigour and nourishment from him, as its *living head*, and as the *branches* do from the *parent vine*. Christ *dwells* and *abides* in the believer by his Spirit, and the

† John xv. 1. &c.
‡ Eph. v. 30. Rom. vii. 4.
§ 1 Pet. ii. 4.
|| Eph. iv. 15.
** John vi. 56.
†† John xvii. 11.
‡‡ 1 Cor. vi. 17. Col. i. 27——iii. 3. Gal. ii. 20. Matth. xxv. 40. John xx. 17. Rom. viii. 17.

the believer *grows up into him in all things, which is the head.* ‘ As the branch cannot bear fruit of itſelf, except it ‘ abide in the vine; no more can we, except we abide ‘ in Chriſt; for without him, (or out of him, diſunited ‘ from him) we can do nothing;” bring forth no fruit unto righteouſneſs*.

5. THIS is a *ſpiritual union.* “ They that are joined ‘ to the Lord, are one ſpirit;” and this is true in two important ſenſes: (1.) They partake of the ſame divine Spirit with their Lord and Maſter. To *him* indeed GOD gives not the Spirit by meaſure. In him it hath pleaſed the Father that all fullneſs of the Spirit and his graces ſhould dwell; and, through this union, believers derive from him ſuch ſupplies of this Spirit, and his graces, as they ſtand in need of. It is the very ſame Spirit which dwelleth in Chriſt, as the head, which is diſpenſed by him to the living members of his myſtical body. All theſe members, whether in heaven or on earth, drink in the ſame Spirit, from the ſame never-failing fountain or repoſitory, and are all united together in love by the ſame Spirit. (2.) They have alſo the *ſame temper* and *diſpoſition*; the *ſame mind* in them which was alſo in Chriſt Jeſus. His intereſt is their intereſt; and his will is their will. They have the ſame aims, deſires, averſions, delights; the ſame love of GOD, zeal for his glory, and charity and affection for his creatures and children. And hereby they know that Chriſt abideth in them, by the Spirit which he hath given them: But thoſe who have not *thus* the *Spirit* and *temper of Chriſt*, may be aſſured that they are none of his.

6. THIS union of the ſoul to Chriſt is formed *by faith.* The holy Spirit works this faith in the ſoul, and draws to Chriſt; and faith receives Chriſt into the ſoul, and forms the bond of ſpiritual union between them; ſo that thenceforth the ſoul *lives in Chriſt*, by *faith* and *love*, and

* John xv. 4, 5.

and *Christ lives in the soul* by the quickening, sanctifying and comforting influences of his holy Spirit. *Christ*, says the Apostle, *dwelleth in our hearts by faith. We dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit* *.

7. THE effects of this union are many and exceeding precious: For, (1.) The moment our souls are thus united to Christ, we are in a *justified state*, in a state of acceptance and reconciliation with GOD, and consequently can never come into condemnation †. (2.) The moment of this union, is the moment of *our spiritual regeneration*: We then begin to be *partakers of a divine nature*, which, by virtue of this union, we receive from Christ the head of divine influences. (3.) With the first moment of this union begins our *eternal*, as well as our *spiritual life*: It is our *birth to glory*. (4.) Our progress in holiness depends entirely on this union; for severed from Christ, we can do nothing. (5.) Fellowship and communion with GOD is entirely the fruit and effect of this union: For, we can have no fellowship with GOD, but *in* and *through* Christ. (6.) Fellowship and communion among Christians is begun and carried on by this union: For, they are all united unto one another *in Christ*, and *to* GOD *through Christ*; and this communion is formed by their all partaking the same Spirit from Christ the head, by which as members, they are united together into one body.

8. LET us never rest satisfied, until this blessed union is formed in our own souls; and until we know that it is, by the blessed effects of it, purifying our hearts by faith, and enabling us to bring forth much fruit of holiness.---I had almost forgot to add, under the foregoing particular, That the perseverance of the saints in grace, is the blessed effect of this union; and that this union, is the strongest argument to prove it.

ESSAY

* Eph. iii. 17. 1 John iv. 13. 1 Cor. xii. 13.
† Rom. viii. 1.

E S S A Y. XIV.

Of the FINAL PERSEVERANCE *of the* SAINTS.

1. AS every bleſſing is valuable in proportion to its *certainty* and *duration*, ſo the final perſeverance of the ſaints in holineſs, if it be true, muſt be a very comfortable doctrine.

2. THIS doctrine is neceſſarily denied by all thoſe who imagine they can put themſelves into a ſtate of grace, and put themſelves out of it, at pleaſure; and indeed by many who acknowledge the neceſſity of ſupernatural and efficacious influences of the Spirit in converſion, and yet ſuppoſe this grace *amiſſible* by the converted ſinner, who, by his abuſe of his natural liberty, may *totally* and *finally fall from grace*.

3. WHEN we ſpeak of a ſinner's *perſevering in grace*, or *falling from grace*, we mean *true grace*, or a real work of regenerating grace in the ſoul: For, we make no doubt, that many who have ſeemed to have had grace, in a judgment of charity, have fallen from that grace which they *only ſeemed to have*, but *had not* in reality. We have obſerved before, that a very ſpecious religious character is often formed on the principles of *ſelf-love*, *honour*, *fame*, *reputation* and *fear*, or the terrors of conſcience, from a ſight and ſenſe of guilt and demerit, which, although it is exceeding *hollow*, *defective* and *imperfect*, yet often impoſes not only on a credulous world, but alſo upon the perſons who ſuſtain it. None but GOD certainly and infallibly knows whether perſons have true grace or not. Hypocrites often make as fair a profeſſion as real Chriſtians; and when ſuch fall into a courſe of groſs ſins, we are not raſhly to conclude that *men may*

fall

fall from grace, as it is impoſſible for us to know whether ſuch were ever *truly* and *really* gracious.

4. IT is no objection againſt this doctrine, that ſome truly gracious perſons have fallen into very groſs ſins; yea, into courſes of ſin, and thereby diſhonoured Chriſt, and their profeſſion of his religion. The queſtion is, Whether truly gracious perſons can ever *totally* and *finally* loſe the principle of grace; *wholly* apoſtatize from GOD, and fall into reprobacy and condemnation?

5. SOME have imagined, that the ſaints may fall *totally* from grace, but not *finally*; as in the inſtances of *David* and *Solomon*: But, though this would ſolve many difficulties, yet it does not ſeem to be the ſcripture doctrine.

6. IF what we have ſaid of *converſion* be true, it ſeems by no means probable, that GOD ſhould regenerate men, and give them his Spirit, and wholly change their natures, and put his image on their ſouls, and yet, that either *they themſelves*, or the *devil*, ſhould be allowed to deſtroy and undo this glorious work, and wholly raze and blot out that image of his, which was engraven by his Spirit on their hearts!

7. IF GOD, by an act of aſtoniſhing grace, *juſtifies us* when *ungodly*; if he alſo takes us out of the *devil's* family by *adoption*, and gives us the ſpirit and temper of ſons, whereby we are diſpoſed and enabled to cry, *Abba, Father*, and to render a filial and dutiful obedience: Can we ſuppoſe him ſo capricious (with reverence be it ſpoken!) as to change his own free acts; recal his gifts and favours; condemn us again and caſt us back to the family of the devil, from which he had but juſt taken us by a miracle of mercy; eſpecially when we are told that *his gifts and calling are without repentance* *.

8. IF the doctrine of our *myſtical union with Chriſt*, through faith and the indwelling influences of the Spirit,

* Pſal. lxxxix. 28,---34. Rom. viii. 32,---39.

rit, be true; the perſeverance of the ſaints in holineſs, muſt follow of conſequence: For, can we ſuppoſe that the myſtical body of Chriſt can be mangled or diſmembered? That his members may be cut off and made members of the devil? Or that our bodies may be one day *temples of the holy Ghoſt*, and the next *ſynagogues of ſatan*?

9. Is it not ſomething very ſhocking and abſurd to reaſon, to ſuppoſe, that the ſtates of men GOD-ward ſhould be liable to hourly change; one hour juſtified perſons, the next under ſentence of condemnation; one hour holy ſaints, the next profane reprobates; one hour favourites of heaven, the next confederates with hell: The hour before death in a ſtate of ſalvation, angels ready to guard and convey them to bliſs; an hour hence, the prey of devils, and conveyed by them to everlaſting torments!

10. WE do not ſay that the ſaints are infallible by any power of ſtanding in themſelves; or that divine grace is a thing, which, in its own nature cannot be loſt. We believe, that if believers were left to themſelves, they would fall from grace every hour. But we found this doctrine wholly on the power and promiſe of GOD; firmly believing, on the authority of his infallible word, "That his gifts and calling are without repentance; "and that all who are begotten again to a lively hope, "through the reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt from the "dead, to an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, and "that fadeth not away, reſerved in the heavens for "them, SHALL BE KEPT BY THE POWER OF GOD, "THROUGH FAITH, UNTO SALVATION, ready to be re-"vealed in the laſt times *."

11. FOR the clear and ſuperabundant ſcripture evi-

dence

* 1 Pet. i. 3,---6.

dence of this doctrine, read with attention the scriptures referred to below in the margin *.

12. THE scripture instances or examples alledged against this doctrine, are either, (1.) Of *hypocritical professors*, or *mere temporary believers*, falling from an outward profession of religion, which we believe to be a very possible and common case. Or, (2.) Of the *casual* and *temporary* defections and falls of true saints, which we readily grant to be too frequent a case. Or, (3.) Of *conditional threatenings* made to true saints, as a means of, and excitement to their perseverance. And all these scripture instances which are commonly objected to this doctrine, may, without straining them, be reduced to one or other of these classes.

13. THE principal objections alledged against this doctrine, from the nature and tendency of it, is, (1.) That it ministers to carnal confidence and security, and tends to hinder that watchfulness and circumspection, that holy fear and trembling with which it becomes such guilty, imperfect creatures as we are, to work out our salvation: But, the very best of men, can have no ground of confidence, save in the strength and promise of GOD. We know also, that if we live not holily, watchfully and circumspectly, we have no true grace. These are the only certain and infallible signs and marks of true grace, and where these are wanting, it would be the most irrational and absurd presumption, to be confident of persevering in a grace which we have not. (2.) It is objected, that this doctrine renders admonitions and reproofs, vain and needless. But these are the very appointed means of our standing, and to prevent our apostacy

* John x. 27,---29.——vi. 39, 40.——xvii. 11. 1 John ii. 19. ——iii. 9. Eph. i. 13, 14. 2 Tim. ii. 19.——iv. 18. Matth. xxiv. 24. Rom. xi. 29. Isa. xlii. 3.——liii. 11, 12. Philip. i. 6. Heb. vi. 17, 18. Jude i. Psal. xxii. 30. Isa. liv. 10. Jer. xxxi. 33, 34. Job xvii. 9.

apoſtacy and ruin. We can have no certainty of perſeverance, but what ariſes from our certainty of the truth of grace, and this can be only aſcertained by a ready and chearful compliance with every goſpel motive to univerſal holineſs.

14. FEW Chriſtians *can* or *ought* to take any comfort from the application of this doctrine to themſelves. None have any right to do ſo, but ſuch as have the cleareſt and moſt ſatisfying evidences of the truth of grace in themſelves. And how few real Chriſtians, comparatively ſpeaking, have actually attained to this ſatisfying evidence of the truth of grace, from which they may take the comfort of the doctrine of perſeverance?

15. LET it therefore be our firſt and principal care, to have true grace; let it be our next to know that we have it, to make our calling and election ſure and certain to ourſelves; and then let us freely rejoice in the immutability of the divine love;---that his gifts and calling are without repentance; that where he has once begun a good work, he will carry it on to the day of Chriſt Jeſus, and that neither earth nor hell, ſhall be able to pluck us out of his hand, or out of his Father's hand. Amen.

ESSAY XV.

Of PEACE *of* CONSCIENCE.

1. CONSCIENCE is a comparing of our moral actions with their rule, and a practical judging of them by this rule; the reſult of which is, that we either *acquit* or *condemn* ourſelves, according to this

evidence. When we acquit ourſelves upon this practical judgment, then have we *peace of conſcience*.

2. PEACE of conſcience is the *fruit* and *effect* of *ſanctification*: For, it is impoſſible that an unſanctified, impenitent, graceleſs perſon, can, upon true evidence, acquit himſelf at the bar of his own conſcience; or, in other words, enjoy true peace of conſcience.

3. IN order to true peace of conſcience, it is not enough that the matter of our actions be conformable to the law of GOD: We muſt alſo be conſcious that they are done from *right motives* and for *right ends*; in obedience to the authority of GOD, with a view to his glory and the good of our fellow creatures, or for our own ſpiritual benefit.

4. IT is one thing to be able to acquit ourſelves of *ſome particular crime* falſely laid to our charge by men, which a very wicked perſon may be able to do; and quite another thing to be able to acquit ourſelves, in our *general conduct*, in the ſight of GOD. In order to *this peace*, we muſt labour to maintain the teſtimony of a good conſcience, both *towards* GOD and *towards men*; or, as the Apoſtle elſewhere expreſſes it, we muſt *have lived in all good conſcience* *.

5. A GOOD, *quiet*, and *peaceable* conſcience is one of the greateſt bleſſings upon earth; one of the richeſt and moſt invaluable privileges of the ſanctified; can be only obtained in the way of circumſpect holineſs, and ſhould be purſued with the utmoſt aſſiduity by every Chriſtian. Both the nature of it, and an earneſt reſolution to purſue it, are well expreſſed in theſe words of *Job*: *My heart ſhall not reproach me, ſo long as I live* †.

6. Two things are particularly neceſſary to peace of conſcience: *Firſt*, That *our ſins are pardoned*, through faith

* Acts xxiii. 1.——xxiv. 16.

† Job xxvii. 6. Read alſo, 1 John iii. 19,---21. 1 Tim. i. 5. 1 Pet. iii. 19. 1 Tim. iii. 9.

faith in the Redeemer's blood: For, where guilt remains, there can be no ground for peace, and where a ſenſe of guilt remains, no peace can actually take place *. *Secondly*, A *holy life*: For, *there is no peace, ſaith my* GOD, *to the wicked* †.

7. THE *pure* and *raviſhing* pleaſures, the *ſolid joys* and *extatic delights* of a peaceable conſcience, are beautifully expreſſed by the Apoſtle ‡; "For this is our rejoicing, "even the teſtimony of our conſcience, that in ſimpli-"city and godly ſincerity, not with fleſhly wiſdom, but "by the grace of GOD, we have had our converſation "in the world." And again §; "Therefore, being "juſtified by faith, we have peace with GOD, through "our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and rejoice in hope of the glo-"ry of GOD. We glory in tribulations alſo; know-"ing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, "experience; and experience, hope; and hope mak-"eth not aſhamed, becauſe the love of GOD is ſhed "abroad in our hearts by the holy Ghoſt, which is given "unto us."

8. THE *horrors* of an *evil, guilty, condemning* conſcience are, beyond compare, the moſt ſhocking miſeries of this life; and too certain preludes of that worm which dieth not, and that fire which is not quenched. Conſcience is a lion, which will one day or other, riſe up and tear to pieces, with reſiſtleſs fury, the impenitent ſinner. We have ſome inſtructive and alarming inſtances of theſe horrors of a guilty and awakened conſcience, in the caſes of *Cain*, *Judas* and *Francis Spira*.

9. THE dangerous and deſtructive counterfeit of *peace of conſcience*, is *ſecurity*, or a *falſe* and *ill-grounded* peace of mind, in a wilful courſe of ſin. This ariſes either from falſe

* Heb. ix. 11,---14.——x. 22.
† Iſa. lvii. 21.
‡ 2 Cor. i. 12.
§ Rom. v. 1,---4.

falſe and unworthy notions of God's perfections, or from a long cuſtom of ſinning againſt light, whereby the conſcience becomes as it were *ſeared* and *paſt feeling* * : But a piercing light will, one day or other, diſcover this cheat to the ſinner, and fill his ſoul with an anguiſh which he ſhall neither be able to ſupport nor divert.

10. Let us labour to obtain an *enlightened, well informed* conſcience, that we may neither, on the one hand, become the dupes of ſuperſtitious fears, groundleſs panics, and imaginary terrors, for actions in which there is really no guilt; nor, on the other, like Saint Paul, bring guilt upon ourſelves, by erring *ignorantly through unbelief* †.

11. Let us pray and labour for a *tender, ſenſible, faithful* conſcience; leſt we be given over to the dreadful ſoul-deſtroying judgments of *blindneſs of mind* and *hardneſs of heart*.

* Eph. iv. 18, 19.
† 1 Tim. i. 13.

ESSAY XVI.

Of Joy *in the* Holy Ghost.

1. JOY in the holy Ghoſt, is a joy proceeding not merely from the teſtimony of a good conſcience; but alſo from the chearing influences of the holy Spirit, the comforter, bearing witneſs with the comfortable teſtimony of our own ſpirits, ſhining upon the work of grace in our ſouls, and making it viſible to ourſelves; the conſequence of which is, that we are filled with joy unſpeakable and full of glory.

2. It

2. It is a direct fruit of the Spirit, not only as *sanctifying*, but as *comforting* *: It is the love of God shed abroad in our hearts, by the holy Ghost which is given unto us †.

3. This also is a privilege only of the *sanctified*: For, although the holy Ghost operates on the hearts of the wicked, as a *renewer* and *sanctifier*; yet he visits none as a *comforter*, sheding abroad the love of God in their hearts, except such as are in a state of *pardon* and *reconciliation* with God, and as are *actually holy*.

4. If we would experience and enjoy within us, that spiritual kingdom of God, which consists in *righteousness, and peace, and joy in the holy Ghost* ‡; we must, by a *virtuous, watchful* and *circumspect* life, have our souls always prepared and adorned, as fit temples for the residence of the holy Ghost: For, this joy does not seem to be essential to a sanctified state; but seems rather to depend much on the manner in which we improve our talents, and entertain and cherish the motions and operations of the holy Spirit on our minds. It may be also, in many cases, a peculiar and sovereign favour conferred by God on some believers, who may best improve it to his glory, and the comfort and edification of others, or certain important occasions and emergencies.

5. As, therefore, we would expect this divine privilege, and taste this pure and heavenly joy, let us be solicitously watchful over every movement of our hearts and affections, and labour after the utmost purity of soul.

6. Many poor Christians are so far from enjoying these *luxuries of religion*, that through some peculiar infelicity of constitution or external circumstances, or from some other cause known only to God, they walk continually

* Gal. v. 22.
† Rom. v. 4.
‡ Rom. xiv. 17.

nually in darkneſs and ſee no light: Let not ſuch, however, be over much diſtreſſed, provided they are but enabled to *truſt in the* LORD, *and ſtay themſelves upon their* GOD *.

* Iſa. l. 10.

ESSAY XVII.

Whether CHRISTIANS *may be fully aſſured of* GOD'*s eternal* LOVE, *in this* LIFE?

1. BY *a full aſſurance of* GOD'*s love*, we mean, 'Such 'a firm and well-grounded perſuaſion of his 'love to us, of the truth of grace in us, and of the cer-'tainty of our future glory and happineſs, as excludes 'all doubts and fears, and as affords juſt ground of joy 'and triumph.' The Apoſtle terms it, *The full aſſurance of hope* *.

2. WE do not ſuppoſe that *every believer* attains to this privilege; for, we do not ſuppoſe that aſſurance is *of the eſſence of faith*. To *believe* and *truſt* in Chriſt, is *one thing*, and to be *perſuaded* and *aſſured* that we do believe and truſt in him, agreeable to the goſpel command is *another* and a *very different* thing: The *firſt* is a *direct*, the *ſecond* a reflex act of faith: By the *firſt* we are actually in the way of ſalvation; by the *ſecond* we know and are comfortably aſſured that we are ſo; and the *firſt may be* and often *is*, without the ſecond †.

3. THIS

* Heb. vi. 11.
† Iſa. l. 10.

3. THIS comfortable aſſurance of GOD's eternal love is not, in its own nature *permanent*; but may be, and often is *loſt for a time*, either through falls and miſcarriages, or an unwatchful and uncircumſpect life, or for other reaſons and purpoſes known only to GOD. Nay, it may be doubted, whether any Chriſtian ever enjoyed this privilege uninterruptedly for many years, or even months together. Nor indeed is it neceſſary, as it is not eſſential to ſalvation. It is neceſſary to our ſalvation, that we ſhould always truſt in GOD; but it is not equally neceſſary, that we ſhould always know that we do ſo.

4. GOD may have wiſe and gracious reaſons for withholding this comfortable aſſurance wholly from ſome Chriſtians, and for interrupting it often in others; namely, to humble and preſerve them from ſpiritual pride; to chaſtize them for careleſſneſs and unwatchfulneſs, and to exerciſe them in the graces of godly ſorrow, repentance, patience, dependance, and a painful diligence in the work of religion.

5. CHRISTIANS may alſo forfeit this comfortable aſſurance, by their miſcarriages and indiſcretions; by grieving the holy Spirit and reſiſting his motions and impulſes, and by neglecting the duties of meditation, ſelf-examination, prayer, and the other inſtrumental ordinances of GOD's appointment.

6. BUT this aſſurance is a privilege certainly *attainable* by Chriſtians, becauſe it has been *actually attained* by numbers of GOD's people. It appears that *Job* *, *David* †, St. *Paul* and all the other apoſtles had this comfortable aſſurance ‡.

7. IT was one principal deſign of writing the ſcriptures, that we might come to this comfortable aſſurance,

 and

* Job xix. 23,---27.

† 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. and his pſalms paſſim.

‡ 2 Tim. i. 12.——iv. 7, 8. 2 Cor. iv. 17.——v. 1, 6, 7, 8. Philip. i. 19,---23. 1 John iii. 2, 3, &c.

and we are repeatedly exhorted and commanded to seek for it and obtain it, which proves that it is attainable *.

8. THERE are numberless conditional promises of salvation laid down in scripture, the conditions whereof, if we can be persuaded that we have been enabled to fulfil them, we may be equally assured of *eternal life*, and that we are in a *state of salvation*. For instance; *he that believeth, repenteth, is converted and born of* GOD, *shall be saved*. "This is the record, that GOD hath given unto "us eternal life, and this life is in his Son: He that "hath the Son, hath life; and he that hath not the "Son, hath not life; but the wrath of GOD abideth "on him." If, therefore, I have obtained a rational assurance, that I have *believed*, or *received the Son of* GOD *by faith*; that I have *repented*, and am *truly regenerated* and *born again of the Spirit*, I am equally assured of *eternal life*.

9. THE scriptures abound with marks and characters of *true believers* and *real converts*. *E. g.* "This is the "love of GOD, that ye keep his commandments. We "know that we have passed from death unto life, be-"cause we love the brethren. The fruits of the Spirit "are love, joy, peace, &c. and they that are Christ's, "have crucified the flesh, with its lusts. There is, "therefore, now no condemnation to them that are in "Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after "the Spirit. To be spiritually minded is life and "peace. As many as are led by the Spirit of GOD, "they are the sons of GOD. Every man, who hath "this hope in himself, purifyeth himself, as GOD is "pure, &c." Now, if we are rationally and upon good grounds persuaded that we have these marks and characters, we may be equally assured of spiritual life in possession, and eternal life in reversion.

10. THE

* John xx. 31. 1 John i. 4.——v. 13. 2 Cor. xiii. 5. Gal. vi. 3, 4, &c.

10. THE witneſs of the Spirit may alſo concur with and ſhine upon this evidence, and give us an irreſiſtable perſuaſion, that this is indeed our happy caſe *.

11. THE following things ſeem neceſſary to this aſſurance: (1.) There muſt be *promiſes* of life and ſalvation revealed, as *objects* of our faith.---(2.) There muſt be *marks* and *characters* revealed, as a *rule* whereby we may examine and try ourſelves, and know our ſtate.---(3.) Theſe marks and evidences of grace muſt be *diſcovered*, in an ordinary way, by frequent, diligent, and impartial *ſelf-examination*, which is the only rational expedient on our part to come at *ſelf-knowledge*.---(4.) It is neceſſary, that we ſhould *diſcern in ourſelves* theſe marks and evidences, to which the promiſes of ſalvation are made: And, (5.) In order to remove all doubt and uncertainty, it ſeems neceſſary, in moſt caſes, that the Spirit ſhould ſhine upon his own work, and give his *concurring teſtimony*; and for this we ſhould earneſtly pray, while we examine.

12. THERE is an *extraordinary witneſs of the Spirit*, which ſeems diſtinct from this, and which is much more rare and uncommon; wherein, without any ſelf-examination, reflection or reaſoning, the Spirit of GOD *immediately ſhines on the ſoul*, with ſuch an irreſiſtable and overpowering light, and with ſuch ſenſible firſt-fruits of heavenly glory, as puts the perſons thus highly favoured, infinitely above all doubt of the ſafety of their ſtate. This often happens to *eminently holy men*, upon the near approach of death.

13. THE very loweſt degree of this aſſurance is not to be expected without *true faith*, and a conſcientious regard to GOD's commandments, accompanied with ſelf-examination, and careful ſerious reflections on our temper, frame and actions, compared with the word of GOD.

 14. IT

* Rom. v. 1,---5.——viii. 15,---17.

14. IT is the duty of every Chriſtian, to labour to obtain this comfortable aſſurance of the ſafety and happineſs of his ſtate, for the following reaſons: (1.) Without it he can have no rational hope, or joy in the holy Ghoſt. (2.) He cannot, with truth and ſincerity, bear an honourable teſtimony to religion, or encourage and comfort others from his own experience. (3.) He cannot praiſe GOD or rejoice in him, as he ought; nor be ſo chearful in his ſervice, or ſo examplary in his own life, as he otherwiſe might. (4.) His death cannot be honourable to chriſtianity, nor edifying to ſaints or ſinners; as he muſt go down to the grave, in a ſtate of doubt and heſitancy.

15. To obtain this comfortable aſſurance, is, for ordinary, a work which requires much labour, diligence and perſeverance; but when obtained, it will abundantly recompence the labour of a whole lifetime.

ESSAY XVIII.

The IMMORTALITY *of the* SOUL.

1. THE doctrine of the ſoul's immortality is of great importance in religion: For, if the ſoul periſhed with the body, *ſelf-denial*, *mortification*, and *extreme ſufferings* in the cauſe of virtue, would be *abſurd*;--- and the beſt Chriſtians would, as the Apoſtle ſuggeſts, be of all men the moſt miſerable.

2. BY the ſoul's being *immortal*, we do not mean that it is impoſſible for him who made it to deſtroy it; or that it is, in its own nature, immortal, independently on GOD; but that it does not periſh or die with, or like the body,

body, nor can be deſtroyed by any creature; but is appointed by GOD for an endleſs exiſtence, and fitted and qualified for this deathleſs exiſtence in its own nature.

3. REASON does not aſſure us, that *thought* and *conſciouſneſs* are *inſeparable* and *eſſential* properties of human ſouls: For ought we know, they may be and exiſt without continued thought, conſciouſneſs and reflection, though the contrary opinion is highly probable, and ſeems to be countenanced by ſcripture.

4. WE know of but two kinds of ſubſtances in the univerſe, *matter* and *ſpirit*. And theſe we conceive of as entirely different and diſtinct from one another. GOD, we are ſure, is a *pure ſpirit*; *immaterial*, *without body* or *bodily parts*: But we are not equally certain that created ſpirits, either *angels* or *human ſouls*, are ſpirits of the ſame nature with GOD, or *wholly immaterial*. Though their being called *ſpirits*, and being ſaid to be made after the image of GOD, and to be *his off-ſpring*, is a *ſtrong preſumption* that they are *immaterial*.

5. IF it could be certainly proved that our ſouls are wholly immaterial, as GOD is, it would be a ſtrong argument in favour of their immortality: Becauſe, it would hence follow, that they are *incapable of diſſolution*; that they could not periſh with the body, and that none but GOD could deſtroy them. But we have abundant arguments to prove the *ſoul's immortality*, laying aſide the conſideration of its being *immaterial*.

6. THERE is much the ſame reaſon to believe the *ſpirits of brutes* to be *immaterial*, as the *ſouls of men*. *Both* are called *ſpirits* in the ſcripture; though it is ſaid, that the one *goeth upward* at death, and the other *downwards*. And it is as difficult to conceive how a *merely material* ſubſtance ſhould *perceive*, *reaſon*, *remember*, *compare*, *love* and *hate* in a *beaſt*, more than in a *man*. Yet there are not the ſame reaſons to believe the immortality of the ſpirits of beaſts, as of the ſouls of men.

7. THE

7. THE ſtrongeſt and moſt concluſive arguments for the *immortality of human ſouls*, are of a *moral nature*, and do not ariſe from their being *immaterial*: For, although we know our bodies to be material, yet we have ſufficient reaſon to believe, that they ſhall be raiſed from the dead, and rendered immortal in a future ſtate. And if we have reaſon to believe this of our mortal bodies, why may we not believe the ſame of our ſouls, even ſuppoſing them to be material.

8. THERE is a great apparent reſemblance between men and brutes in many reſpects, both *living* and *dying*. They ſeem to have much the ſame natural perceptions of pleaſure and pain. All the brute creation ſeem to have ſome portion of reaſon, fore-thought, contrivance and memory. So that it is hard to conceive an eſſential difference between the ſouls of men and the ſpirits of beaſts; only, that the former appear to be a more perfect kind of ſpirits. Yet there are many *great* and *eſſential* differences between men and beaſts, which lay a foundation for believing the ſouls of men to be *immortal*, whereas the ſpirits of beaſts may be *mortal* and *periſhable* at their death.

9. THE ſouls of men have plainly *a capacity for virtue and religion*. It is evident that they have a *conſcience*, *a moral ſenſe* and *feeling*, a *divine law* written upon them; that they have hopes and fears, relating to inviſible powers, and a future and inviſible ſtate. They have naturally *hope* and *joy*, when they are conſcious of having acted up to the moral law of their nature; and *fears* and *forebodings* of puniſhment, when they groſsly violate the laws of their own minds. In other words; it appears, that they are *moral agents*, *accountable creatures*, under law to GOD; and that they know they are reſponſible to him for their moral actions. But there is not the leaſt evidence or appearance of this among the brute creation. Now if GOD has implanted *this law*, *this moral ſenſe*,

theſe

these hopes and fears in human souls, as the law of their nature; is it to be thought, that they are vain and false, and have no real objects?

10. THE spirits of brutes do not seem capable of improvement: Whatever they *know* and *do* seems to be by *instinct*. The bird builds her nest as ingeniously the *first year*, without any instruction, as she does after the experience of *ten years*; and knows her food, her enemies and resources as well. But the soul of man is capable of daily improvement, not only in *virtue*, but in the *knowledge of arts and sciences*. Is it not likely then, that *human souls* are made for *noble ends*, and for *higher enjoyments*, even for an *immortal, ever improving duration?*

11. THE generality of men of all nations, even the most ignorant and barbarous, have believed the immortality of the soul, and this universal belief, must be supposed founded on *some obvious principles*, level to the capacity of all, which is a strong presumption that it is *true* and *founded in nature*.

12. MEN in general have *a strong desire*, and a fond hope of immortality; and the more virtuous and holy they are, the more earnest is this hope and desire of immortality: But would a *good* GOD provide gratifications for all the natural desires of the lowest order of creatures, and leave this noblest appetite in man ungratified?--- or would he inspire the *holiest* and *best of men* with *pantings, breathings* and *earnest longings*, which are *vain, imaginary* and *delusive?*

13. IT seems not consistent with the divine goodness to form so excellent a creature as man, for so short *a duration* and such *low employments*, as are to be met with in this life. Is it reasonable to imagine, that the human soul, by the time its noble faculties just begin to be cultivated and fitted for noble pleasures and enjoyments, should be extinguished and cut off for ever?

14. GOOD

14. GOOD men defire nothing fo much as to enjoy GOD more perfectly than they can in their life; and the more they love GOD, the more eager and unfatisfied is this defire in their fouls. Nay, this defire, is the fruit of GOD's grace in them, and of his own planting. But if the human foul is not immortal, the beft of men, can never obtain their *nobleft defire*, and the *higheft enjoyment* and *happinefs* of which their nature is capable.

15. IF the foul were mortal, a defperate villain might deprive the moft virtuous man of *his being*, and of all the future rewards of his virtue: But is it confiftent with the juftice and goodnefs of GOD, that this fhould be in the power of a bad man?

16. IF GOD is a juft governor of his rational creatures, the *virtuous muft* and *will* be rewarded according to their works, and the *wicked* punifhed according to theirs: But we are fure this does not always happen in the prefent life; therefore, there muft be a *future ftate* of retribution, and confequently human fouls are immortal.

17. OUR Lord Jefus Chrift has put this doctrine beyond all doubt, having brought life and immortality to light by his gofpel. The whole of his religion; all his threatnings and promifes, his rewards and punifhments, go upon this fuppofition, and all his difcourfes and parables are full of it.

18. CHRIST's raifing the dead bodies of many, and rifing himfelf from the dead; alfo, the appearance of *Mofes* and *Elias* to the difciples on the *mount of transfiguration*, were fo many occular demonftrations of the immortality of the foul, and that its exiftence depends not on the life of the body.

19. IT is no objection to this important doctrine, that the faculties of the fouls of *aged* or *fick perfons*, are *impaired* and *infeebled* by the difeafes and decays of the body; feeing the foul muft exert its faculties *by* and *through*

through the bodily organs. On the contrary alſo, the ſouls of ſome men are uncommonly active and vigorous when their bodies are in the deepeſt decays, and juſt at the point of death.

20. IF our ſouls are indeed immortal, and muſt live for ever happy or miſerable, is there any care or concern in this life a thouſandth part ſo important to man, as to provide for the future happineſs of his immortal ſoul?

ESSAY XIX.

Of DEATH.

1. THOUGH we can hardly conceive of the *natural immortality* of a body compoſed of *fleſh* and *blood*; yet GOD could doubtleſs have made our bodies immortal, if he had ſo pleaſed. And had we continued in a ſtate of innocence, there is no doubt but that we would have been immortal; for this ſeems implied in the promiſe of the covenant of works.

2. WHETHER this reward and privilege of innocent man, would have been an immortality on earth or in heaven, is no where plainly revealed.

3. THOUGH man was *naturally mortal*; yet GOD could have preſerved him from death, by the ſalubriety of the air and water, the wholeſome, reſtorative and medicinal quality of the fruits of the earth, and that compoſure and equability of the paſſions and affections, reſulting from the innocency and perfection of the ſoul.

4. SOME have ſuppoſed, that the *tree of life*, from which man was excluded by ſin, had, in its fruit, the

preternatural quality of preſerving man immortal, ſo long as he had acceſs to eat it: Others, that it was a *ſacramental pledge* of his immortality ſo long as he continued in a ſtate of innocence.

5. HOWEVER theſe things may be, yet we are aſſured both from ſcripture and experience, that *fallen, ſinful* man, is *mortal*; that death is the *wages* and *conſequent* of *ſin* in all the race; and that death hath paſſed upon *all*, becauſe *all have ſinned* *.

6. As death is the *wages of ſin*, and by the unalterable purpoſe of GOD, all men are doomed to die; ſo a great many *ſecond cauſes* may have concurred to ſecure the accompliſhment of this purpoſe; as the curſe of the earth, poiſoning its fruits with the ſeeds of death; the baneful influences of the accurſed air upon our lungs and juices; the intemperature of the ſeaſons, and the quick ſucceſſions from wet to dry, and from extreme heat to extreme cold; the exorbitancy and irregularity of our paſſions and appetites through ſin; the ſickly and enfeebled conſtitutions of our forefathers, and the like.

7. WITH regard to beaſts, we ſuppoſe death to put a period to their pains, pleaſures and very beings. But, as it is attended with ſome degree of pain, and deprives theſe creatures of being, and many pleaſurable enjoyments, religion and even humanity ſhould reſtrain us from giving them unneceſſary pain, and much more from taking away their lives, where neceſſity, or the law of ſelf-preſervation, does not require it.

8. WITH regard to man, *death* in itſelf conſidered, or the *mere ſeparation of ſoul and body*, ought not to be greatly dreaded, as probably the pain of it is much ſmaller than we imagine: But what renders death peculiarly important and formidable to man, is its *awful conſequences*. "It "is appointed for all men once to die, and after that "the judgment."

9. "THE

* Gen. ii. 17. Rom. v. 12. Job xxi. 23. Heb. ix. 27.

9. "THE ſting of death is ſin." A conſciouſneſs of guilt, of expoſedneſs to an impartial judgment, eternal baniſhment from GOD, and the poſitive inflictions of his wrath, render death extremely formidable to the *wicked*, as it muſt be to *ſuch*, the period of all their pleaſurable enjoyments, and the commencement of eternal miſery.

10. EVEN nature, in good men, has an abhorrence of death, in itſelf conſidered, as we may learn from the Apoſtle himſelf *; becauſe, ſay ſome, death is *unnatural*, being no part of the original conſtitution, but an *adventitious* conſequent upon ſin, and part of the puniſhment of it. But many other reaſons may be aſſigned for this, ſuch as the natural fear of the pain of dying, our unacquaintedneſs with the ſeparate ſtate and inviſible world, and remaining doubts of their unpreparedneſs, with many. Beſides, the ſoul and body, who have been long ſuch cloſe and intimate companions, muſt naturally have a reluctance to part from each other, though but for a ſeaſon.

11. IT is the peculiar privilege of the *righteous*, that death will redound to their unſpeakable advantage.--- *Death is theirs*, as the Apoſtle emphatically expreſſes it †. *To them to die, is gain* ‡.

(1.) THE ſting of death is taken away, in their juſtification: For, after rational evidence, that a perſon is pardoned, and reſtored to the favour of GOD, there is no more rational ground for the *fear of death*; as that *ſenſe of guilt* and *fear of puniſhment* which are the ſting of death are taken away, and ſuch a perſon has ground for that triumphant exultation; "O death, where is thy "ſting! O grave, where is thy victory §!"

* 2 Cor. v. 2.
† 1 Cor. iii. 22.
‡ Phil. i. 20.
§ 1 Cor. xv.

(2.) DEATH changes its nature to the righteous, and, of an *enemy* becomes a *friend*. The *king of terrors* is changed into a *messenger of divine love*: As, *first*, It frees them from all misery, and from the remainder of indwelling corruption. It ends the mortal strife and conflict, and gives them a complete victory and triumph over every enemy. *Secondly*, It fits and qualifies them for farther and higher communion with Christ in glory. When they are *absent from the body*, they are *present with the Lord*; see him face to face, and enjoy him perfectly without a *medium*. It enlarges and qualifies the soul for more perfect communion with, and the more perfect enjoyment of GOD, *Christ*, *angels* and *blessed spirits*. And, as *flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven*, it prepares the body for putting on a spiritual and immortal form, without which it could not be fitted for heaven.

12. THE change of those who shall be alive at the resurrection and second coming of Christ, will be equivalent to death: There appearing no reason why such should be privileged above their fellow creatures.

13. THE translation of *Enoch* and *Elijah*, are the only two exceptions from the universal mortality of the human kind; and perhaps were intended as demonstrative proofs of an unseen world.

14. THOUGH death will be certain gain to the righteous; yet a longer continuance in the present life may be beneficial to many of them, and answer great and important purposes in the scheme of providence: Wherefore, an absolute and impatient desire of death, or peremptory prayers for it, are not commendable in good men; but all lawful means to preserve and prolong life ought to be used by them *.

INFERENCES. 1st, How ought a sense of universal mortality to *humble* the *pride of man*; and especially that arising from *birth*, *honour*, *power*, *wealth*, *riches* and *nobility*?

* Philip. i. 21,---26.

lity? We have ſurely no reaſon to be vain or proud of any thing, of which death can rob us.

2. How *vain* and *ridiculous*, yea, and *unhappy* a thing would man be, if he were wholly under the dominion of death, and had no claim to immortality?

3. FROM the conſideration of death, the greateſt of all natural evils, and from its *univerſality*, we may infer, the great evil of ſin, from which it took its riſe.

4. FROM the ſhortneſs and uncertainty of life, and the importance of it, as a ſtate of probation for eternity, we ſhould learn the importance of improving our time, and the great guilt and folly of laviſhing and ſquandering it in fooliſh and vain, and much more in ſinful amuſements and pleaſures †.

5. IF death be ſo important in its conſequences, how dreadful a thing is murder? and how cautious and circumſpect ought judges and juries to be in matters of life and death?

6. How deſperately mad is the wretch who is acceſſory to his own death, by which, he not only deprives himſelf and the world of all the benefits and advantages of his life, but plunges into an awful eternity, under all the irremiſſible guilt of ſuicide.

† Pſal. xc. 12.——xxxix. 4. 5.

ESSAY

ESSAY XX.

The Resurrection *of the* Dead.

1. THIS is a doctrine of *pure revelation*, ſeeing there is no principle or appearance in nature, from whence it can be rationally inferred.

2. The inſtance of a grain of corn dying in the earth before it ſprings, and like inſtances, are good *illuſtrations* of the doctrine already revealed, and ſhew that the thing is neither *impoſſible* nor *abſurd*; but cannot prove it.

3. Though it appears from many paſſages of the Old Teſtament ſcriptures, that this doctrine was believed by the Old Teſtament ſaints *; yet the *full, clear* and *circumſtantial* revelation of it was reſerved to be brought to light by the goſpel. Chriſt raiſed three dead bodies in the courſe of his miniſtry, and raiſed himſelf. He terms himſelf, *the reſurrection and the life* †; and declares, that he is commiſſioned by God to raiſe up all his people at the laſt day ‡. See this doctrine eſtabliſhed from the reſurrection of Chriſt, and beautifully explained, 1 Cor. xv.

4. The bodies both of the *righteous* and the *wicked* ſhall be raiſed §: For, as the body has been a partner with the ſoul in this ſtate of probation, it ſeems equitable, that it ſhould ſhare with it in a ſtate of retribution.

5. The

* See 1 Sam. ii. 6. 2 Kings iv. 35.——xiii. 21.——xvii. 21, 22. Pſal. xvi. 10. Iſa. xxv. 8. Hoſ. xiii. 14. Compare 1 Cor. xv. 54, 55. Luke xx. 37, 38. Compare Exod. iii. 6. Job xix. 25,---27. Dan. xii. 2. Heb. xi.

† John xi.

‡ John vi. 39, 49.

§ Matth. xxv. 31, &c. Rev. xx. 12, 13. Matth. x. 28. Luke xii. 25.

5. THE resurrection body will be the *same in substance* with that which died, but will have *far different qualities*, suited to the state and place of retribution: For, flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven; neither is it conceivable that they should long endure the torments of hell, unconsumed, without a perpetual miracle. The bodies of the saints will be raised *spiritual*, *incorruptible* and *glorious*, like the glorified body of Christ; and probably those of the wicked, *spiritual* and *incorruptible*, but *hideous* and *deformed*.

6. THE objections raised against the resurrection of the *same body*, are so futile, when we consider the power and wisdom of GOD, and the true nature of things, as not to deserve a serious answer.

7. THE bodies of those who shall be found alive on the earth at the last day, shall be instantaneously changed; in which change there will be the nature and essence both of a death, and a resurrection.

ESSAY XXI.

Of a FUTURE JUDGMENT.

1. IT is appointed for all men once to die, and after that the judgment, Heb. ix. 27.

2. MANY of the arguments for the immortality of the soul, equally prove a judgment to come; such as the *moral agency* and *accountableness* of man; the operations of his conscience and moral sense; his unacountable *hopes* and *fears* respecting an invisible power and a future state; the unequal distribution of rewards and punish-

ments

ments according to men's moral characters in this present ſtate, and the like.

3. IT is remarkable alſo, that a belief of a judgment to come, and a future ſtate of rewards and puniſhments, according to men's preſent behaviour, has been as *univerſal*, as the belief of the ſoul's immortality; and is indeed grounded on the ſame general principles.

4. THE holy ſcriptures *fully*, *clearly*, and *circumſtantially* eſtabliſh and teach this doctrine *.

5. GOD will judge the world by *Jeſus Chriſt*, by whom he *made* and *governs* it, and by whom he has redeemed it. There is a great and evident propriety in this, from many reaſons too tedious here to mention. This alſo tends powerfully to prove the *real divinity* and *infinite perfection* of our Redeemer †.

6. CHRIST at the day of judgment, will deſcend from heaven, in viſible pomp and ſplendour inexpreſſible; clothed with his own glory, his Father's glory, and attended with all the ſhining retinue of heaven;---will ſeat himſelf on a glorious white throne in the lower heavens, and having ſummoned before him, the whole rational creation, *angels*, *men*, and *devils*, will judge and ſentence them according to their reſpective works and characters ‡.

7. THE important conſequence of this judgment is, that the righteous will immediately enter into a ſtate of *endleſs happineſs*, and the wicked into a ſtate of *endleſs miſery*, in conſequence of the public ſentence then paſſed upon them by the judge §.

8. As

* See Jude 14. and Eccleſ. xii. 14. Matth. xxv. Rev. xii. and xxii. &c.

† Acts xvii. 31. 2 Cor. v. 10. &c.

‡ Luke ix. 26. Matth. xxv. 31. 1 Theſ. iv. 16. 2 Theſ. i. 7,---10. 2 Pet. ii. 4. Jude 6, 14, 15. Rev. xx. 11, 12.——xxii. 12. 2 Cor. v. 10.

§ Matth. xxv. 34, 41, 46.

8. As we hear of but *one judgment*, it does not appear that the ſouls of men, are immediately judged at their departure from the body; although it is *certain* they are then made to *know* and *expect* their final doom, and do enter immediately into ſome degree of happineſs or miſery, according to their reſpective characters *.

* Luke vi. 21,---23.——xxiii. 43. Rev. vi. 9, 10.

ESSAY XXII.

HEAVEN; *or the* FUTURE STATE *of the* BLESSED.

1. WE have already ſuppoſed, that the ſouls of the righteous, during the whole intermediate ſtate, from the article of death, to the day of judgment, are in a *place* and *ſtate* of bleſſedneſs,---called in ſcripture *Paradiſe*, *Abraham's boſom*, *heaven*, and the like; though it is uncertain, whether this be the ſame place and ſtate into which they will enter after the final judgment.

2. THOUGH the ſight of their deſcending Redeemer, and their being placed on his right hand before the judgment ſeat, will fill the righteous with inexpreſſible joy; yet the ſentence paſſed on them after judgment, "Come ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the kingdom, "&c."---may be properly deemed the *firſt part* of their *public triumph*, and of the *honour* conferred upon them before the aſſembled world: This being the *firſt declaration* of their title to the eternal joys of their Lord, in conſequence of their judgment and acquittance.

3. THEY will then go away with Chriſt and the holy

angels into *life eternal*, where they will ever be with each other, and with their dearest Lord *.

4. WE must consider heaven both as a *place* and a *state* of blessedness; but *where* this place, or *what* this state precisely is, we are not at present permitted to know.

5. As Christ has, and the saints will have *glorious bodies*, there must needs be a *local heaven*, or *some place* where these bodies will *be* and *reside*. But whether the whole universe may not be turned into a heaven to them; or whether any particular part of it may be appropriated for their peculiar residence, is what we cannot certainly tell. True, the heaven of the saints is termed a *city*, the *New Jerusalem*, *mansions in* GOD'*s house*, *sure habitations*, and the like; but for all we know, these may be only *figurative expressions*. GOD may create a heaven around his saints wherever they are, even in hell; and they may have intimate communion with each other, from the most distant parts of the universe. The *angels* always behold the face of GOD in heaven, and yet they are represented as ministring to the saints on earth. Wherever GOD graciously communicates himself to his rational creatures, there is heaven; and, as GOD is immense and infinite, his creatures can no where be out of his immediate presence.

6. HEAVEN, wherever it is, must be a *glorious place*, adorned with every thing which can gratify and delight the refined and heavenly senses of glorified and spiritualized bodies; and as, in our perfect glorious state, we may have a great many *more* and *different* senses and *capacities*, than what we have at present, and all these may have their proper and adapted gratifications; therefore, it is impossible for us to conceive at present any thing of the glory and happiness of that place, which *eye hath not seen, nor ear heard*, &c. *.

7. BUT

* Matth. xxv. 46.
* 1 Cor. ii. 9.

7. BUT we can at preſent conceive ſomething of the *heavenly ſtate*, as a ſtate of *perfect holineſs*, exempt from all ſin and miſery; and indeed, good men enjoy ſomething of heaven in this ſenſe of the word, or have ſome foretaſtes or prelibations of it in their ſouls, in this life.

8. HEAVEN is a ſtate of *improved knowledge* and *perfect holineſs*. The glorified ſaints do *ſee* and *know* GOD *intuitively*, in his own nature, and in a ſpiritual manner, as one ſpirit may be ſuppoſed to ſee and know another. They alſo have a clear diſcernment of the wiſdom and contrivance of his works, and of the holineſs, juſtice and equity of his ways and providences; which is a kind and degree of knowledge we cannot attain to in this life, and which muſt afford inexpreſſible happineſs to the mind, by delightfully gratifying its nobleſt powers. The righteous in heaven are alſo *altogether holy*; have no propenſity to ſin; no ſtruggles with corruption; no conflict with temptation; no remorſe for guilt, nor any fear of diſpleaſing GOD, or enduring his diſpleaſure. They *clearly ſee* and *know* GOD, and therefore they perfectly *love* and *admire* him. They know the equity of his laws and the beauty of holineſs, and therefore they cannot but delightfully obey him and work holineſs, and can be in no danger of inclining to the hateful ways of ſin. Beſides, enjoying ſo glorious a reward of holineſs, and ſeeing ſin ſo dreadfully puniſhed in the damned, they are everlaſtingly guarded againſt the love of ſin in the moſt powerful manner imaginable.

9. As GOD is the perfection of beauty, and the ſource of all bleſſedneſs and comfort, ſo the higheſt part of our heavenly bleſſedneſs will conſiſt in the *contemplation* and *enjoyment* of him. In *knowing him*, we ſhall *know all truth*, and in *enjoying* him we ſhall *enjoy all good* and *happineſs*; for there is neither *truth* nor *happineſs* but *in* and *from* him; ſo that he muſt ever be the *ſupreme good* and *chief portion* of our ſouls: Beſides, that the knowledge and enjoy-

ment of GOD are *transforming* and *assimulating*; so that to *know* and *enjoy him*, is to *be like him*; and to *be like him* in our measure, is to be *as holy*, *happy* and *glorious*, as our nature will admit *.

10. THE presence and enjoyment of Christ and of the holy Ghost, will also be prime ingredients in our heavenly blessedness. Indeed, in enjoying *them*, we enjoy GOD †.

11. NOR need we scruple to suppose, that the sweet fellowship and communion of *angels* and *saints*, more especially those whom we have *known* and *loved* on earth, will be ingredients in our heavenly blessedness. "But "ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of "the living GOD, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an "innumerable company of angels; to the general as-"sembly and church of the first-born, which are writ-"ten in heaven, and to GOD the judge of all, and to "the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the "Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of "sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of "Abel ‡."

12. THE happiness of the righteous will be *eternal*.

13. IT shall also, in all probability, be *ever improving*, as they grow in knowledge and holiness.

14. IT is highly probable, that there will be different degrees of glory in heaven, according to the different degrees of holiness among GOD's children on earth §.

15. WE should now have our conversation in heaven, and be preparing for that blessed place and state: For, how sad a case will it be, if we are describing that blessedness which we shall never enjoy, nor even see, but at an unapproachable distance, as the rich man did *Lazarus*, through the impassable gulph.

ESSAY

* 1 John iii. 2.
† 1 Thess. iv. 17, 18. Phil. i. 23. 2 Cor. v. 5,---8.
‡ See Heb. xii. 22, &c.
§ 1 Cor. xv. 41, 42. Matth. xxv. 14.

ESSAY XXIII.

Of HELL, *or the* PLACE *and* STATE *of the* WICKED.

1. ALTHOUGH the wicked carry hell in their consciences from the moment of their death, and are probably doomed to herd among the devils, and to share in their present punishments; yet their rising from their graves in *terror* and *deformity*; their ranking themselves on the left hand of the judge, and more especially their receiving that awful sentence; "Depart "from me ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for "the devil and his angels," may be reckoned the beginning of their *hell*, or *eternal torments* †.

HELL is both a *place* and a *state*. The *place* or *locality* of hell cannot be doubted after the resurrection, as the bodies of the wicked must needs be in some place. Besides, the scriptures represent it as "a lake of fire and "brimstone; a fire prepared for the devil and his an-"gels," and the like;---and *Dives* is represented as lifting up his eyes, being in torments; and an *impassable gulph* is said to be fixed between him and *Lazarus*. But whether the souls of the wicked are now, in their intermediate state, confined to any such place, is a question not easy or needful to be answered. Some think, that they and the devils are suffered to roam at large through the universe. Let it suffice us to know, that wherever they are, it is hell with them. They are under a painful sense of the divine displeasure, and have a dreadful expectation of the judgment, and of greater miseries yet to come.

3. THERE have been many vain speculations about the *place* and *nature* of hell's torments. Some have thought

† Matth. xxv. 41. &c.

thought it abſurd to ſuppoſe, that the poſitive torments of damned ſpirits, of the devil and his angels, ſhould be excited *by material fire*. But if we conſider, that it is our *ſpirits* which feel the pain of burning through our bodies, we ſhall not think it incredible, that GOD ſhould excite the ſame idea of pain from fire in *pure ſpirits*, without the intervention of bodies. However, fire may be only *figuratively* uſed, to ſignify the moſt intenſe pain and torments. And as for the *place* of the damned, it better becomes us to endeavour to ſhun it, than curiouſly to enquire *where* or *what* it is.

4. AT the reſurrection of the wicked, their ſouls being united to their bodies, they ſhall be judged; and that awful ſentence being paſſed upon them, "Depart "from me ye curſed, &c." they ſhall be dragged away by devils, and with them, ſhut up in the priſon of hell; thus ſharing in the puniſhment of thoſe with whom they apoſtatized.

5. IT appears from ſcripture, that the miſery of the damned will be *properly eternal, everlaſting fire*; a *worm that dieth not*, and *a fire that is* not *quenched*. It appears agreeable to reaſon alſo, that creatures who have deſpiſed and rejected *an everlaſting heaven of bleſſedneſs*, ſhould have *an everlaſting hell of miſery*; and that thoſe who have ſlighted the glorious hope ſet before them, ſhould inherit endleſs deſpair, which, indeed, upon the whole, was *their own choice* and *preference*.

6. As to the *ſtate* of *hell*, or rather of *the damned*, it ariſes in a great meaſure from their own wicked and helliſh diſpoſitions, which cannot admit of happineſs, but are naturally productive of miſery. A wicked man is, and muſt be *a hell to himſelf*. He is *ſelf-fitted* and *prepared to this deſtruction*; and he needs only to be out of the body, and out of a capacity of taſting GOD's goodneſs, to be in *hell*, and to be equally a *devil*. So that repentance of ſin, and

holineſs,

holineſs, are in their own nature, neceſſary to deliver men from hell, and to qualify them for happineſs.

7. THE chief ingredients in the miſeries of the damned, are, (1.) Their being baniſhed from the preſence and enjoyment of GOD, the fountain of happineſs :---(2.) The ſociety of *devils* and other damned ſpirits, who will be continually upbraiding them, and exciting their helliſh paſſions :---(3.) A remembrance of the good things of this life which they have loſt, and a ſenſe of their deſperate madneſs in rejecting that eternal bleſſedneſs which they might have enjoyed, for the meereſt trifles :---(4.) Envy at the happineſs of the bleſſed :---(5.) A painful ſenſe of GOD's wrath, and the infliction of poſitive torments from the preſence of the Lord, and the glory of his power ;---and *finally*, deſpair of ever ſeeing an end of their miſery---with, perhaps---a continual increaſe and aggravation of it, from their increaſing wickedneſs and guilt.

8. IF any thing can awaken our fears, ſurely it ought to be a dread of our falling into this place of torment*.

* Luke xii. 4, 5.

ESSAY XXIV.

What, as CHRISTIANS, *we ought to do more than others, from Matth.* v. 47.

THE *others* mentioned here, are *publicans* and *ſinners*, and imply all the *wicked* and *profane*, and all *hypocrites* and formal, inſincere profeſſors of religion: And this plainly ſuppoſed, that the true and ſincere diſciples of

of Chriſt, who hope for ſalvation through faith in him and obedienee to his goſpel, muſt do much more, and go much farther in the duties of religion and ſound morality, than theſe. The following may ſerve as a few illuſtrations of this obſervation.

1. OTHERS, even *publicans* and *ſinners*, *may* and *do* love thoſe that love them: But we muſt love and wiſh well to our enemies; pray for them and do them good.

2. OTHERS *may* and *do* take ſome care of the decency of their outward behaviour, that they may be acceptable before men: But we muſt watch over the moſt hidden movements, thoughts and deſires of our hearts; ---labour to approve ourſelves to the eye of GOD, and to keep conſciences, as well as appearances, void of offence both towards GOD and man.

3. OTHERS will *ſometimes* mind religion when they have nothing elſe to do, either for their worldly pleaſure or profit: But we muſt make religion the *principal leading* buſineſs of our lives, to which all things muſt give way.

4. OTHERS perform the duties of religion, as a *diſagreeable taſk*, either to ſtand fair in the opinion of men, or to ſatisfy the importunate demands of conſcience: But we muſt *delight* and *rejoice* in them, as our moſt ſweet and pleaſurable enjoyments.

5. OTHERS are ever contriving *how little* they may do in religion, in order to ſhun hell: But we muſt be ambitious to *abound in good works*, that we may the more pleaſe and honour GOD, and enjoy a greater meaſure of his likeneſs and favour.

6. OTHERS, walking by ſight and ſenſe, take up their reſt and portion in the things and enjoyments of this world; ever anxiouſly enquiring who will ſhew them any earthly good:---But, living and walking by the faith of unſeen things, we muſt make GOD our *only portion* and *inheritance*, ſeeking and delighting in the uplifting of his countenance,

countenance, and the manifeſtation of his reconciled favour.

7. OTHERS are moſt curious in knowing and ſtudying the characters and concerns of their neighbours: But we muſt be moſt diligent in the ſtudy and knowledge of ourſelves and of *our own proper concerns.*

8. OTHERS are indulgent and favourable to themſelves and their own failings, while they are ſevere and unmerciful obſervers and cenſurers of the ſins and failings of their neighbours: But we muſt be *ſevere to ourſelves*, and *charitable* in our judgment of *others*, *hoping all things* and *believing all things* in favour of our neighbour.

9. OTHERS, even *publicans* and *ſinners*, may and do often attend the duties of public religion: But, we muſt alſo be found conſcientious in the religion of the *family* and *cloſet*; in the duties of *private* and *ſecret* devotion.

10. OTHERS perform *ſome duties*, and deny *ſome ſins*: But we muſt be governed throughout by a principle of *uniform obedience*; hating every falſe way, and having an equal reſpect to all GOD's commandments, as *holy*, *juſt* and *good.*

11. OTHERS ſquare their religion by the faſhion and cuſtom of the places where they live: But ours muſt be *unfaſhionably ſingular* in this reſpect, being wholly meaſured by the law of GOD, which is the only rule and model of our obedience.

12. OTHERS are diſcouraged and diſheartened from duty by the reproaches and perſecutions of the wicked: But we muſt learn to *glory in the croſs*, and to *rejoice in ſufferings* and *perſecutions* for the ſake of Chriſt.

13. OTHERS will *ſin* rather than *ſuffer*: But we muſt *ſuffer* rather than *ſin.*

14. OTHERS render evil for evil, and railing for railing: But if we would be the true diſciples of Chriſt, we muſt render *good* for *evil*, after the moſt amiable and perfect example of him, who, "when he was reviled,

" reviled not again : when he ſuffered, threatened not ;
" but committed himſelf to him that judgeth righte-
" ouſly *."

15. OTHERS are indulgent to their *favourite ſins* and *beloved luſts* : But we muſt be particularly ſevere againſt *theſe, plucking out the right eye,* and *cutting off the right hand.*

16. OTHERS love their flatterers : But we muſt love our well deſigning reprovers.

17. OTHERS accept of Chriſt as a *Saviour from hell* : But we muſt alſo accept him as a *Saviour from ſin* ; embracing him in all his offices, as a *king* to rule us, and a *prophet* to teach us, as well as a *prieſt* to offer himſelf an atonement, and intercede for us.

18. OTHERS are for a *cheap* and *eaſy* religion which coſts them little labour or ſelf-denial : But we muſt chuſe a ſelf-denying religion ; a *painful, diligent, laborious* courſe in the ſervice of GOD.

* 1 Pet. ii. 23.

ESSAY

ESSAY XXV.

Of HEAVENLY-MINDEDNESS, *and the contrary* VICES.

1. HEAVENLY-MINDEDNESS is a very comprehensive virtue, and essentially necessary to every Christian. It consists in the prevailing bent and tendency of the mind and heart towards GOD, and the things of GOD and heaven; and is directly opposed to *worldly-mindedness*, *earthly-mindedness*, *covetousness* and *sensuality*.

2. HEAVENLY-MINDEDNESS necessarily presupposes *regeneration*, *conversion*, a change of mind and heart by renewing grace, or a sanctified nature, in some degree at least; for every man, by nature, is *earthly*, *sensual*, *devilish*, not having the Spirit of GOD;---seeing that that which is born of the flesh *is* and *must be* flesh;---and seeing that the *natural* and *unrenewed* mind, is *enmity against* GOD.

3. HEAVENLY-MINDEDNESS will principally shew itself in the following instances:

(1.) IN a supreme regard to GOD above the creature. The heavenly-minded man loves GOD and the Saviour, although unseen, above all things in this world, by means of that faith which is the evidence of things not seen, and the substance of things hoped for. No object of sight or sense so strongly moves the noblest affections of his soul, or so powerfully elicites and draws forth his desires, as an invisible GOD, and an exalted Redeemer, whom having not seen, he loves, and in whom, although now he sees them not, he yet rejoices with joy unspeakable and full of glory *. Tell the

* 1 Pet. i. 8.

heavenly-minded man of enjoying riches, power, pomp or honour;---recount to him the various gratifications and pleasures of sense---of women, wine, luxurious and delicate living;---place his affections to all these, and desires of enjoying them, over against his love of an unseen GOD and Saviour, and his desire of enjoying them;---put it to his choice, and he will despise the *former*, in comparrison *.

(2.) THE heavenly-minded man sees and enjoys GOD in his *works* and *providences*. His mind is turned to a contemplation of GOD in his vast and wonderful works. In these he has a deep and affecting conviction of the power, wisdom and goodness of him who made them all. He tastes the goodness of GOD in every enjoyment of sense; in every pleasure and refreshment. He eyes and enjoys GOD in every dispensation of providence. He receives every mercy as the gift of GOD, and a fresh obligation to gratitude, love and praise; and hears the voice of GOD in every affliction, reproving, chastening and calling him home from sin, or quickening him to the performance of some long-neglected duty.

(3.) THE heavenly-minded man, converses with, and enjoys GOD, in his *word* and *ordinances*. He reads the scriptures diligently, with correspondent holy affections; with gratitude and spiritual desire and appetite. He hears GOD speaking to his soul in them; trembles at his word; delights in the purity of his laws, humbly submits to their authority, and feeds pleasurably upon his promises and offers of mercy. He frequents ordinances, with no other view than to *glorify* and *enjoy* GOD in them. In *prayer*, he really, humbly and delightfully converses with GOD. In *praise* his soul exalts and magnifies the Almighty. He hears sermons that he may the

* Psal. iv. 6, 7.——xlii. 1,---4.——lxiii. 1, &c.——lxxiii. 25.

the better know GOD, and his duty, and love them; and that he may, by this means, cleanse his way, reform his life, and get strength for both. He prepares for sacraments and attends them, that he may actually renew his covenant with GOD, and receive comfort and strength to keep it stedfastly: And he has a pleasure and delight in these duties, superior to any which he feels in the enjoyments of this earth †.

(4.) THE heavenly-minded man has a turn for spiritualizing all the common occurrences and events of life. He is disposed to give a useful and edifying turn to every topic of conversation; and to profit even by the worst, or most common things that happen to himself, or to others around him. It would be endless to illustrate this remark.

(5.) THE heavenly-minded man, having his conversation, his heart, his hopes, his treasure, and the object of his dearest love, and strongest desire in heaven, must needs have a peculiar and uncommon delight in those companions, and in that kind of conference and discourse, which are employed about spiritual and heavenly things. Companions and conversation of this kind, exactly hit his taste, as his mind is high and heavenly bent. This is so just and obvious a character of heavenly mindedness, that it needs no farther confirmation or illustration.

(6.) THE heavenly-minded man may be said to live by the faithand hope of unseen and heavenly things. He considers this world but as a wilderness through which he is journeying towards his Father's house, and eternal inheritance. Hence, present things affect him but little, as present conveniences would a travelling wayfaring man. He had rather have them than want them; but if

† Psal. xxvii. 4, 5.——lxiii. 1, 2.——lxv. 4.——lxxxiv. ——xix. 7,---10.——cxix. 73, 127.——cxxii. 1,---4.

if he ſuffers a little in his journey, he cares not much for it. His Father, his Redeemer and almighty friend, and his brethren and ſiſters in Chriſt which has left this world, are in heaven before him; his treaſure is there; his reſt, reward, crown, and inheritance are there.---His heart therefore muſt be there alſo.---He is therefore *habitually*, *believingly*, *hopefully* and *joyfully* looking forward to his journey's end. And indeed, the more eagerly that the eye of his faith and hope is fixed upon the heavenly prize, *i. e.* the more heavenly-minded he is, the leſs will he regard or mind the things that are around him, or the croſs accidents that happen to him on his journey thither. Hence it follows, that he walks by *faith*, not by *ſight*; looketh not on the things that are ſeen and temporal, but at the things which are unſeen and eternal;---ſetteth his affection on things above, and not on things below. His fears and cares, hopes and deſires, ſorrows and joys, are chiefly of the *ſpiritual* and *heavenly* kind, and but *little*, *ſeldom*, and *moderately* moved about this world, and the things of it, which paſs away. On the contrary, earthly-mindedneſs, diſcovers itſelf by the following marks:---A loving and preferring the creature above GOD;---the body and its concerns above the ſoul and its intereſt;---earth above heaven;---the objects and enjoyments of ſight and ſenſe, above thoſe of faith and hope. The earthly-minded man, prefers money before grace;---earthly honour above heavenly;---the favour of men before that of GOD;---a good living in this world, before the hopes of heavenly bleſſedneſs. He is little moved by the *works* or *providences* of GOD; little affected by *his word*;---little delighted with *his ordinances* or *people*; has no pleaſurable reliſh for holineſs itſelf, or the means of attaining it: But performs theſe, if he does perform them at all, in a *cuſtomary*, *formal*, *carnal*, *lifeleſs* manner, to ſtop the mouth of conſcience;

to

to pleaſe the world and promote worldly ends; or to be ſeen and praiſed of men.

ESSAY XXVI.

GOSPEL SINCERITY, *or* UPRIGHTNESS.

1. GOSPEL ſincerity is expreſſed by two words: ---The *firſt* ſignifies 'a thing which will ſtand 'the teſt, if it is examined or judged of by the light of 'the ſun, *eilikrinia*,' and is uſed by the Apoſtle *, when he commands the *Corinthians* to keep the feaſt with the unleavened bread of ſincerity and truth; or it may allude to the judgment paſſed on grain when it is winnowed, which will bear winnowing, and being ſeparated from the chaff, looks the better.---Sincerity is ſomething which will ſtand the teſt.---The other word is *aplotes* which is commonly tranſlated *ſimplicity*; which ſignifies, a *thing without folds*, and intimates *an open* and *undiſguiſed* behaviour, without *deceit, guile, or diſſimulation*.---*Thus* we are commanded to have our converſation in this world in *ſimplicity and godly ſincerity*; not with *worldly* or *knaviſh* and *deceitful* wiſdom †. And according to this ſenſe of the word we are commanded to lay aſide *all guile* and *hypocriſy* ‡. And the man is pronounced bleſſed in whoſe ſpirit there is *no guile* §. And *Nathaniel* is pronounced an Iſraelite indeed, in whom was *no guile*; ---that is, a *plain man*, as *Jacob* is called ||.

2. GOSPEL

* 2 Cor. v. 8.
† 2 Cor. i. 12.
‡ 1 Pet. ii. 1.
§ Pſal. xxxii. 2.
|| John i. 47. Gen. xxv. 27.

2. GOSPEL ſincerity ſuppoſes a ſingle aim and intention of pleaſing GOD, in the whole of our courſe. And although this intention may not be actually alive in our hearts, as the moving and producing cauſe of every ſingle action; yet if we are *ſincere*, it muſt be our *habitual, prevailing intention*; and wherever we have time to *doubt* or *deliberate* about the nature of any action, this muſt be our *actual intention* in it; and that nothing contrary to this intention prevails with us. This is included in theſe general precepts of Chriſtianity---"Whether ye eat or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of GOD.---Whatever we do, we do it unto the Lord, and not unto men.---Servants be obedient to your maſters with fear and trembling, in ſingleneſs of your heart, as unto Chriſt; not with eye ſervice, as men-pleaſers, but as the ſervants of Chriſt; doing the will of GOD from the heart; with good will doing ſervice, as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing, &c*." The ſame is alſo meant by a *ſingle eye*, and the contrary, namely, *inſincerity* by *the double minded man, who is unſtable in all his ways*,

3. GOSPEL ſincerity, ſuppoſes an impartial enquiry into our duty, what it is;---a hearty deſire and endeavour to know, in every inſtance, *what is the good* and *acceptable* and *holy will of the Lord*, and how *we may ſo walk as to pleaſe* GOD †. The upright man is anxious to know his maſter's will in every particular caſe, and is ever ready to ſay, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And what I know not, teach thou me."---He deſires to have no *biaſs, prejudice*, or *prepoſſeſſion* againſt the will of GOD, how croſs ſoever it may be to his own will or former notions or prejudices. He deſires to be excuſed from no part of his duty, how difficult or ſelf-denying ſoever.---And as this is the *ſincerity* of

* Eph. vi. 5,---9. Col. iii. 22,---24.
† 1 Theſ. iv. 1.

of his *disposition*; so he gives all diligence, by prayer, enquiry, reading, and a close attendance upon ordinances, to know the whole of his Master's good pleasure, that he may prepare himself to do according to it. But insincere men, are careless about the knowledge of their Master's will; because they are prejudiced against the performance of it, and *hold the truth in unrighteousness*. *Nathaniel's* conduct affords a fine illustration of this branch of sincerity; and our Saviour seems to fix the noble character he gives him, on his impartial enquiry after truth *.

4. GOSPEL sincerity runs through the whole of a man's religious character and conduct, and supposes an entire and universal application to the practice of duty, so far as we know it, without any stated, allowed reserves to the contrary. The sincere man, as his governing aim is to please and serve GOD, so he will be as careful of the exercise of every grace and virtue, in the frame and temper of the heart, as in the outward actions of the life.---He will be as careful and watchful over his *private* conduct, as his *public*;---as sorry for his *secret* sins, and the follies of his *heart*, as for his outward offences; ---as devout and constant in the religion of the *family* and *closet*, as in that of the *church*;---as conscientious in shunning one sin as another, and in performing one duty as another. And indeed, there cannot be a more *clear* and *decisive trial* of our sincerity than this; namely, to examine and observe how we stand affected to those parts of morality and religion, to which none but GOD *and our own consciences* are privy. If we perform these as carefully and circumspectly, as we do the most outward and visible duties, which are seen and praised of men, then may we conclude on just grounds, that we have truth in the heart, and sincerity in the inward parts.

* John iii.

5. SINCERITY ſuppoſes a conformity and agreement between the ſentiments of a man's heart and his words and actions. A ſincere man will not ſay that he believes a doctrine which he really does not believe, to pleaſe, or gain the good opinion of any man. He will not ſpeak of exerciſes, feelings, or experiences which he never had, in order to obtain any privilege :---He will not profeſs a ſorrow for ſin which he feels not, nor reſolution of repentance and amendment which he never truly nor ſolemnly made. The ſincere man, either ſpeaks not at all, in matters of religion, or elſe ſpeaks ſincerely what he thinks. He *canteth* not, he *diſſembleth* not, he *lieth* not either *for*, or *to*, or *concerning* GOD, or the things of his ſoul.---St. *Peter* was flagrantly guilty of this kind of *inſincerity* †, and ſo are all hypocrites.

6. THE ſame thing will ſincerity produce in all our conduct *towards men*. A ſincere man will ſcorn to uſe *trick*, *artifice*, and *diſſimulation*, to gain his ends with his fellow-creatures; he will not pretend friendſhip or kindneſs where he has none; nor make promiſes which he intends not to perform; nor act an unfriendly part behind men's backs, after profeſſions of reſpect and regard to their faces;---much leſs will he ſtoop to the baſeneſs of making pretences of friendſhip, on purpoſe to impoſe on men, or uſe ſly inſinuations to draw things from them in the freedom of diſcourſe, with the murderous deſign of divulging theſe very things afterwards to their diſadvantage. This is the wicked cunning and craftineſs of the old ſerpent, and not the *openneſs* and *ſincerity* of a Chriſtian indeed, in whom there ſhould be no guile.

7. WE are obliged to this temper and conduct by numberleſs conſiderations: (1.) It is expreſsly required by the precepts of our religion ‡. (2.) We cannot expect

† Gal. ii. 11,---14.
‡ Joſh. xxiv. 14. John vi. 24. Rom. xii. 8. Heb. x. 22.

expect acceptance with GOD, in any duty, without ſincerity, Jam. ii. 10. Matth. xxiv. 51. Phil. i. 10. (3.) We cannot have peace of mind, or ſtand acquitted at the bar of our own conſciences, if we are inſincere in religion, 1 John iii. 19,---21. 2 Cor. i. 12. Gal. vi. 4. (4.) To be ſincere in religion, would ſave the profeſſors of it abundance of trouble which hypocriſy occaſions them. The eaſieſt and ſureſt way of ſeeming to be religious, is to be ſo in reality; and it is the moſt difficult and diſagreeable taſk in the world to be ever wearing a maſk and falſe diſguiſe. (5.) Inſincerity is the very image of the *devil*, that *ſubtile, malicious, deceitful, guileful* old ſerpent, who transformeth himſelf into an angel of light.

8. IT is greatly to be lamented, that this noble virtue, which indeed is one of the moſt diſtinguiſhing badges of true Chriſtianity, ſhould yet be ſo little regarded, and ſo ſhamefully violated among profeſſing Chriſtians, that under the warmeſt profeſſions of friendſhip, and the moſt ſolemn obligations to it, there ſhould be ſo little beſides *trick* and *artifice*, *deceit* and *diſſimulation*, *double-dealing* and *undermining* practiſed among Chriſtian brethren. A clear, but melancholy proof this, that we have only a name to live, while we are in the gall of bitterneſs and bond of iniquity, and doing the works of our father the *devil*.

ESSAY

ESSAY XXVII.

CHRISTIAN ZEAL, *and its* OPPOSITES *and* COUNTERFEITS.

1. ZEAL ſeems properly to ſignify, a *heat, fervour* and *impetuoſity* of *mind* and *action*; and is either *good* or *bad*, either a *virtue* or a *vice*, either *religious* or *common* and *profane*, according to its objects, and the proportion it bears to their importance.

2. EVEN religious zeal is not ſo much a Chriſtian grace or virtue, as a qualification which ſhould attend the exerciſe of every Chriſtian grace and virtue.

3. THE ſcriptures give as many inſtances of a *bad* zeal as of a *good* one: We cannot therefore be too cautious about what objects our zeal is employed, and in what degree, leſt, while we imagine we are pleaſing and honouring GOD, we may in fact be diſhonouring and offending him, and increaſing our own guilt.

4. As Chriſtian zeal is, however, a very important and indiſpenſible duty, and as we are expreſsly commanded to *be zealous* *, it may be right to enquire into the properties of a true Chriſtian zeal; to conſider its ſpecious and impoſing counterfeits, to ſpeak of the obligations we are under to be zealous, and of that temper which is contrary to it; and by doing this we ſhall exhauſt the ſubject.

(1.) EVEN a religious zeal is no farther good and commendable, than when it is on the ſide of truth and virtue. The *cauſe* therefore muſt be *good* about which our zeal is concerned, or it will have the moſt miſchievous conſequences. To be zealous, that is, to have a ſtrong

* Rev. iii. 19.

ſtrong and ardent concern, for falſehood, and againſt truth; or for vice and againſt virtue, and to act vigorouſly in conſequence of this zeal, is to do the very greateſt miſchief in our power, and to act the *devil*, as much as our capacities and influence will admit. Such was the zeal of the Jews againſt Chriſt, his Apoſtles, and the primitive Chriſtians. Such, particularly, was the zeal of *Saul*, afterwards *Paul*, when he *madly*, and with uncommon ardor and activity perſecuted the church of Chriſt *. The caution therefore of this ſame Apoſtle is extremely appoſite and neceſſary; "It is "good to be always zealouſly affected in a good "thing †."

(2.) IGNORANCE of truth and duty, where there is a poſſibility and opportunity of coming to the knowledge of them, will not excuſe in this matter, otherwiſe it would have excuſed St. *Paul* and moſt of the *Jews* in their miſguided and miſchievous zeal. Therefore, our zeal, eſpecially our religious zeal, ſhould always be preceded by a careful, ſerious enquiry into the truth, and accompanied with knowledge. The reaſon of this is plain; for, of all zeal, religious zeal where it is blind and miſguided is the moſt furious and miſchievous. It is increaſed by the importance of its object; and when it is blind and miſguided, it rages againſt the cauſe and glory of GOD, and the higheſt concerns of men, which are truth and righteouſneſs. We may ſee its dreadful effects in the primitive *Jewiſh* and *heathen* perſecutions, and in the ſeas of Proteſtant blood ſpilt by the church of Rome. If the *Jews* had known Chriſt, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory; yet ſince they *might* have known him, their ignorance was no excuſe for their zeal againſt him. It was their ſin, that their zeal

* Acts v. 17, 18.——xiii. 45.——xvii. 5. Rom. x. 2. Gal. i. 14. Phil. iii. 6.

† Gal. iv. 18.

zeal of GOD was not according to knowledge *. What things Saint *Paul* did against Christ, were *ignorantly through unbelief*; yea, he verily thought that he ought to have done them; yet was he not thereby justified in doing them †.

(3.) RIGHT and good zeal, must be proportioned to the value and importance of the objects about which it is employed. As there is diversity in the importance even of these things which are of divine duty and obligation, so we should be most zealous about the most important things and duties of religion, and proportionably less zealous about those things and duties which are of less importance. It is the way of hypocrites to be mighty zealous about trifles; about small matters, and ceremonial observances, while they are very lukewarm and indifferent, about the greater duties of *piety* and *morality*. They tithe *mint*, *anise* and *cummin*; while they neglect the weightier matters of the law, *mercy*, *judgment* and *righteousness* ‡. How preposterous and absurd is it to see a man break charity with his Christian brother, for the neglect of *modes*, *ceremonies*, and *human inventions*, while he would caress him, though a drunkard, an adulterer, or a profane swearer, if he observed these? Reason will teach us, that duties of the highest importance, should be the most ardently cared for, and the most diligently performed. We would deem him a fool, who would be more concerned about the security and welfare of his finger or toe, than of his heart or brain. Every thing appertaining to true religion merits our regard and observance; but the vitals of religion merit our warmest zeal. "GOD loveth mercy more than "sacrifice, and righteousness more than all burnt offer-"ings."

(4.) TRUE

* Rom. x. 2.
† 1 Tim. i. 12,---15.
‡ Matth. xxiii. 23, 24.

(4.) TRUE zeal always takes its rise in *the heart*, and is founded on a *right temper* and *right affections* there. It is termed *fervency of spirit* †. Christian zeal is the sprightly vigour, and strenuous activity of every holy affection and disposition; and these springs set the active powers of the soul and body to work in the cause of GOD and goodness.---And here we may take notice of the *opposites* and *counterfeits* of true zeal, in this view of it;---such as, *first*, a *Laodicean*, *careless*, *indolent*, *lukewarm* temper of mind: The person is neither hot nor cold;---he will not wholly throw up a profession of religion; yet is he too indolent and unconcerned to act up to it with becoming earnestness and intenseness, spirit and resolution. He, as it were, *halts between two opinions*; his mind is in a state of *torpid equilibrium*, without heat enough to espouse its interests and perform its duties, or coldness enough to abandon it and give it up. This is the sad case of millions in the Christian church ‡. *Secondly*, there is a seeming counterfeit zeal for religion, where there is no warmth of *affection*, a *blustering*, *noisy*, profession, spending itself either in religious discourse or controversy, or in uncharitable and censorious judgings and railings against the characters and professions of others, where there is really no true regard to religion at heart. This seems to have been the zeal or (hypocrisy) of the *scribes* and *pharisees*; and is well described by the prophet §. Or, *thirdly*, it is a dreadful counterfeit of true Christian zeal, when men make a great shew and stir in religion, merely to deceive others, and to obtain *wicked* or *secular* ends, as was the case with *Jehu*, when he said; "Come see my zeal for the Lord ‖."

(3.) TRUE Christian zeal always begins at home; it first casts the beam out of our own eye; its indignation

† Rom. xii. 11.
‡ Rev. iii. 14,---19.
§ Ezek. xxxiii. 31. Psal. lxxviii. 36, 37. Isa. xxix. 13.
‖ 2 Kings x. 16.

nation rifes higheft at our own faults; it is vigoroufly concerned for our own reformation, correction, improvement in knowledge and grace; perfection and final fecurity and happinefs. It is abfurd to imagine, that a man can have any right and true hatred of fin in others, while he has none againft it in himfelf; or that a man fhould be anxioufly concerned for another man's reformation, falvation and happinefs, while he has no regard to his own.

(6.) TRUE Chriftian zeal is ever properly employed about others in the *fecond place*. Chriftians are zealous of good works, both in themfelves and others*. We have inftances of this kind, Acts xvii. 16. Rev. ii. 2. Charity fhould quicken our zeal both *againft the fins* and for *the happinefs* of others. *David* was grieved, and fhed tears, when he beheld tranfgreffors.---*Lot* was vexed by the filthy converfation of the wicked. Chrift caft the money changers out of the court of the temple, and in this was fulfilled in him that fcripture, "The zeal "of thy houfe hath eaten me up." *Paul's* fpirit was moved, at the fight of *Athenian* idolatry. True zeal will engage us to reprove the fins of others, in a proper place, time and manner†. True zeal againft fin, will make us fhun finful companions, Pfal. cii. 4.---It will alfo engage us to do all the good for the fouls of others that we can, Ecclef. ix. 10.

7. THAT we may fhun irregularities in the exercifes of our zeal towards others, we fhould obferve the following cautions: 1. Let us take heed of a cenforious, uncharitable fpirit in our reproofs of others.---This is a zeal *unchriftian* and *without knowledge*, and is never likely to do any good. 2. Let us beware of *paffion* and *wrath* in our zeal to reclaim and reform tranfgreffors. Love to the perfon of the offender, and meeknefs fhould accompany

* Tit. ii. 14.
† Ephef. v. 11. Tit. i. 10,---13. 2 Tim. iv. 2.

company our moſt zealous endeavours to reform him: For, in this caſe, as in others, *the wrath of man worketh not the righteouſneſs of* GOD. 3. The inſtruments of Chriſtian zeal, are *ſcripture, reaſon* and *perſuaſion*. It is a wicked, antichriſtian, unwarrantable zeal, to deſtroy men's bodies, or rob them of their intereſts, for the good of their ſouls. This is the zeal of Popiſh inquiſitors. 4. Our zeal ſhould be tempered with *prudence*. The zeal of a private Chriſtian cannot, with prudence, be carried ſo far in the reformation of abuſes, as that of a *magiſtrate* or *public miniſter of religion*. Although every Chriſtian ſhould be zealous for the propagation of truth and goodneſs, yet the meaſure of his zeal ſhould correſpond with his ſtation.---Beſides, the exertions of our zeal againſt ſin ſhould be regulated, by the character of offenders, and the nature of their offences. *Public, bold* and *ſhameleſs* offenders are to be *rebuked ſharply* *. Of ſome have compaſſion, making a difference: And others ſave with fear, *pulling them out of the fire* †. 5. Right zeal is exerted againſt all ſin, both in ourſelves and others.

(8.) TRUE Chriſtian zeal is enforced upon us by many reaſons and obligations: 1. The importance of religion deſerves our zeal.---2. The difficulties that attend the right diſcharge of our Chriſtian duty, require zeal, and render it neceſſary.---3. We can have no evidence of our own ſincerity, without becoming fervour and earneſtneſs in the duties of religion; for, conſidering the unſpeakable importance of religion, if we are *truly* concerned about it at all, it muſt be *zealouſly*.---4. We ſhall never do much good to the ſouls of others, or much honour to our common Chriſtianity, without a proper degree of Chriſtian zeal.---5. We have the examples of the *prophets*, and of *Chriſt* and his *Apoſtles*, and of all eminently good men, to countenance

* Tit. i.

† Jude 22, 23.

and encourage us in a zealous adherence to religion, and in the zealous practice of the duties of it.

ESSAY XXVIII.

PATIENCE *and the* CONTRARY VICES.

1. PATIENCE is *twofold*. It either, (1.) respects the evils of life which we are actually feeling; or, (2.) some future good, which we have reason to expect, but which we do not as yet enjoy. The first is expressed in scripture by the word *upomone*, which signifies an *enduring of afflictions with constancy*. The second by the word *makrothumia*, a *length of mind*, which signifies a *patient waiting for a promised good*, and is opposed to *hastiness of spirit** .

2. PATIENCE does not consist in *insensibility*, nor suppose it. It supposes that we *feel* the whole weight of our troubles and afflictions, but bear them with a Christian spirit and temper; and implies the following things.

3. THAT we have the command and possession of our own souls and are not rifled or discomposed, by the cross or painful accidents of life; but that we are so much *our own man* as to see, and steadily to pursue and perform the duties which become us as *men*, and *Christians*.

4. PATIENCE will prevent us from making hasty judgments either concerning GOD or *man*; either against ourselves or others. *Impatience* makes men fretful and discontented, and hurries them on in the heat of their spirits, to rash and wicked judgments both of GOD and man;

* Heb. vi. 12. James v. 10. Rom. ii. 4.——xi. 22. 2 Cor. vi. 6.

man; "I ſaid, in my haſte, all men are liars," and ſo Pſal. lxxvii. 7,---10. Patience will make us conſider, that we may be miſtaken both with regard to the *deſigns* and *intentions* of GOD and man, and with regard to the *juſtice* and *propriety* of our afflictions, and will ſave us from many raſh, wicked and uncharitable thoughts, both of GOD and our neighbour.

5. PATIENCE, will preſerve us from uſing unlawful methods both of delivering ourſelves from preſent afflictions and obtaining the things we deſire,---if we are endued with Chriſtian patience we will rather *ſuffer* than *ſin*: We will rather continue poor and miſerable, than better our ſtate by forbidden and unlawful means: We will wait GOD's time and will, in the way of duty and honeſt endeavours; being aſſured, that GOD will deliver us from trouble, and perform his promiſe to us in the very beſt and fitteſt time and manner, if we do indeed wait upon him and truſt in him.

6. CHRISTIAN patience will engage us to perſevere in the way of duty, in the midſt of all diſcouragement and oppoſition; becauſe, it proceeds upon a ſuppoſition and firm unſhaken belief, 'That whatever befals 'us, is beſt and fitteſt for us upon the whole; that 'whatever we ſuffer, we not only ſuffer deſervedly, but 'it is *proper* and *needful* that we ſhould ſo ſuffer, and that 'whatever GOD hath promiſed, ſhall ſurely be perform-'ed in the fitteſt and propereſt time.' In a word, it proceeds upon a firm, convictive and practical belief of the truth, wiſdom, goodneſs and power of GOD, and of the perfect equity, wiſdom and goodneſs of all his providential dealings with his creatures, and that if we do but our part, GOD never can nor will fail in his. Nay, that even his delays in delivering us from affliction, or conferring upon us his promiſed bleſſings, are juſt and right, merciful and gracious *.

 7. THIS

* Job vii. 9. Heb. xii. 1, &c.

7. THIS grace is perfectly reaſonable, and fit and becoming to be exerciſed by ſuch creatures as we are, as will appear by the following reaſons.

8. IMPATIENCE under afflictions, or in the delay of expected good, can be of no manner of ſervice to us, but muſt do us a great deal of hurt. Our fretting and murmuring under afflictions, diſcompoſe us, and make their weight *double*. It ſhews a rebellious temper, and renders us unworthy of the relief which we deſire; while, at the ſame time, it cannot procure us any relief, but muſt needs make our caſe worſe.

9. WE deſerve no good thing at the hand of GOD, but all evil, even *eternal miſery*; and therefore, if we *think right*, a living man has no right to complain, a man for the puniſhment of his ſins; but it is his evident duty to bear the indignation of the Lord, becauſe he hath ſinned againſt him. If we had our deſerts, we would be in hell; therefore, we ſhould bear patiently every affliction, which is ſhort of this.

10. EVEN where GOD hath made promiſes to deliver his people from afflictions, or to beſtow upon them mercies, he hath not *ordinarily* limitted himſelf to *any particular time*: but juſtly expects that we ſhould refer the *time* and *manner* wholly to his own infinite juſtice, wiſdom and goodneſs, and wait upon him believingly, confidently and reſignedly for the event.

11. GOD's mercies and deliverances are ſo *full*, *complete* and *ſatisfying* in themſelves; and the very ſmalleſt of them is ſo great an honour, when conferred by ſo great a being, upon ſuch worthleſs, undeſerving and hell-deſerving creatures as we are, that it becomes us to wait patiently for them, in the moſt diligent and ſelf-denying means, all the days of our lives. What are we that we ſhould *ſet a time* to the great GOD, and be fretful, peeviſh and impatient, if he does not hear our cries,

and

and gratify our defires, in fending us bleffings and deliverances, which we have not the leaft claim to *of right*, and which we have *wholly forfeited* by our fins and provocations?

12. IN a word, if we would confult our duty to GOD, and our own higheft intereft and happinefs, it behoves us to *let patience have its perfect work*, under every trial and affliction.

E S S A Y XXIX.

MEEKNESS, *and the oppofite* VICES.

1. THE fcriptures teach us to confider *meekneſs*, as referring, in its exercifes, both to GOD and *man*.

2. MEEKNESS, as it is a right temper towards GOD, refpects either his *word* or his *providences*.

3. As it refpects his *word* or his *revealed will*, it confifts in a humble, teachable fubmiffion to the authority of his word; that the foul bows to it and acquiefces in it, and facrifices all its *prejudices*, *carnal reafonings* and *preconceived opinions* to its dictates. It implies the temper of young *Samuel*, "Speak, Lord, for thy fervant hear-"eth." Or, that of *Cornelius's* houfhold, "Behold, "we are all hear prefent before GOD, to hear what is "commanded us of GOD." Thus we are commanded, *to receive with meekneſs* (with the eager, fubmiffive, obedient temper of humble difciples, and with all readinefs of mind) *the ingrafted word, which is able to ſave our ſouls* *.

Thus

* James i. 21.

Thus Christ was anointed to *preach good tidings to the meek*: And GOD dwells with them who are of a humble heart, and who tremble at his word; and guides the meek in judgment *.

4. MEEKNESS towards GOD, implies an *humble, complacential submission* to his *providential will*, in its *severest* and *most afflictive dispensations*. And this is submission or resignation to the will of GOD, in opposition to a fretful, murmuring, impatient spirit against his providence. The man who is thus meek towards GOD, is dumb and openeth not his mouth; and is still, and submits quietly to the rod; and humbles himself under the mighty hand of GOD, and accepts the punishment of his iniquities, and says with Eli, "It is the Lord, let him "do what seemeth him good."

5. MEEKNESS, as it is a right temper of mind and spirit towards our neighbour, consists in a sweet and easy, courteous and obliging, peaceable and composed temper and behaviour, and is opposed to a boisterous, unruly, morose, revengeful, and more especially to a surly and angry temper and conduct towards others.

6. THE meek person is calm under provocations, and, having a command over his own spirit, is not hurried on to cursing, railing, reproachful language, or to hasty resentment and revenge, which always drives people of furious, ungoverned passions, to sinful, and often to very unjust and injurious extremes. The meek man will never be angry without a cause, or above measure; will never take an affront where none is meant, nor resent a real affront above what it deserves. He is slow to wrath; not easily provoked; thinketh no evil; speaketh not unadvisedly with his lips; rendereth not railing for railing; but, by soft and reasonable answers, turneth away wrath, and overcometh evil with good. Anger resteth in the bosom of fools: But it is not so with

* Psal. xxv. 9. Isa. lxi. 1.

with the meek man; he letteth not the ſun go down on his wrath. If his brother ſin againſt him *ſeventy-ſeven* times in a day, and ſay, *I repent*, he forgiveth him, and eaſily maketh up any breach, upon proper acknowledgment and ſubmiſſion. *Peace* is his *element*, and wrath the averſion of his nature.

7. MEEKNESS diſcovers itſelf, in a great cautiouſneſs of giving offence to others. Proud, angry, wrathful and turbulent men, are not cautious of this: They are perpetually giving offence, and ſeem to delight and glory in it, as a ſign of courage. But the goſpel teacheth us to ſpeak evil, (unneceſſarily) of no man; not to be brawlers, but gentle, kind, tender-hearted, thus ſhewing all meekneſs to all men *. The meek man is ever a civil, affable, courteous man; and a good heart teaches him that which is the grand precept in *politeneſs* and *true good breeding*; namely, to give no offence or uneaſineſs to any in company; but to endeavour to give pleaſure and ſatisfaction to all, ſo far as that may be done with a good conſcience.

8. MEEKNESS will ſhew itſelf in a modeſt and becoming deportment in every different rank, ſtation and relation of life. It will make *ſervants*, *children*, and all *inferiors* contented and pleaſed with their low and inferior ſtations; the poor with their poverty, and the afflicted with their afflictions. And it will make ſuperiors humble in their exalted ſtations, affable, and courteous, juſt and merciful, mild and gentle to thoſe that are under them, in inferior ſtates.

6. ABOVE all, a meek temper will ſhew itſelf in things that relate to religion. Surely the wrath of man worketh not the righteouſneſs of GOD. We are to contend indeed earneſtly for the faith once delivered to the ſaints, and not to deny or diſſemble what we take to be the truth of the goſpel, even at the riſque of life

* Tit. iii. 2.

life itſelf: But to manage religious diſputes and controverſies with angry contention and a perſecuting ſpirit, is to defend and maintain truth in a manner quite oppoſite to the temper and ſpirit of the goſpel, and which is never like to make proſelytes. It is to offer a holy ſacrifice with unhallowed fire,---and, like *Uzzah*, to polute the ark of GOD, by a *wrong touch*: Therefore, we are commanded, "In meekneſs to inſtruct thoſe who "oppoſe themſelves *. To be ready to give an anſwer "to every man that aſketh us a reaſon of the hope that "is in us, with meekneſs and fear †." And even *offending brethren* are to be treated, and if poſſible recovered from the ſnares of the *devil*, "In the ſpirit of "meekneſs ‡. Nay, the wiſdom that is from above, "is firſt pure, then peaceable, (or meek) full of mercy "and good works;"---and a wiſe and knowing man in religion, is to rule his tongue and angry paſſions, and to ſhew, out of a good converſation, his works, with *meekneſs of wiſdom* §. Indeed, the very genius of the goſpel is *meekneſs*.---It is the miniſtry of reconciliation with GOD and man.---It proclaims *peace upon earth*, as well as *good will towards men*.

10. WE cannot be Chriſtians without this temper; without all *lowlineſs* and *meekneſs*: For, this is the very temper and ſpirit of Chriſt, and he has commanded us to take his yoke upon us and learn of him; for, ſays he, "I am meek and low of heart." And this *temper* he eminently expreſſed through the whole of his own life.

11. MEEKNESS is one of the fruits of the regenerating, ſanctifying ſpirit, without which we are ſure, none will enter into the kingdom of heaven. Indeed, the moſt of theſe fruits, as enumerated by St. *Paul*, are branches

* 2 Tim. ii, 25.
† 1 Pet. iii. 15.
‡ Gal. vi. 1.
§ Jam. iii. 13, &c.

branches of meekneſs. "Meekneſs, love, joy, peace, "long-ſuffering, gentleneſs, goodneſs;"---and the greateſt number of the works of the fleſh, are directly the oppoſites of meekneſs; ſuch as, "hatred, variance, "emulations, wrath, ſtrife and envyings."

12. MEEKNESS is a grace exceedingly ornamental to the Chriſtian character. We are commanded to be clothed with humility (which is a ſiſter grace to meekneſs) "and to put on the ornament of a meek and quiet "ſpirit, which is in the ſight or GOD, of great price *." It is ſaid alſo, "that he who is ſlow to anger is better "than the mighty; and he that ruleth his ſpirit, than "he that taketh a city †." The meek alſo are pronounced *bleſſed*, by our Saviour, and have a promiſe that they ſhall *inherit the earth* ‡.

13. THE meek man has the only chance of going *eaſily*, *quietly* and *happily* through the world. Nothing that happens will much rifle or diſturb him, and his temper will render him beloved and admired by all.

14. LET us not miſtake an *eaſy*, *indolent*, *inſenſible*, *cowardly* natural temper for *Chriſtian meekneſs*. It is a grace of GOD's holy Spirit; and the true Chriſtian is meek, not for want of true courage and ſenſibility of injuries received, but in obedience to the laws of GOD, and in conformity to the doctrines and example of his Saviour.

15. IF we would obtain this grace we muſt pray and ſtrive to obtain it with *all diligence* and much *ſelf-denial*: For, it is directly againſt the grain of our corrupt and ſinful nature, and the prevailing maxims of the world. Indeed, no man will ever be endued with true Chriſtian meekneſs, till he has been renewed by the holy Spirit,

 and

* 1 Pet. iii. 4.
† Prov. xvi. 32.
‡ Matth. v. 5.

and has learned of Chrift to be meek and lowly of heart.

E S S A Y XXX.

CHARITY, *and the oppofite* VICES.

1. CHARITY is but another word for *love*; and when it is ufed as a term in divinity, in its largeft and moft extenfive fenfe, it fignifies the whole of our duty to GOD and man, both in its principle and proper fruits and effects. In a word, charity is the fulfilling of the whole law, and includes the two great commandments laid down by our Saviour as the fum and fubftance of the law and the prophets. "Thou "fhalt love the Lord thy GOD with all thy heart, with "all thy foul, &c. and thy neighbour as thy felf." Charity, therefore, in this largeft fenfe, implies a right temper of mind, both to GOD and our *neighbour*, and all its genuine fruits and effects, and therefore, is the whole of true religion and morality.

2. THIS grace or virtue, as it refpects GOD, (1.) prefuppofes a right knowledge of GOD; that we know him, or have worthy and juft conceptions of him in his adorable and amiable perfections (for there is not a more certain maxim, than that we can have no love for an unknown object;) and this knowledge, though it may be obtained in part, and in fome degree, from his works and providences, yet it is moft perfectly obtained from his revealed word, illuftrated and fet home upon the foul by the influences of his Spirit. (2.) It implies that we love him *fupremely*, and above all other beings; for if we do not love him *thus*, we do not love him as GOD; or the affection does not correfpond with the object

object of it. (3.) It implies that we are cheerfully and cordially devoted to his ſervice and obedience: "for "this is the love of GOD, that we keep his command-"ments."

3 THE vices oppoſite to this branch of charity---are, (1.) A wilful and careleſs ignorance of GOD; a neglecting the means of knowing him and acquainting ourſelves with him, without which it is impoſſible we ſhould love him as we ought. (2.) An exceſſive *ſelf-love*, or love of any creature, or creature enjoyment, by which the ſupreme love and affection of the ſoul is ſtolen away from GOD, and placed on the creature; which is *ſpiritual idolatry*. (3.) All ſin and vice is a violation of this branch of charity; but more eſpecially thoſe ſins, which ſtrike moſt directly at the *glory of* GOD, ſuch as *blaſphemy*, *profane ſwearing*, *atheiſtical* thoughts and ſpeeches, ſpeaking irreverently and ſlighting of GOD, his works, word, ordinances, laws, and people. Indeed, the natural mind is enmity againſt GOD, and none but ſuch as are born of him, can truly love him.

4. THE ſecond grand branch of charity, and as eſſential as the former, is *love to our neighbour*. And this may be divided into two branches, *humanity* and Chriſtian *charity*.

5. EVERY man, in ſcripture account, is *our neighbour*, be of what *nation*, or *religion* he will, and we owe *love* or *charity* to every man as ſuch; as our fellow-creatures; a partaker with us in the ſame common nature; as ſprung from the ſame original ſtock, a creature of the ſame GOD, an inhabitant with us of the ſame world; ſubject to the ſame feelings, paſſions, appetites, wants, neceſſities, miſeries with ourſelves, and bound with us to the ſame eternal world. From which relations naturally flow the duties of juſtice, ſympathy, mercy, compaſſion, all ſpringing from the root of charity or love to our neighbour. Hence we are to *owe no man*

any thing but love; and *this love* is the *fulfilling of the whole law*, as far as it respects our neighbour; because it will naturally and powerfully dispose us to treat our neighbour in all respects *as we ought*, wherever it truly takes place, and prevails in the heart.

6. CONTRARY to this branch of *charity* or *humanity*, is all injustice, evil-speaking, evil-thinking, or rash and censorious judging of our neighbour; all narrow, national prejudices against men; all local, contracted affections which shut out a party of mankind from our humanity, on account of their being of a different nation or religion from ourselves; all envy, malice, and cruelty towards our fellow-creatures, and all partiality in the administration of justice.

7. CHRISTIAN *charity* or *love*, properly so called, consists in a peculiar affection for our fellow Christians, under the notion of their being *our brethren*; disciples of the same LORD and Master; spiritual children of the same GOD by adoption and regeneration; heirs of the same precious hope, and incorruptible inheritance; fellow-pilgrims in the same strange country, and fellow-travellers together to the same land of promise. This is still an advance upon humanity, and unites Christians together in the most peculiar bonds; so that whatever is a violation of the laws and bonds of common *humanity*, is much more so of the laws of *Christian charity*. Indeed, charity, or Christian love, is the peculiar genius of christianity, and is that grace which Christ has honoured, by making it the peculiar and distinctive badge of his disciples. "By this, says Christ, shall all men know "that ye are my disciples, if you have love one for "another." Nor is the exercise of any grace so warmly urged upon Christians, as this.

8. A PECULIAR fruit of charity is *alms-giving*, or relieving the necessities of the *poor*, the *needy*, the *miserable* and the *oppressed*; and indeed, this is what commonly

passes

paſſes in the world by the name of *charity*, though very unjuſtly: For, the Apoſtle aſſures us, that a man may *give* even *all his goods to feed the poor*, and yet *have no charity*. An alms, if it proceeds not from *charity*, that is, from a true Chriſtian love to GOD and our neighbour, and from a principle of dutiful obedience to GOD, is no grace at all.

9. WE have an excellent character and deſcription of charity given, 1 Cor. xiii. 4, &c. "Charity ſuffer-
" eth long and is kind; charity envieth not; charity
" vaunteth not itſelf, is not puffed up, doth not behave
" itſelf unſeemly; ſeeketh not her own; is not eaſily
" provoked; thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniqui-
" ty, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things;
" believeth all things; hopeth all things; endureth all
" things: Charity never faileth. And now abideth
" faith, hope and charity, theſe three; but the greateſt
" of theſe is charity."

ESSAY XXXI.

CONTENTMENT, *and the oppoſite* VICES.

1. CONTENTMENT is a grace which re-ſpects only our *outward condition in this world*, and not our ſpiritual condition here, or our lot and appointment in the world to come; and it conſiſts in ſuch a moderate value for, and attachment to the things and enjoyments of the body and of this mortal life, that whether we have or want them; whether we have little or much of them, we are ſo well ſatisfied, and ſo little diſturbed, that we are thankful to GOD for what we have,

have, and are at *leisure* to enjoy both GOD and *ourselves*. In short, it consists in such a submission to GOD, and satisfiedness with the allotments of his providence, with regard to our worldly circumstances, that we may be able to say with the Apostle, "I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be contented; both to be full and to be hungry: both to abound, and be abased and suffer need *."

2. CONTENTMENT cannot reach to a man's spiritual condition or future state; for, although a sinner may have reason to thank GOD that he is out of *hell*; yet, it would ill become him to say, 'Whatever state my soul is in, whether in a state of grace or sin, converted or unconverted, I am therewith contented.' The design of GOD's word is, that sinners should have no peace or contentment in their sinful and perishing condition, and that they should never rest contented, till their peace is made with GOD.

3. NOR would it become a gracious man to be contented with low attainments in grace and holiness, and an imperfect measure of conformity to GOD. Saints should be restless in their endeavours to *perfect holiness in the fear of* GOD; and forgetting things behind, to reach forward, and press on to the mark for the prize of their high calling. Phil. iii. 13, 14, and many other scriptures.

4. NOR is it at all to be supposed, that any human creature *could*, or *should* be contented to be damned, and thrust out for ever from the beatific presence of GOD. All sinners, indeed, ought to acknowledge damnation their just portion, and approve the law and sentence which condemns them †: But it is against the *law of self-preservation*; yea, against our duty to GOD, to consent to be damned, or to be contented with this allotment.

* Philip. iv. 11, 12.
† Psal. li. 4. Rom. iii. 4.

ment. That ſtrong expreſſion, therefore, of St. Paul, Rom. ix. 3. and that of Moſes, Exod. xxxii. 32, muſt have ſome other meaning.

5. NOR ought we to be *ſo contented* with our condition and circumſtances in this life, as to be willing to take up our lot, portion and everlaſting abode here. Chriſtian contentment is conſiſtent with the moſt earneſt wiſhes and deſires to be in a better country, even an heavenly; to be *abſent from the body*, and the things and enjoyments of it, and *preſent with the Lord*; and only ſuppoſes, that as wiſe and prudent travellers, we are contented with ſuch lodgings and fare as we meet with in our journey to our Father's houſe, and our heavenly inheritance.

6. NOR does contentment, even with our worldly circumſtances, imply an inſenſibility of our difficulties and afflictions, or forbid lawful deſires and endeavours to get rid of them by bettering our condition. Such deſires are the foundation of diligence, induſtry, and the uſe of means, and therefore cannot be diſpleaſing to GOD. But, contentment ſuppoſes, that if we are diſappointed in the uſe of means, we acquieſce and are ſatisfied, without murmuring, convinced that ſuch is the will of heaven.

7. CONTENTMENT is oppoſed to *covetouſneſs* and *worldly-mindedneſs*, and ſuppoſes that our deſires of the good things of this world are low, modeſt and chriſtian; that we ſeek not eagerly great things for ourſelves, but bound our wiſhes and views to a moderate competency; reſolving, that having food and raiment we will be therewith contented; ſeeing that a man's life conſiſteth not in the abundance of the things he poſſeſſes *.

8. IMMODERATE worldly cares and anxieties about what *may* happen to us in time to come, are inconſiſtent with Chriſtian contentment, as they render men uneaſy for

* Luke xii. 15. Gen. xxviii. 20. Heb. xiii. 15.

for the present, unfit them for the duties of religion, and speak a distrust of the providential goodness of GOD *. Besides, these cares and anxieties, although they destroy our peace, yet they cannot better our circumstances; for, *taking thought*, cannot add one cubit to our stature, or alter the course or allotments of divine providence.

9. ALL murmurings and repinings against the providence of GOD, as though GOD had dealt more severely with us than he ought or might have done, are inconsistent with Christian contentment. To remedy this, we should consider GOD's universal providence, and the equity and perfect rectitude of his ways, 1 Sam. iii. 18.

10. ENVY against others, who are in more prosperous and honourable circumstances than we, is inconsistent with Christian contentment. There can be no contentment in the envious breast. Why should my eye be evil against my neighbour, because GOD is good to him? If my neighbour is a wicked man, his prosperity will destroy him: If a good man, why should I envy his prosperity, and not rather rejoice in it; seeing GOD made him prosperous for wise and good purposes? Indeed, my envying my neighbour his prosperity or happiness, is a plain and convincing proof, that I myself do not deserve these blessings at the hand of GOD; and that if I had them, I would make a very bad use of them.

11. A TRULY contented man, however he may wish his condition better, yet never will use *unlawful means* to better it. This is to make haste the wrong way, to be rich, easy or happy; and shews great discontent. The danger of this is well painted, in one instance of it, 1 Tim. vi. 8,---10. See a good advice also against this kind of discontent, Luke iii. 14.

12. CONTENTMENT

* Luke xxi. 34. Matth. vi. 34. Phil. iv. 6.

12. CONTENTMENT will engage us to make the beſt of our condition whatever it be. The contented man will ſurvey his remaining comforts with gratitude to GOD, and comfort himſelf by conſidering how few and tolerable his diſtreſſes and misfortunes are, compared with thoſe of many others. He will alſo endeavour to extract ſome ſpiritual advantage out of every affliction.

To engage us to contentment with our preſent lots and conditions, let us conſider, (1.) That they are appointed by a GOD of infinite juſtice, wiſdom and mercy. (2.) That let them be as bad as they will, we deſerve ſtill worſe. (3.) That it is generally *our own fault*, that they are not better. (4.) That if we are indeed GOD's children, all will work together for good to us; and that our wants and afflictions are ordered *in mercy*, and becauſe *need ſo is*: And if we are not GOD's children, we are puniſhed *leſs*, much leſs, than our iniquities deſerve. (5.) That however *grievous* or *hard* and *uncomfortable* our lots are, our wants and miſeries cannot be of long continuance, but muſt ſoon be terminated by death. (6.) That the beſt of men, even the *Son of* GOD himſelf, have been in worſe preſent circumſtances than we are; and yet were perfectly contented; from whoſe examples we ſhould learn this grace.

ESSAY XXXII.

CHASTITY *and the contrary* VICES.

1. GOD hath implanted in the ſexes ſuch appetites and affections towards each other as are neceſſary for the propagation of our kind, and without which, probably the firſt command, "Multiply and re-"plenifh the earth," would not have been readily obeyed. And it is here worth obſerving, as a proof of the divine wiſdom and goodneſs, that a natural pleaſure is annexed to thoſe actions by which our kind is propagated, and life ſupported and ſuſtained.

2. CHASTITY conſiſts in the regulation of theſe appetites and deſires between the ſexes.

3. As GOD hath implanted no natural appetites in his creatures, for which he hath not provided lawful gratifications; ſo the appetites between the ſexes, may be gratified in a lawful manner. Wherefore, chaſtity conſiſts not in *eradicating* theſe natural appetites, but in *regulating* them; reſtraining them within the bounds of moderation, and directing them to right objects. Hence appears the unreaſonableneſs of *celebacy* and a *monaſtic life*.

4. ALTHOUGH brutes, generally ſpeaking, are remarkably moderate in the gratification of theſe appetites, yet they cannot be called *chaſte*, having no conſcience, and being under no moral or divine law. *Chaſtity* therefore is a *human* and *Chriſtian* virtue, ariſing from reaſon, reflection, and ſubmiſſion to the authority of a divine law.

5. REASON and *reflection* will quickly convince us that the looſe and unbounded gratification of the appetites

petites between the ſexes, would be productive of the greateſt miſchiefs in human ſociety; and therefore *marriage*, (the only remedy againſt this miſchief) has been held ſacred and venerable among almoſt all nations, who have had little elſe than the dictates of natural reaſon for their guide. Indeed, other gratifications of theſe appetites have been tolerated among ſome of them. And the more brutiſh theſe nations have been, the more unbounded and unreſtrained have they been in the gratifications of theſe appetites, (witneſs the ancient Britons.)

6. THE Chriſtian revelation has limitted the gratification of theſe appetites to *one woman* and *one man*, in a ſtate of marriage, during the life of either of the parties; and has ſtrictly, and upon the ſevereſt penalties, forbid the gratification of them in any other way: The reaſons of which limitation and prohibition, are very wiſe, and ſufficiently obvious: Hence we may learn what is *unchaſtity*, in *deed*, *word*, and *thought*.

7. UNCHASTITY in *deed*, is when ſingle and unmarried perſons do at all actually gratify theſe appetites; or when married perſons at all actually gratify them, with any other perſons than their own huſbands or wives; and is diſtinguiſhed into ſins of *fornication*, *adultery*, *inceſt*, *poligamy*, *ſodomy* and *ſelf-pollution*.

8. UNCHASTITY in thought or deſire, is when one of either ſex, looketh upon one of the contrary ſex, which is a forbidden object, ſo as to luſt after them, or deſire criminal converſe with them. And how much more criminally unchaſte muſt it be, ſo to inflame the heart with an abſent, forbidden object, as to act over the guilty ſcene in imagination?

9. UNCHASTITY in word, is when we uſe ſuch filthy obſcene language, as has a tendency to excite unchaſte thoughts and deſires, either in ourſelves, or others. In order to maintain and preſerve our chaſtity,

the following things ſeem neceſſary and uſeful:---(1.) To pray for, and endeavour after *true converſion*, or a *new*, *clean*, and *pure* heart; for while we have a corrupt nature, our paſſions and appetites will ever be inordinate and ungovernable.---(2.) To ſhun all unneceſſary intimacy and familiarity with forbidden objects of the different ſex, by which we may inſenſibly contract unlawful deſires, which may in time lead to criminal actions; or, where a friendſhip is cultivated between the ſexes, to improve it to the promoting of purity and virtue.---(3.) To chuſe and conſort with ſuch companions of our own ſex, as are moſt chaſte and modeſt in their language and deportment; and on the contrary, to ſhun all lewd, immodeſt, profligate companions, who will ſoon vitiate our taſte, and corrupt our manners.---(4.) To be much in reading the ſcriptures, and ſuch other books, as tend to purify the mind, and inſpire chaſte and holy thoughts; and cautiouſly to ſhun the peruſal of looſe plays, ſongs, romances, and ſuch traſh as corrupt and debauch the mind.---(5.) Often to examine our own hearts, and meditate on the extreme evil and danger of unchaſtity; how unlike it renders us to the pure and holy GOD; how unfit for his enjoyment, and how obnoxious to his vengeance; that burning luſts, are fuel to kindle unquenchable flames, in the place of torment.---(6.) Faſting and prayer, have been found excellent and effectual remedies for unchaſtity; and indeed, all the inſtrumental duties of religion ſhould be uſed in this view.---(7.) Chaſtity agrees well with diligence and ſobriety, and often dwells under the ſame roof with them. ---(8.) Marriage is to many, the only remedy for unchaſtity; and it is a lawful and honourable one.---(9.) But, in ſhort, without a new and divine nature, and grace in exerciſe, nothing will effectually ſecure either married or ſingle from *unchaſtity*, either in *thought*, *word*, or *action*.

ESSAY

E S S A Y XXXIII.

HUMILITY, *and the oppofite* VICES.

1. HUMILITY confifts in a right judgment of ourfelves, compared with other beings ; and is oppofed to the vices of *pride*, *arrogance*, *felf-righteoufnefs*, *felf-conceit*, *vanity*, and *boafting* and *glorying* in one's felf, with a contempt of others.

2. HUMILITY, like all the other Chriftian graces, muft be feated in the mind, and thence difplay and manifeft itfelf in our words and outward deportment ; and therefore the Apoftle exhorts Chriftians to " put on " humblenefs of mind."

3. HUMILITY does not confift in making a wrong judgment of ourfelves or others, or in thinking lefs or worfe of ourfelves than we deferve ; but in making a right and juft judgment of ourfelves and others on comparrifon ; and if we do fo, we fhall have little reafon for pride, arrogance or felf-conceit. Nor,

4. DOES humility confift (as many have fuppofed) in mean clothes, dejected looks, and a complaifant cringing behaviour to our fellow creatures : All thefe may confift with the moft infufferable pride and ambition, and are often only cloaks to conceal it. Yet the world makes humility to confift wholly in thefe things, and will not allow a man to have any pride, who is negligent or flovenly in his drefs, or affable in converfation.

5. THE humble foul fees that he is *nothing* before GOD, or in comparrifon with him ; that he is but a creature of a day, fprung from the duft, whofe breath is in his noftrils, wholly depending on GOD for his foul

and

and its faculties, his body and its ſenſes; for every mo ment of his exiſtence, every ſupport and comfort of th preſent life, and every hope of future life; and therefore he *walks* exceeding *humbly with his* GOD.

6. THE humble ſoul ſees that it is not only a *dependen* creature, but a *ſinful, guilty, helpleſs, periſhing, loſt, miſer able* creature, who has deſtroyed itſelf; who deſerve hell, and no kind of mercy or favour from GOD at all Therefore, he is contented in all ſtates without mur muring; bears afflictions with patience; is thankfu for every, even the ſmalleſt favour; rejoices in the glad tidings of a Saviour and ſalvation; gladly diſclaims and renounces his own righteouſneſs and merit, and joyfully embraces and pleads the righteouſneſs and merit of Chriſt; comes to GOD poor and empty, wretched and miſerable, humble and penitent, and falls down before the throne of his mercy, willing to accept the free ſalvation with the utmoſt gratitude, on GOD's own terms; on *any terms*.

7. THE humble ſoul, knowing its own natural weakneſs, blindneſs, ignorance and fallibility; how prone it is to errors, miſtakes and prejudices; readily renounces and diſclaims its own weak, corrupt, fallible judgment in religious matters; ſubmits its reaſon and underſtanding wholly to the dictates of GOD's *word* and the *guidance of his Spirit*, and is willing humbly and gladly to learn from GOD and his *bleſſed Son*, the truths and duties of religion. He is not wiſe in his own conceit, or wiſe above what is written, but wholly ſubmits his underſtanding to revealed truth.

8. THE humble ſoul thinks meanly of its own knowledge and goodneſs, compared with that of other men of nobler powers, and higher attainments and advantages; eſteeming others better than himſelf, and in honour preferring them. He is ſo far from *envying* ſuch, that he honours and reſpects them as better and more uſeful than

than himſelf; thanks GOD for his grace in them and his gifts to them; is ready to learn from and imitate them; ſpeaks honourably and reſpectfully of them to others, and thereby endeavours to promote their uſefulneſs in the world: Nay, he is not angry or offended, nor is his pride piqu'd, if they are honoured more than him, and at his own expence. To bear this patiently ſhews true humbleneſs of mind.

9. THE humble ſoul, ſenſible that all its knowledge and goodneſs is *borrowed* and *derived*; is the fruit of GOD's gifts and grace, and of the opportunities and advantages which he has conferred upon it; and how very limitted and imperfect its knowledge is at the beſt; how very little it knows of what may be known, and how imperfect its knowledge is of the things which it knows, how many degrees of grace and goodneſs there are between it and the perfection of holineſs of which our nature is capable: The humble ſoul, I ſay, knowing and being convinced of all this, can never deſpiſe thoſe who have leſs knowledge and goodneſs than himſelf; becauſe, he hath nothing which he hath not received, and it is GOD who hath made him to differ, and he is ſtill but a poor, imperfect creature, full of ignorance and corruption. This therefore keeps him from *ſpiritual pride*; from *ſelf-righteouſneſs* and *ſelf-conceit*; from being puffed up, and from glorying in a ſtate which is ſo very far ſhort of perfection. He is humble, and pities the infirmities of others.

10. PRIDE was the firſt ſin of men and angels, and is ſtill the predominant vice of ſinners, and the laſt ſin which is totally ſubdued and rooted out of the human heart by renewing grace.

11. PRIDE *towards* GOD, ſhews itſelf by the following ſymptoms. Men who will believe their own vain imaginations, ſooner than GOD's word; who ſet up their darkned reaſon, above the word of GOD, and their

own

own corrupt wills, above the will and law of GOD; who oppoſe GOD, and murmur againſt him, and will not accept of his Son and his righteouſneſs, but believe they have righteouſneſs and merit enough for their juſtification, are exceſſively proud: And this is the moſt helliſh and provoking of all pride; yet, it is the pride of every unconverted ſinner.

12. PRIDE *towards men*, ſhews itſelf in undervaluing and deſpiſing others, and preferring ourſelves before them; in contradicting and oppoſing others upon all occaſions; in looking down upon others as beneath our notice, and undervaluing all their good qualities and accompliſhments; in ſpeaking much of ourſelves, praiſing ourſelves, and boaſting and glorying in our actions and diſpoſitions.

13. GAIETY and fondneſs of dreſs, is a kind of *childiſh, womaniſh* vanity, which hardly deſerves the name of *pride*. It is a kind of childiſh folly which deſerves to be laughed at, and which no ſinner of good common ſenſe was ever guilty of. What? Proud of that which covers our nakedneſs and ſhame!

14. THE *devil* affords the higheſt example of pride; and the bleſſed Jeſus of humility.

15. PRIDE is the moſt *ſhameful* and *abſurd* vice of a man; and humility the moſt *amiable* and *ornamental* virtue of a Chriſtian *.

ESSAY

* Pſal. xxxviii. 6. Matth. v. 4.——xviii. 4. Iſa. lvii. 15. Luke xviii. 9,---13. 1 Pet. v. 5. James iv. 6.

E S S A Y XXXIV.

SOBRIETY, *and the contrary* VICES.

1. SOBRIETY is a very extenſive virtue, which is not only oppoſed to *drunkenneſs* and *intemperance* (as it is commonly underſtood ;) but to all *levity of mind* and *irregularity of the paſſions, appetites* and *affections*.---Indeed, to be *ſober*, is to perform the third part of our Chriſtian duty. " We muſt deny all ungodlineſs and every " worldly luſt, and live godly, righteouſly and ſoberly in " this world *."

2. THERE is an intoxication or drunkenneſs of the mind, as well as of the body ; and the *ſcripture* or *goſpel ſobriety* is particularly, if not chiefly oppoſed to this vice. All temperate and abſtemious men, are not ſober men. *Young women* and *deacons wives* are commanded to be ſober † ; and it would be indecent to imagine, that this was a caution againſt intemperance in drinking. Young men are exhorted to be ſober-minded ‡ ; which ſhews that this virtue relates to the government of the mind, as well as to that of the bodily appetites. ---Sobriety is alſo oppoſed to *gaiety* and *vanity in dreſs* in women, and pertneſs or immodeſty of behaviour : " In like manner alſo, that women adorn themſelves in " modeſt apparel, with ſhamefacedneſs and ſobriety ; " not with broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or coſtly " array ; but with good works §."---It is alſo oppoſed to *pride* and *ſelf-conceit* ‖ : " Let no man think of him-

* Tit. ii. 12.
† Tit. ii. 4. 1 Tim. iii. 11.
‡ Tit. i. 6.
§ Tim. ii. 9.
‖ Rom. xii. 3.

" ſelf more highly than he ought; but ſoberly, ac-
" cording as GOD hath dealt to every man the meaſure
" of faith."

3. SOBRIETY, therefore, as it is a *mental virtue*, ſeems to ſignify *gravity* and *decorum* of thought and behaviour; and conſiſts in a due and prudent regulation of the paſſions, appetites, affections and actions, and is oppoſed to *levity*, *ficklenefs* and *inconſtancy of mind*; *to pride*, *ſelf-conceit*, and extravagant *paſſions* and *affections* of all ſorts.---So that a ſober man, is one who is diſcreet, humble, prudent, compoſed, patient, meek, grave and examplary in all manner of life and converſation.

4. SOBRIETY is alſo often particularly oppoſed to intemperance in drinking *.

5. DRUNKENNESS which is the oppoſite to ſobriety in this ſenſe of it, is, in itſelf, *a great evil*, and productive of many others †. (1.) It is expreſsly and repeatedly forbidden in the goſpel, under the penalty of forfeiting the favour of GOD and eternal life, 1 Cor. vi. 10. Gal. v. 21. Matth. xxiv. 48, 51. (2.) Chriſt and his Apoſtles, have warned Chriſtians againſt it, in a very ſingular, and moſt urgent manner; and no wonder, ſeeing it is in itſelf ſo beaſtly a vice, and attended with ſo many hurtful conſequences with regard to men's *bodies*, *ſouls*, reputation and worldly intereſts. (3.) It is a vice peculiarly Heathen ‡. (4.) It wholly unmans us;---renders us ſtupid and ridiculous, juſt objects of ridicule and contempt, even to children, ſervants, and idiots §. (5.) It incapacitates us for all the duties we owe to GOD, our families, our neighbours, and ourſelves; and puts us in the way of doing the moſt wicked

* 1 Theſ. i. 6,---8. 1 Pet. iv. 7. 1 Tim. iii. 2. Tit. i. 8. ——ii. 2, 12. Acts xxvi. 25.

† Prov. xxiii. 29, 30, 33.

‡ Rom. xiii. 12, 13, 14, 1 Theſ. v. 8.

§ Prov. xxix. 1. Hoſ. iv. 11.

wicked and hurtful actions. (6.) It juſtly renders us unworthy of all truſt and confidence from others. (7.) It lays us open an eaſy prey to all knaviſh and deſigning men; lays the foundation of many chronical and acute diſeaſes, and generally brings its votaries to poverty, contempt, and an unpitied and premature death.

6. IN order that we may be preſerved from this moſt diſgraceful and moſt deſtructive of all vices, the following maxims and cautions may be found ſerviceable.---(1.) Shun the company of ſuch as are addicted to this ſwiniſh vice *.---Tarry not long among thoſe who are in the way to exceſs, how ſober ſoever their general character may be, leſt you ſhould be induced to run to the *ſame exceſs of riot*, and ſo contract a vicious habit.---(3.) Take care never to exceed that quantity of wine or ſtrong liquor, which you find by experience to be a proper and moderate refreſhment. The boundary of temperance is ſo very narrow, that we may eaſily exceed it; which, if we do, we loſe the command of ourſelves, and may quickly be hurried to the greateſt length of exceſs.---(4.) Endeavour never to make ſtrong liquor neceſſary to your refreſhment. There is much wiſdom in laying reſtraints on the appetites, at times, even in the uſe of innocent enjoyments. Theſe wholeſome reſtraints ſtrengthen ſelf-power and ſelf-government.---(5.) Shun habitual idleneſs, which is commonly the parent of drunkenneſs, gaming and moſt other pernicious vices.---(6.) Frequently conſider the *ſhame*, the *folly* and the *horrid guilt* and danger of drunkenneſs †.---(7.) Pray daily to GOD for a new heart, cleanſed from the love of ſin, and breathing after univerſal purity and perfection ‡.

* Prov. xiii. 20.——xxiv. 20, 21.——iv. 14, 15. Hab. ii. 15.
† Deut. xxix. 19, 20.
‡ Rom. xiii. 12,---14.

ESSAY XXXV.

CHRISTIAN COURAGE *or* FORTITUDE, *and its oppofites.*

1. FORTITUDE or courage, is that temper or difpofition of mind which fets a man upon doing *brave* and *commendable* actions in the face of any *danger* or *oppofition* which may lie in his way. Nay, the truly brave man is rather *animated* than *difheartened*, by the number or greatnefs of the dangers and difficulties which lie in the way of his duty. "The righteous is "bold as a lion; and he that hath clean hands grows "ftronger and ftronger."

2. CHRISTIAN courage or fortitude, is a being *bold*, *fearlefs* and *intrepid* in the caufe of Chrift, and in our duty and allegiance to him. As bravery in war has been ever efteemed the higheft proof of courage, (becaufe *life*, the deareft of all earthly enjoyments, is rifked in war) fo we borrow our idea of Chriftian courage, from the ftate of chriftianity in this world, which is very properly repreefented as a ftate of warfare;---and to exercife Chriftian courage, is but another phrafe for 'being 'good *foldiers of Jefus Chrift*,' who is called very expreffively the *Captain of our falvation* *.

3. COURAGE naturally fuppofes difficulties, dangers and oppofition; for, without thefe, there could be no proper trial or exercife of this virtue. This therefore proves, that the Chriftian life, as a ftate of warfare, is not that eafy, inactive, indolent thing, which the generality of nominal profeffors feem to imagine; but a life of conflict, full of hazards, difficulties and oppofition; and that he who has never experienced and encountered thefe,

* 2 Tim. ii. 3.

theſe, has never yet truly enliſted himſelf under the banner of Jeſus, nor wared a good warfare.

4. COURAGE, in order to denominate it a *Chriſtian virtue*, muſt, as well as *zeal*, be founded upon *knowledge*, and a rational conviction, not only of the goodneſs of the cauſe in which we are engaged, but alſo of the difficulties we have to encounter; the riſk we run; the meaſure of our ſtrength; the aids and ſuccours we have to expect, and the wages we have to receive if we come off conquerors. In ſhort, it ſuppoſes that we have *counted the coſt* *.

5. THE neceſſity and expediency of Chriſtian fortitude will appear from the *numerous*, *ſubtile* and *powerful* enemies of our ſalvation: (1.) From inviſible, malignant ſpirits †. (2.) From our own luſts and corruptions, which treacherouſly take part with theſe ſpiritual enemies againſt us, and being, as it were, our very ſelves, are the more difficult to deny, mortify and conquer. (3.) From our fellow creatures, who too often uſe every artifice to allure us to ſin, or to ſhame and fright us from duty.

6. THE *nature* and *number* of our Chriſtian duties abſolutely require the exerciſe of this virtue. What fortitude muſt it require to comply with that exhortation of our Lord, "If any man will be my diſciple, let him "deny himſelf and take up his croſs and follow me?" *Self-denial* and *ſelf-conqueſt* are the nobleſt feats of courage, and require the exertions of a firm, reſolute and determined ſoul. "He that is ſlow to anger is better "than the mighty; and he that ruleth his ſpirit, than "he that taketh a city ‡. To be more particular: (1.) Repentance, which is a general and indiſpenſable Chriſtian

* Luke xiv. 26,---33. Phil. iii. 7,---14. Acts xx. 22,---24. Rom. viii. 18. 2 Cor. iv. 16.

† Eph. vi. 8, &c.

‡ Prov. xvi. 32.

Chriſtian duty, requires the utmoſt degree of fortitud and reſolution to ſubdue and eradicate old rooted habit and to deny ourſelves ſuch things as we have long ha great pleaſure in, and to abſtain from which, will be ex tremely painful. We muſt forſake old companions; re ſolutely withſtand their enticements to ſin and vanity endure their ſcoffs, and, at length, their rage. It ma happen, that we cannot truly repent without diſobligin our neareſt relations and dareſt friends; without di continuing *gainful buſineſs*, as well as renouncing *belove luſts*; or without making acknowledgments for injurie done, and reſtoring, with ſhame, what we have unjuſtl acquired. But under all theſe difficult and ſelf-denying duties, the cowardly and irreſolute man muſt ſhamefully ſuccumb.

(2.) THE falſe opinions and depraved cuſtoms o the world make ſad havock among human ſouls, and it is the duty of every Chriſtian to oppoſe them, and to counteract their miſchievous tendency. The evangelical precept is, "Be not conformed to this world; "but be ye transformed by the renewing of your "minds." Now, the falſe maxims and depraved cuſtoms of the world, like irreſiſtable torrents, ſweep the cowardly and irreſolute Chriſtian along with them. He hears his religious opinions ridiculed; his GOD irreverently mentioned; his Saviour traduced, and his pious friends made the laughing ſtock of fools, yet dares not reply; fears to be rude; dreads the ridicule or reſentment of ſome fellow-worm---nay, perhaps the ſame puſillanimity leads him baſely to lend the ſmile of ſeeming approbation to this wickedneſs, and at length cordially to fall into it himſelf. But the reſolute and courageous Chriſtian, dares to be ſingularly good; he dares to ſtem the torrent of popular depravity and corruption;---he dares to be pious and upright, againſt the example of *the multitude who do iniquity*.---He can

bear

bear to be laughed at as an unfaſhionable fool, by both the great and little vulgar, with all the fortitude and magnanimity of a Chriſtian hero. He ſhines as a light in the world, amidſt a crooked and perverſe generation, holding forth the word of life, and counting it all joy to be perſecuted for righteouſneſs ſake. Were the whole world to deride, to perſecute, to oppoſe him, he would, with the heroic leader of Iſrael's tribes, reſolve, "As "for me and my houſe, we will ſerve the Lord *."

(3.) To be brief: Would we ſee the excellency and neceſſity of Chriſtian fortitude, we muſt view the Chriſtian in the following ſtations of duty and of providence---Reproving ſin---oppoſing error---propagating truth---conflicting with temptation----ſtruggling under the preſſure of pain and heavy calamities and afflictions---expoſed to the rage and malignity of perſecuting zeal---and upon the very verge of eternity, encountering *death*, the *laſt* and *moſt terrific* enemy in the Chriſtian warfare:---Eſpecially, in the awful hour of death, and amidſt the agonies of diſſolving nature, the irreſolute man is ſtupified with horror. He dares not take a retroſpect of his by-paſt life, nor look into the fathomleſs abyſs of eternity. He recollects, that the face of man has often terrified him ſo, as to make him do violence to conſcience: How then ſhall he behold the face of GOD, whom he hath offended through a ſinful fear of man, and of whoſe words he has been aſhamed before an *adulterous generation? Fearful* he clings to life; *reluctant* he ſtarts back from the brink of eternity, and dreads the ſight of his almighty judge. Diſmal forbodings fill his ſoul with diſtreſsful agonies, and he quits the world, leaving the ſpectators under a painful uncertainty whither he is gone.---But the Chriſtian who has courageouſly ſerved his GOD in life, is generally bold as a lion in the near proſpect of death.---

To

* Job xxiv. 15.

To him, death is a meſſenger of peace. He triumphs over his terrors through the blood of the Lamb; enquires fearleſs for his ſting, and demands his guidance to the unknown regions of eternity! *There* he expects congratulating angels to meet him. *There* he hopes to ſee GOD as his reconciled Father, face to face, and that wonderful God-man Chriſt Jeſus, who was ſo much his friend as to die for him;---to ſee him exalted to the higheſt honours,---exalted to be his judge:---And recollecting ſome of the tokens and manifeſtations of his love, he deſires now to teſtify to all around him, the *grace*, and *faithfulneſs* and *loving kindneſs* of his Lord. He dies in hope; dies exulting; moves and inſtructs the ſpectators of his exit, and perhaps does more honour to GOD, and more good to his fellow-men, in his death, than he has been enabled to do in all his life.

7. FAITH begets this virtue in the ſoul, and gives vigour to all its acts and exertions. (1.) By that faith, which is the evidence of things not ſeen, we perceive, that the cauſe we have eſpouſed is good; that it is the cauſe of GOD and of Chriſt; the cauſe in which the eternal intereſt of our ſouls is embarked. (2.) By faith we ſee the arm of omnipotence ſtretched out for our ſuccour, and may ſay, with humble confidence, that we have *almighty ſtrength*, reſpecting what we have to encounter with in the way of our duty. How baſe then to be *daſtardly* and *faint-hearted*, with ſuch odds on our ſide? (3.) By the eye of faith we ſee the glorious Captain of our ſalvation ſpreading his ſtandard over us---ſtanding with a celeſtial crown in his hand to reward our valour, and millions of our fellow-ſoldiers, beholding, as it were, from the battlements of heaven, our behaviour in the Chriſtian race and warfare. Seeing then we are encompaſſed with ſuch a cloud of witneſſes, ought we not, "Laying aſide every weight, and the ſin

"which

" which easily besets us, to run with patience the " race set before us, looking unto Jesus * ?" (3.) By faith we look back and behold the gracious army of *martyrs*, *apostles*, *prophets*, and *patriarchs*, who were bold to attempt, and resolute to perform the most arduous things. *These* have each conquered singly, and triumphed. *These* were *men* as *we are*, and justly expect that we should behave with equal ardour, fortitude and perseverance in the Christian warfare. They seem to chide our sloth, and animate us to activity by observing, that ' GOD is still almighty ;---that our religion is still ' divine ;---that our Redeemer is still the same Jesus, ' and his gospel worthy as much honour now as ever ' it has been.'

* 1 Cor. ix. 25. 2 Tim. iv. 8. Heb. xii. 1,---4.

ESSAY XXXVI.

The CHRISTIAN USES *of the* TONGUE.

1. THE noblest use that can be made of the tongue, is to *glorify* GOD ; which is done by this little instrument, (1.) By praying to him. Thus we acknowledge our entire dependance on him for all that is needful to our happiness. (2.) By praising him. Thus we make known his loving kindness to his needy undeserving creatures. (3.) By expressing our admiration of his infinite perfections : Thus exalting his great name. (4.) By confessing our iniquities : Thus magnifying his grace, which continues with us, notwithstanding our so great unworthiness. (5.) By

contending for the truth of his word; teſtifying our confidence in it, and diſcouraging every indecent freedom with it. (6.) By vindicating his providential government, and diſplaying the wiſdom, goodneſs and equity of his ways. Theſe are, doubtleſs, ſome of the principal ends for which the tongue is given to man.

2. A VERY good and noble uſe of the tongue is, to promote by it the good of our neighbour; which we may do, (1.) By labouring to inſtruct the ignorant in what may relate to the concerns of his body; but more eſpecially in what reſpects his ſoul. (2.) By commendation, in ſuch manner as may be an encouragement to him to proceed in the way of godlineſs and virtue, ſo as to advance his good name, and extend the ſphere of his uſefulneſs: But in this good office, we ſhould guard in a particular manner againſt flattery, or imprudent commendation, which is deadly poiſon to moſt men. (4.) By *peace-making*: There being nothing more deſtructive to religion and virtue than malicious ſtrife; nor any thing more unſeemly in a Chriſtian. Thoſe therefore who are the happy inſtruments of removing this helliſh evil from between men, are, in a peculiar manner, conſidered by the GOD of peace as *his children*: And, (5.) By vindicating injured characters and perſons. This is doing very great ſervice to men; diſcovers a noble ſpirit, and is an office that procures the eſteem of men, and GOD doubtleſs regards the diſcharge of it with complacence*. (6.) One of the nobleſt and moſt benevolent uſes of the tongue, towards our fellow-creatures, after inſtructing them in the principles of religion, and animating them to the practice of it; is to pour the balm of conſolation into the wounded ſpirit. Words fitly ſpoken to the broken in heart; to thoſe agonizing ſouls who are ſinking as it were, under the preſſure of ſome heavy affliction into the black ſea of deſpair, are indeed

* Matth. xii. 35,---37.

deed like *apples of gold in pictures of silver*. Can there be a more *God-like*, *Christian-like* office than to sooth the throbbings of the anxious mind; to give it, "beauty "for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the gar-"ment of praise for the spirit of heaviness?" This is one of the most amiable and benevolent offices of the gracious Redeemer, "To bind up the broken hearted "and to comfort all that mourn *." And such as imitate him in this branch of his prophetic office, are, to their sorrowing distressed fellow-creatures, as *rivers of water in a dry place*, and the *shadow of a great rock in a weary land*: They are *a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, and a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall* †.

3. ANOTHER Christian use of the tongue, is to manage it so as not to *destroy*, but to *increase*, mutual confidence among men. This must be done by maintaining a strict correspondence between *our words* and *our thoughts*. Whenever we speak, an honest upright heart should dictate our speech, and we should on no pretence, tell a lie, not even that good may come ‡. Great regard should be paid in particular to our promises; to promise nothing or enter into no engagements but such as we are deliberately resolved to perform at all hazards.---In short, our words should contain nothing but truth, and the whole truth, reserving nothing, where the reserve would amount to the consequence of a lie in prejudicing any. Yet in some cases it may be lawful to reserve *a part of the truth*---or to use something of a feint. See 1 Sam. xvi. 2.

* Isa. lxi. 1,---3.
† Isa. xxxii. 2.——xxv. 4.
‡ Rom. iii. 8. Psal. xv. 1, 2.

E S S A Y XXXVII.

The UNCHRISTIAN ABUSES *of the* TONGUE.

THE unchriſtian abuſes of the tongue, form ſtrong contraſt to the former ſubject.

1. As the nobleſt uſe of the tongue, conſiſts in thoſ exerciſes of it which tend to celebrate, magnify an glorify the bleſſed GOD, and ſet forth his excellencies t our fellow-creatures; ſo whatever has a direct, or indi rect tendency to diſhonour GOD, or give our fellow creatures *wrong*, *mean*, and *unworthy* apprehenſions o him, are the moſt *capital ſins* and *abuſes* of the tongue-- ſuch as, (1.) atheiſtical ſpeeches: As ſaying, tha *there is no* GOD; denying or diſputing his being, or in ſinuating ſuch hints and arguments, as tend to deſtro this belief in ourſelves or fellow-creatures. This i ſtriking at the glory of GOD with a witneſs, and erazing the very foundations of all religion among men. Equal ly pernicious are thoſe ſpeeches and arguments, which while they ſeem to admit the being of a GOD, inſinuate that he did not create, and does not rule and gover the world :---Or, allowing his univerſal providence, i giving general laws to nature, while they deny his par ticular providence, or his ordering and over-ruling al the particular actions of his creatures.---Nor is it whit better to deny GOD's moral government of his ra tional creatures; that he is the *obſerver of men*; the wit neſs and judge, the rewarder and puniſher of their mo ral conduct. To this may be added the vile guilt o robbing GOD of any of his perfections, of his omniſci ence, omnipreſence, his holineſs, juſtice, mercy o

truth

truth;---or of extolling any of these perfections, to the prejudice of the rest.

(2.) BLASPHEMY: Either cursing GOD, as *Job's* wife would have persuaded him to do; or challenging GOD to come forth, and do his worst; or boldly and insolently defying his vengeance; or charging him foolishly, as cruel and unjust, and laying more on us than we deserve; or boldly calling down his vengeance upon ourselves or others; or sporting with his judgments, undervaluing his mercies, and ridiculing his works, or word, or providences. This is to do all that we can to debase and vilify the Almighty, by speaking of him in a manner that we dared not to do of a dignified fellow-worm.

(3.) PROFANITY, nearly bordering on the former. Speaking slightly and disrespectfully of holy things and ordinances, and that holiness which is the image of GOD on his people;---mimicking and mocking holy actions, such as prayer, preaching, the sacraments, and the like;---making a jest of the scriptures, and using them proverbially to profane purposes;---speaking slightingly of the laws of GOD and the rules of holiness, as not worth our notice;---making a mock at sin as a meer trifle, and talking of the most awful and serious matters, such as death, judgment, heaven and hell, in such a slight, vain, and sportive manner, as plainly shews that we have no practical belief of them.

(4.) SOLEMN perjury; or calling GOD to witness a known lie, and praying down his vengeance upon us, in case our declaration be not true, when we know that it is not.

(5.) COMMON swearing; which by the frequent and familiar abuse of GOD's holy name, lessens our own reverence and that of others for an oath; turns the venerable name of JEHOVAH, into a meer *scarecrow*, or an *empty sound*, to convey our hellish passions to others, and

paves

paves the way to *cuſtomary, horrid perjury*. This is an abuſe of the tongue, which, beſides its being forbidden by the word of GOD, on the penalty of his ſevereſt diſpleaſure, is attended with neither pleaſure, profit nor honour;---is rude, barbarous, uncivil, and unmeaning, and fit only for *devils* and *damned ſpirits*.

(6.) THE common and profane uſe of GOD's name, even where neither curſing, ſwearing, nor damning is annexed to it: Such as, O GOD! O LORD! O CHRIST! *E Gad! O Je!* and GOD bleſs us! CHRIST bleſs us! and the like, when they are ſpoken in a *light, unmeaning, cuſtomary* manner: For, as GOD's name is ſacred and glorious, ſo every *common uſe* of it, is an *irreverent abuſe* of it, and is expreſsly forbidden in the third commandment, "Thou ſhalt not take the name of the "LORD thy GOD in vain, &c."

2. As the next important uſe of the tongue, is to promote the good of our fellow-creatures; ſo, whatever tends directly, or indirectly to hurt or injure our neighbour, in any of his intereſts, is a *vile, unchriſtian, diabolical* abuſe of it. Indeed, all the above-mentioned abuſes of it, are againſt *Chriſtian charity*: For, though they directly and immediately tend to diſhonour GOD, yet they mediately and indirectly tend to corrupt and ruin our neighbour. Indeed, whatever ſin comes the length of the tongue, *is*, and neceſſarily *muſt be* defiling to all around us, who are diſpoſed to receive infection. But the abuſes of the tongue, which are moſt immediately repugnant to Chriſtian charity, are the following: (1.) *Direct lying*, or *untruth*: For, as the tongue and ſpeech were given to be a true and regular *index* and *interpreter* of the mind; ſo a man who ſpeaks not truth, is like a *clock* whoſe hand points to the wrong hour, or like a *compaſs* whoſe needle deviates from the true pole, *uſeleſs* and *worth nothing*. Beſides, as truth is the foundation of all right intercourſe between men, ſo there could be no liv-

ing

ing in ſociety, or tranſacting buſineſs with our fellow-creatures, if falſehood prevailed univerſally. Indeed, truth is ſo *ſacred*, *valuable* and *important* a branch of Chriſtian morality, and ſo eſſentially neceſſary to the well-being of human ſociety, that it ſhould never be violated, even in jeſt, or upon the ſlighteſt and moſt trivial occaſions.

(2.) DISSIMULATION: Either by willfully concealing neceſſary truth, or ſpeaking in a doubtful, ambiguous, enigmatical manner, with a deſign to deceive or miſlead our neighbour.

(3.) DOUBLE-DEALING; being fair to our neighbour's face, and otherwiſe behind his back.

(4.) MISREPRESENTING a *ſtory* or *fact*, which is one of the moſt miſchievous kinds of lying and back-biting; for, by omitting *one ſingle word* or *circumſtance* of a ſtory or fact, it may be quite altered to the unſpeakable prejudice of our neighbour and of the truth.

(5.) DECEITFUL-PROMISING: Cauſing our neighbour to rely on a promiſe, which we either do not intend to perform at all, or which we have no hope of being able to perform punctually, at the time and in the manner propoſed: This makes unſpeakable confuſion in the *trading world*, and in every other department of life, and tends effectually to ruin our character, and very often our neighbour's too, who is led to deceive others on the ſtrength of our promiſe.

(6.) BEARING FALSE WITNESS againſt our neighbour; either by telling known and malicious lies to the prejudice of our neighbour, in the way of calumny, ſlander and back-biting; or by unneceſſarily abetting, propagating and ſpreading the ſlanders of others, whom we have reaſon to ſuſpect of malice againſt him: Much more, by taking away his life, intereſt, or good name, by perjury.

(7.) SPEAKING the very worſt that we can of our neighbour,

neighbour, consistent with truth, with a designed concealing any good qualities he possesses, on purpose to hurt his character or interest, or to impede his usefulness: For, we may do unspeakable hurt often, even by speaking *improper* and *unseasonable* truths: But nothing short of *Christian charity* and *prudence* can direct in this matter.

(8.) DIVULGING and *blabbing* out such secrets as our neighbour may have, in confidence entrusted us with, either with a malicious design to hurt him, or through meer imprudence, and a tatling disposition.

(9.) ALL such abusive, ignominious names and insulting language, either *of* or *to* our neighbour, as tends to break Christian charity, stir up anger, and occasion quarrels and law-suits; which besides their provoking nature and unhappy consequences, prove the want of charity, meekness, humility and patience, and are a scandal and disgrace to our common Christianity *.

(10.) ALL sporting with, and mocking at the *sins* and *natural infirmities* of our neighbour, and speaking, lessening degrading things of him, on account of the latter.

(11.) VAIN, *idle*, *unedifying* conversation, which neither tends to *comfort* or *improve* either ourselves or others, especially if it is continued long, to the destruction of our own, or our neighbour's precious time: For, we are told, we shall "give an account of every idle word we "speak at the day of judgment."

(12.) PROPAGATING evil, pernicious principles and doctrines, which tend to poison our neighbour's mind, and to pave the way for a vicious practice.

(13.) FLATTERING our neighbour in his follies and vices, and thereby feeding his pride and strengthening his hands in folly and wickedness; more especially, with the detestable view of getting some favour from him, or advantage over him, as the reward of this iniquity.

(14.) ABUSING

* Matth. v. 21,---26.

(14.) ABUSING our neighbour's confidence in us, by giving him bad or ruinous advice, when we hope to benefit by his complying with it.

(15.) CORRUPTING our neighbour, and seducing *him* or *her* to sin, and thereby committing the very worst kind of murder, both upon the soul and body of our neighbour.

(16.) BY filthy songs, or corrupt and profane speeches, polluting and debauching the minds and hearts of our neighbours, and inducing them to the love and practice of sin.

(17.) INSTEAD of comforting the sick, afflicted and distressed, laughing at and insulting their miseries, and thereby doubling the burthen of their sorrows.

3. THE sins of the *tongue* are the most numerous class of all our sins, except those of the *heart*; and indeed, they will never be much lessened, until the heart is renewed and sanctified by divine grace.

4. As the sins of the tongue are the *most destructive*, as well as the *most numerous*, we had need to set a double guard over the motions of this unruly member, seeing that in no way are we like more to disgrace our Christian profession, than by an unbridled tongue.

5. THE right use and government of the tongue, is one of the *least doubtful proofs* of true religion.---" If " any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect " man. If any man among you seem to be religious " and bridle not, &c *.

* James i. 26.——iii. 2.

ESSAY XXXVIII.

The beſt METHOD *of maintaining* PEACE, LOVE, *and* UNITY *among* CHRISTIAN BRETHREN.

1. CONSIDER, that although Chriſtianity is a *perfect inſtitution*, and tending to make *Chriſtians perfect*; yet Chriſtians being only in the way of cure, in a ſtate of recovery, do not arrive at abſolute perfection in this life, at leaſt, not before death.

2. IT is therefore *abſurd* and *unreaſonable* in one Chriſtian to expect abſolute perfection in the character and temper of another, while here below in the ſchool of Chriſt. As long as I live, I will have my failings and infirmities, and my brother will have his.---Hence ariſes,

3. THE duty of, and obligation to, *mutual forbearance* among Chriſtian brethren: For, if I hope and expect, that any brother will *bear with my failings* and *infirmities* in temper and conduct, and will have pity and compaſſion on my weakneſs; juſtice and charity require that *I ſhould bear with his*, and not be *over rigid* and *ſevere* in my requirements from him. If not, I *do not* unto others, as I *would they ſhould do unto me*, and am become a tranſgreſſor of this golden rule of equity.

4. IF this Chriſtian maxim of *bear and forbear*, or of *pitying*, and, in love, *forgiving one another*, is not regarded and obſerved, there cannot poſſibly be any ſuch thing as a Chriſtian ſociety, great or ſmall, held together upon earth.

5. THE failings and imperfections of our Chriſtian brethren, though very undeſirable in themſelves, yet are over-ruled to ſerve excellent purpoſes in this ſtate of trial

and

and probation: Upon them are grafted ſome of the nobleſt Chriſtian virtues, ſuch as *charity*, *meekneſs*, *patience*, *ſelf-denial*, *compaſſion*, *forbearance*, and a *forgiving temper*;---and they are excellent *touch-ſtones*, whereby we may examine and prove our own ſpirits, and diſcover whether we are indeed poſſeſſed of theſe Chriſtian graces, *i. e.* whether we are Chriſtians.

6. WHOLLY to break ſociety and fellowſhip with my Chriſtian brother or brethren, becauſe *he* or *they* have offended me, ſpeaks the moſt unſufferable pride.---It is, in plain conſtruction, to preſume that I myſelf am perfect and blameleſs, and need no forbearance or forgiveneſs from my brethren.

7. IF GOD ſhould break with us for every offence, what would become of us? Yet the example of GOD and of CHRIST are expreſsly ſet before us for our imitation in this duty *.

8. BUT what are the terms and conditions of forgiving, or being reconciled with our Chriſtian brother, when he offends us? I anſwer, *ſigns of true penitence*; and to forgive him, and be reconciled with him, and keep up Chriſtian fellowſhip and communion with him, upon *theſe ſigns*, is a Chriſtian duty ſo indiſpenſably neceſſary, that our Saviour has charged us, if our Chriſtian brother offend us, not only *ſeven times*, but even *ſeventy times ſeven*, *i. e.* 490 times in one day, and return, and ſay, *I repent*, we muſt *as often forgive him* †.

9. BUT are there not ſome offences, which, though they claim our forgiveneſs, yet give juſt cauſe of our quitting all Chriſtian fellowſhip and ſociety with our brethren? Anſwer. No offence can juſtify *private revenge* in a Chriſtian. If my brother ſhould even attempt to take away my life, and turn again and ſhew ſigns of

* Eph. iv. 2, 32. Col. iii. 13, 14.
† Matth. xviii. 15,---35.

true ſorrow and penitence, I muſt as a Chriſtian, forgive him and be reconciled with him; though, in ſuch caſes, public juſtice muſt be allowed to take place for the good of ſociety: But, a man who is called a *brother*, may, by the *nature* and *number* of his offences, and by a *proud, haughty, impenitent* diſpoſition, render himſelf wholly unworthy of Chriſtian fellowſhip and communion in any ſociety; yet ſo as to be again received and re-admitted, upon giving proper ſigns of true penitence.

10. BUT muſt we *ſo put up with*, and *forbear* the failings and infirmities of our Chriſtian brethren, as to neglect the duties of *reproof* and *admonition*, leſt we break the bond of peace, and provoke or diſpleaſe our offending brother? Anſwer. By no means. This would be to *ſuffer ſin upon our brother*. *Unity* and *peace* among Chriſtian brethren, muſt be founded on, and comport with truth, integrity and a charitable zeal for each other's welfare. We are to continue rebuking and exhorting, in a Chriſtian manner, but never to break the bond of Chriſtian fellowſhip, till men appear to be *incorrigible reprobates*. *I* have *one failing*, *you* have *another*: I muſt bear with your failing, while I uſe every endeavour to correct it; *you* muſt do the ſame by *me*. No giving up with this mutual duty, till we both get to heaven; where, being both perfect, we ſhall have no need of mutual forbearance and forgiveneſs.

11. I WILL not renounce or diſown my *natural brother*, nor quit the family, though he offends me, or is angry with me without cauſe. He is my *brother*, and a multitude of tender and endearing conſiderations plead for forgiveneſs, and a re-eſtabliſhment of peace and unity: And ſhall I renounce and diſown a *Chriſtian brother*, and quit *the fellowſhip of the ſaints*, for the like reaſon, where the obligations to brotherly love are much more *numerous*, *ſacred* and *noble*, and the motives to forgiveneſs and unity, much more tender and endearing.

12. THE

12. THE ſame reaſons which will engage us to quit one Chriſtian ſociety, becauſe of the failings and infirmities of our brethren, ſhould engage us to quit the fellowſhip of the church itſelf; and then we renounce all union and communion with the body of Chriſt, and putting ourſelves out of the way of all the means of ſalvation, do *virtually* renounce heaven itſelf, *i. e.* apoſtatize!

13. IF we are indeed Chriſtians, we muſt all *meet in heaven*, and *there* live together as friends, in one ſociety for ever: And ſhall we part ſociety for every trifle on the road, where we have ſo much need of each other's mutual advice, reproof, forbearance and charity?

14. CONSIDER the damage done to Chriſtianity by *ſchiſm* and *diviſions* among Chriſtian brethren; the pleaſure it gives to the *devil*; the tendency it has to prevent others from uniting themſelves to thoſe communities, from which deſerters have carried off an evil report, and the malicious and wicked triumph it gives to the envious enemies of Chriſtian union, communion and peace, and the injury it does to the great and noble deſigns of ſuch ſocieties.

15. IF a deſerter from a religious ſociety ſhould be aſked by an enemy of religion, what his reaſon was for deſerting? Conſider the danger he is in of wounding religion in the anſwer he muſt make. 'I did not like 'the men; or, I did not like their proceedings; or, I 'got no good, but rather harm, by being of the num-'ber.' Here a man ſpeaks at once *uncharitably* of his Chriſtian brethren, and *falſely* and *unfavourably* of the ways of GOD: For, few men are ſo juſt and modeſt as to declare the true reaſons of ſuch a conduct, and to lay the blame, where it properly is, upon their own ficklenefs, inconſtancy, unchriſtian diſpoſition, and diſtaſte and diſreliſh to that which is good; or, perhaps, a mean and

vile

vile ambition to pleaſe and gratify ſome declared and malicious enemy to ſo good a deſign.

16. LET a man conſider, whether, on his *death-bed*, he could approve of having broken the bonds of Chriſtian peace and unity, and quitted a ſociety, formed on Chriſtian principles, and in which he might have both *done* and *received* ſome ſpiritual good; merely, becauſe all his Chriſtian brethren were not juſt, in all reſpects, ſuch as he would have them; while he himſelf had poſſibly as great failings as any among them.

17. REAL *offences* from our Chriſtian brethren cannot juſtify our quitting Chriſtian communion: Much leſs *ſuppoſed offences*, or *real benefits*, ſo miſcalled.

ESSAY XXXIX.

The RULE *of judging of our* BRETHREN; *againſt* RASHNESS, *and* CENSORIOUSNESS.

THE general rule given by our Saviour to this purpoſe, may be found, Matth. vii. 1, &c. "Judge not that ye be not judged, &c."---It is evident, however, from *reaſon* and from *other ſcriptures*, that this rule has a great many important exceptions, and that our Saviour does not mean to prohibit *every kind* of judging of our neighbour.---For,

1. THE words and actions of ſtate criminals, againſt the laws of their country and the peace and welfare of civil ſociety, *may* and *ought* to be judged, condemned, and puniſhed by the civil magiſtrate, whom GOD hath ſet apart for that very purpoſe *.

2. THE

* Rom. xiii. 1,---8.

2. THE words and actions of Chriſtian profeſſors, as members of Chriſtian ſocieties, againſt the laws of Chriſt, and the duties of their Chriſtian calling, may, and ought to be judged, cenſured, condemned, and ſpiritually puniſhed, by the *Miniſters* and other proper officers of ſuch ſocieties, who are authoriſed by GOD to this buſineſs †.

3. IT is ſo far from being a *ſin*, that it is an eminent proof and branch of love and Chriſtian charity, to fear for our Chriſtian brethren, and be jealous over them with a godly jealouſy, leſt they ſhould be overtaken by the temptations which ſurround them, and to warn and admoniſh them againſt their danger ‡;---alſo, to *judge* and *condemn* them for things plainly *erroneous* in their principles, or *immoral* in their conduct, and in tenderneſs and love, ſharply to reprove and rebuke them §.

4. WE *may* and *muſt*, yea, we are directed and commanded, to judge of men by their words, actions, and outward deportment; indeed, it is next to impoſſible for us not to exerciſe our judgment in ſome way or other, about every action we ſee and attend to; and truly, without the exerciſe of this faculty of judging, we would have no rule or guide in our tranſactions with mankind, but ſhould often be unvoidably expoſed to the greateſt injuries.

5. CONSEQUENTLY, when our neighbour gives clear proof of his wickedneſs, by a continued ſeries of wicked words and actions, and by a manifeſt diſinclination to that which is good, we have certainly a right to *judge of the tree*, by the *badneſs of its fruit*, and to condemn ſuch an one as a *bad man*; yet not interfering with his future ſtate, as he is ſtill in the place of repentance ||.

6. THE

† 1 Cor. v. 11, 12. Heb. xiii. 17.
‡ 2 Cor. xi. 3.
§ Lev. xix. 17. James v. 19, 20.
|| Mark vii. 15. James i. 26.——iii. 11, 12.

6. THE *kind of judging* therefore here forbidden by our Saviour, muſt be *raſh, cenſorious, ignorant, uncharitable* judging; a judging, not ſo much of men's perſons, as of their ſtates, not ſo much of men's actions, as of their intentions; and may be confined to the following particulars.

(1.) JUDGING out of our province, or paſſing a judgment on perſons or things which we have no right to interfere with. Miniſters have no right to interfere in the proper office of Magiſtrates; nor Magiſtrates, in thoſe *peculiar* to Miniſters †. The Apoſtle would not *cenſure* or *inflict ſpiritual puniſhments* on thoſe who were *out of the church* ‡.

(2.) PRAGMATICALLY judging, deciding and determining in matters above our knowledge and reach, and where we can have no evidence of the truth, which is the only ground of right judging:---Such as *ignorant men*, cenſuring *deep and learned opinions*,---or our taking upon us to judge of the *thoughts* and *deſigns* of men's *hearts*.

(3.) SEVERE cenſuring and judging of others, for things in their own nature indifferent. Pretending that to be wrong in men, which we cannot prove to be ſo; requiring that in them, which GOD hath not required; forbidding that to them which GOD hath not forbidden, and condemning them for not *doing* or *forbearing* ſuch things.

(4.) BLIND and *raſh* judging of our neighbour, without plain and ſufficient conviction of his guilt. A diſpoſedneſs to cenſure, and paſs ſentence againſt him, before we know the crime, or know he is guilty of it: Suſpecting him of evil principles and evil deſigns in his actions, and raiſing theſe ſuſpicions into accuſations againſt him, before full evidence, or any evidence at all appears,

† Luke xii. 13, 14.
‡ Cor. v. 12.

appears, whereon to ground these suspicions.---This is censoriousness and rash judging with a witness; inconsistent with *equity* or *brotherly love*.

(5.) TAKING up an evil report against our neighbour, upon *hear-say*, or mere *common fame*, and joining with the censorious and malevolent world, in the *hue* and *cry* against our neighbour, before a particular and candid inquiry into the truth of the allegation. This proves that we have no Christian love for our neighbour, no tenderness for his good name; but that we delight in scandal, and are evil disposed to our neighbour.

(6.) CRUELLY and unmercifully making the very worst of our neighbour's conduct, without making proper allowances for the temptations he lay under, and the disadvantageous circumstances in which these temptations might attack him. These often greatly *alleviate* the guilt of the actions; and sometimes totally *alter their nature*, and even *justify* them. See the *shew bread* eaten by *David*, and the ears of corn plucked by our *Saviour's disciples*.

(7.) PREJUDICE and *partiality* in judging and condemning the actions of others; censuring them through hatred or dislike of their person, rather than an abhorrence of their crimes; passing that fault over slightly in ourselves, or in our friends, which we aggravate and condemn without mercy in our enemies, or even in indifferent persons; being quick in seeing the *mote in our brother's eye*, while we excuse and justify *the beam in our own*.

(8.) UNCHARITABLE judging of others; which includes a number of cases:---1. All evil-surmisings, and groundless suspicions and jealousies.---2. Putting the worst construction on men's conduct, while it will bear better.---3. Taking upon us to judge of men's thoughts and principles, when there is nothing reproachful in their actions.---4. Judging of men's *spiritual* state and

condition, that it is evil, upon reaſons which GOD's word does not juſtify.---5. Running down a character by the wholeſale, when there may be many *good* and *praiſe worthy* things in it.---6. Condemning *whole nations* or *religious* ſects of men in the lump, when there are many excellent perſons among them.---7. Imputing to men opinions and conſequences, which they do not allow nor hold in order to expoſe them to hatred and contempt.---8. To interpret calamities which befal people, as *judgments from* GOD for things we diſlike in them; or for ſome ſuppoſed injuries to us, or to our friends.---9. To be backward to admit fair tokens and proofs of repentance for *real injuries* done us; and to be unforgiving and irreconcilable, and raſhly to give up all our hopes of ſinners, and all endeavours for their good *.---10. To publiſh the real faults of others *without occaſion*, or without a very good and warrantable deſign;---and much more to do it *wantonly* and *maliciouſly*.---11. To ſlander *whole families*, *kindreds*, *nations*, *ſects*, or *parties* of men, for faults done by *one* or *a few* of them, which the others could not prevent, and which they do not approve.

Reaſons againſt Cenſoriouſneſs, or raſh and uncharitable judging.

(1.) IT is iniquitous in itſelf. (2.) It is againſt the golden rule; "What ye would that others ſhould do "unto you, &c." (3.) It is odious to GOD, being the very reverſe of that charity which he has eſtabliſhed as the rule and principle of all our tranſactions with our neighbour. (4.) It is ſo hateful to men, that cenſorious perſons are generally paid in their own coin, and their own actions the more ſtrictly ſcanned and the more ſeverely cenſured.---"For with what judgment ye "judge ye ſhall be judged, and with what meaſure ye "mete,

* Cor. xiii.

"mete, it ſhall be meaſured to you again*." It is a dreadful abuſe of our time, and miſuſe of our talents, turning our thoughts and judgment uncharitably on the actions and affairs of others, while we have ſo much need to *ſtudy*, *judge*, and *condemn* ourſelves †.

* Matth. vii. 1.
† 1 Cor. xi. 31.

ESSAY XL.

Of a PEACEABLE DISPOSITION, *and the oppoſite* EVILS.

1. THE very diſtinguiſhing *ſpirit* and *genius* of Chriſtianity is *peace* and *love*; and one of the fruits of the ſpirit is *peace*;---not only a ſenſe of reconciliation and peace with GOD through the merit and interceſſion of Chriſt, and, as a fruit of this *peace of conſcience*, or an inward complacential well-pleaſedneſs with our own ſtate and frame, ariſing from the joyful hope that we are objects of the divine favour, and have paſſed from death unto life;---but alſo a *loving* and *peaceable* diſpoſition *towards all men*, ariſing from Chriſtian principles and motives.

2. THIS peaceableneſs being a fruit of the holy Spirit, muſt *begin*, and be *radicated* in the *heart* and *temper*. So far as it is truly Chriſtian, it ſuppoſes a *change of nature*: For, although ſome men are more indolent and eaſy in their temper than others, and are naturally averſe to quarrelling, and fond of eaſe and quiet, yet they cannot be ſaid to *love* and *ſtudy peace*, upon goſpel motives, until their natures are changed and renewed by the GOD

of peace. Such perſons may be ſaid to flee from contention, as a coward from a man that bruiſes him; not from a true and hearty diſlike to quarrelling, or love of friendſhip.

3. PEACEABLENESS, therefore, as a Chriſtian temper, ſuppoſes not only an hearty love and value for peace, from the amiableneſs of ſuch a temper *in itſelf*, from the *authority of* GOD who enjoins it, in imitation of the example and Spirit of Chriſt, who ſet us the brighteſt pattern of it, and from the valuable purpoſes it ſerves in the world and church; but alſo, zealous and unwearied endeavours to maintain a peaceable diſpoſition in ourſelves towards all men, and to promote it among others. A pretence to love peace, while we are litigious and provoking, impatient, fretful and peeviſh, ſtubborn and refractory, and while we promote the quarrels of others, is the vileſt and baſeſt hypocriſy.

4. THE Apoſtle tells us, "If it be poſſible, as much "as in us lies, to follow peace with all men." This plainly ſuppoſes, that, however we ought zealouſly and ſincerely to endeavour it, and to let nothing fail on our part, in order to obtain this univerſal peace with mankind, yet the thing may be often *impoſſible to us*; and that, in ſuch caſes, we cannot charge ourſelves with blame.

5. THIS may happen through the perverſe humours of thoſe with whom we have to do. Captious perſons often take offence without any occaſion, and will hearken to no reaſon againſt their preconceived prejudices. The more you yield to them, ſtill the more unreaſonable are their demands; ſo that the only way of being at peace with them, is to break off all intercourſe and connexion *.

6. WITH others we cannot be at peace without violating our conſciences, or acting contrary to our duty. If

* Pſal. cxx. 5, 6, 7.

If we do our duty to them, or upon them, they will not be at peace with us: But we cannot, we muſt not buy their peace and good-will ſo dear, as to ſell our own peace with GOD for the purchaſe. Neither *truth*, nor *holineſs*, nor *juſtice* are to be ſacrificed for peace. To obtain peace *with men*, we muſt not make ſhipwreck of faith and a good conſcience *towards* GOD. Conſequently, thoſe who in a modeſt and charitable manner, maintain and defend their own religious principles againſt adverſaries,---or zealouſly reprove vice, cannot juſtly be charged with *unpeaceableneſs*.

7. To do what in us lies to follow peace with all men, implies, that we humbly lay aſide all *pride* and *prejudice* in the purſuit of peace; that we *try*, and *try* and *try* again, without wearying, as far as we lawfully may, to obtain this deſirable end; and that we labour zealouſly to promote the peace of our neighbours, without widening their differences by ill offices *. A *proud man* can never be a *truly peaceable man*. He who would ſeek peace and purſue it, muſt not be aſhamed to humble himſelf, confeſs his faults, and make every needful and reaſonable conceſſion, in order to the re-eſtabliſhing of peace.

8. THIS Chriſtian grace of peaceableneſs, is not confined to a few friends, or to a favourite party, but muſt extend to *all men*. Some think, that if they can live at peace in their families, with their friends, their next neighbours, or their church, it is immaterial what temper they have to the reſt of the world, thoſe of other iſlands, kingdoms, or religious profeſſions. But peaceableneſs, as a Chriſtian grace, ariſes from a principle of *univerſal love and charity to* ALL MEN, and therefore has ALL MEN for its object. As we are to love ALL MEN, and do good to ALL MEN, ſo, as much as in us lies, we are to live peaceably with ALL MEN; and for this purpoſe, our

* Pſal. xxxiv. 14.

our Saviour teacheth us to confider *every man* as *o neighbour*, and every *true Chriftian* in the world, be he what denomination he will, as *our brother*. To this pu pofe,

9. WE fhould be careful to behave inoffenfively t all men *. A peaceable temper will reftrain us fro infolence, rudenefs, injurious reflections, and outrag ous paffions towards others: It will engage us to ftud men's tempers, and be tender of ufing fuch innocen freedoms, with paffionate perfons, as might be no temp tation to others who are of a milder temper. It wi reftrain us from acting the bufy-body, by intermedlin unneceffarily in the affairs of others, or prying into thei fecrets with a defign to reveal them, whereby they ar provoked and others inflamed. It will alfo engage u for confcience fake to give unto all, in their feveral fta tions, that honour and refpect which is due to them and the neglect of which might be juft matter of of fence †.

10. A TRULY peaceable man is *flow* in taking of fence: *flow* to wrath. It is amazing how many dif turbances and contentions happen in the world, by *ap prehending offences* where none are either *meant* or *given* A peaceable perfon, will be loath to fuppofe that an af front is defigned againft him; he will be ready to pu the beft conftruction on doubtful words or actions; no will he over-rate a real offence, or be willing to refent i in a hafty and rigid manner.

11. A PEACEABLE man is not implacable, but is defirous to regain and re-eftablifh peace as foon as pof fible. Peace is his element; the very temper and complexion of his foul; and therefore, when a breach happens, he watches and lays hold of the very firft op- portunity

* 1 Cor. x. 32.
† 1 Tim. i. 13. Prov. xxvi. 20. 1 Theff. iv. 11.

portunity of reconciliation; finding himself unhappy while in a state of variance with his neighbour *.

12. A PEACEABLE man will rather put up with many smaller injuries, than proceed to the rigour of justice, or commence law-suits, which are not only expensive and tedious, but almost ever widen the breach, inflame the angry passions, and procrastinate and protract the wished for term of reconciliation ‡. ABRAHAM affords us a fine example of a peaceable temper. §.

13. WE should be most assiduous in cultivating peace and good-will, with such with whom we are most nearly connected, such as our families, neighbourhoods and churches; for, as from these, we have daily temptations to anger and contention, so our strongest guard should be placed where the greatest danger lies. Besides, the maintaining and promoting of peace in these connexions, is the surest way of promoting our own duty and happiness, and that of others around us.

14. ABOVE all, Christians are under the highest and most inviolable obligations to be at peace with one another, by the *laws* and *motives* of their holy religion. They are the children of the GOD *of peace*; the disciples of the *Prince of peace*; peace is the bond of union among themselves; Christ has bequeathed his peace to them, and, if they are *Christians indeed*, they are animated and aided by *the Spirit of peace and love*: Besides, by an *unpeaceable, strifeful, contentious* temper, they at once *belie* and *disgrace* their profession, and injure the interests of their common Christianity ||.

15. AN unpeaceable temper is a *carnal, mischievous, diabolical* temper †.

16. IT

* Matth. v. 23, 24 Luke xvii. 3, 4.
‡ Matth. v. 39,---41.
§ Gen. xiii. 8, 9.
|| 1 Cor. xiv. 33. 2 Cor. xiii. 11. Eph. iv. 2,---6. James iii. 17.
† 1 Cor. iii. 3. James iii. 14.

16. IT is always the fruit of *pride*, *ambition* and paſſion ‡.

17. IT is a temper which brings continual diſquietude and torment to a man's ſelf.

18. ON the contrary; a *peaceable* temper is an *happy* temper, and attracts the regard and eſteem of all.

19. IT is the diſtinguiſhing temper of heaven, and a neceſſary qualification for that bleſſed place and ſtate §.

‡ James iv. 1.
§ Iſa. lvii. 2.

ESSAY XLI.

Of a MERCIFUL TEMPER, *and its oppoſites.*

1. MERCY, is a *kind*, *compaſſionate*, *ſympathiſing* concern for the *miſerable*, which prompts to a readineſs to help, relieve, or at leaſt alleviate their miſeries, when it is *in the power* of the merciful, and *fit* and *right* to be done.

2. As there could have been no place for the exerciſe of the divine mercy, unleſs miſery had made its entrance among creatures; ſo, nor could there have been place for the exerciſe of mercy between man and man, if mankind were not miſerable.

3. MERCY, as it is a Chriſtian virtue, muſt have its ſeat in the *heart* and *temper*; therefore, we are commanded to "put on bowels of mercies." It is alſo like all other Chriſtian graces, a *fruit of the Spirit*; a part of that image of GOD reinſtampt upon the fallen ſoul, in converſion.

verſion.---There may be a *counterfeit appearance of mercy* in the actions, from *oſtentation*, or *baſe* and *unworthy deſigns*, where there are *no bowels of mercies*, but rather a *cruel* or *unfeeling* diſpoſition. The Apoſtle puts the higheſt outward appearance of a merciful diſpoſition which can be well conceived, and yet ſuppoſes, that the perſon may be wholly void of the grace of mercy itſelf *.

4. A MERCIFUL diſpoſition, where it is, will give evidence of itſelf by *outward correſpondent actions*. A pretence to a merciful diſpoſition, where there is no outward fruits of it, when proper opportunities offer themſelves, is the vileſt mockery; and is finely expoſed by the Apoſtles *James* and *John* †.

5. THERE may be a very merciful diſpoſition in the heart, where the perſon who has it, has it not in his power to give very convincing proofs of it, by his actions. However, where it is, it will prompt a perſon to *do all that he can* to give proof of it. He will, at leaſt, *pity* and *ſympathize* with his ſuffering fellow-creature, and what he can do more, he will do it to relieve him. Now, if there be firſt a willing mind, it is accepted of GOD, according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not ‡.

6. MERCY, as a Chriſtian grace, has its firſt and *chief* reſpect to *men's ſouls*; the troubles and miſeries which they ſuffer, and the dangers to which they are expoſed by ſin: And indeed, this concern for the miſery of men's ſouls, is the chief character which diſtinguiſhes *Chriſtian mercy*, from *mere humanity*. How many good natured men in the world, whoſe hearts bleed to ſee a fellow-creature in bodily pain or miſery, and who would go almoſt any lengths to relieve him; yet have no mercy on their own ſouls, or the ſouls of their

 fellow-

* 1 Cor. xiii. 3.
† James ii. 15, 16. 1 John iii. 17, 18.
‡ 2 Cor. viii. 12.

fellow-ſinners, but would ſee them go to hell, and help them thither, without the leaſt attempt to prevent it: But Chriſtian mercy *bleeds*, and is *moved* chiefly by the *miſery* and *danger* of *human ſouls*; does all that it can to inſtruct the ignorant, and to reclaim the wicked and erroneous;---and what it cannot do itſelf, it rejoices to ſee done by others, and gives every encouragement in its power, to deſigns and endeavours to reform men's manners and ſave their ſouls, that they may be plucked as brands out of the burning.---Noble proofs and examples of this merciful diſpoſition, we have in *Lot*, *David*, the *Prophets*, and eſpecially in *Chriſt* and his *Apoſtles*.

7. MERCY is not confined to the *ſoul*, but reaches to the *whole man*. Here it ſtrikes in with *humanity*, and improves it; weeping with them that weep, and looking not only at its *own things*, but alſo on the *things of others*. It pities and ſympathizes with the pains and diſeaſes of others bodies; the troubles and perplexities of their minds; their wants and neceſſities; their diſaſters and diſappointments; their oppreſſions and afflictions. And when in its power, it labours to mitigate all theſe afflictions, by drawing out its ſoul to the hungry; by clothing the naked; by helping the ſick; by pleading the cauſe of the oppreſſed; by adminiſtring counſel to the perplexed, and comfort to the ſorrowing and afflicted. And whereas, *mere humanity* only does theſe things from *inſtinct*, and to eaſe the anxiety of the mind on the ſight of diſtreſs;---the merciful Chriſtian does them from love to his neighbour, from a conſideration of duty, and from obedience to the authority of GOD.

8. BUT a merciful diſpoſition is ſeen in its greateſt luſtre and advantage, when it pities and forgives perſons who, by injurious treatment to ourſelves, are wholly at our mercy, and upon whom we have it fully in

n our power to glut our revenge; yea, when we may lo ſo under the colour of juſtice. This is *God-like* mercy ndeed! But,

9. IT belongs to Chriſtian *wiſdom* and *prudence* to udge, *to whom*, and *how far*, ſuch acts of mercy ſhould xtend. That lenity which would prompt us to give ip our rights upon all occaſions to lawleſs men, might often be of miſchievous conſequence:---It might often end to harden ſinners in their vices, and embolden hem to treat others as they have done us, with hopes of impunity. By forgiving a man who attempts my ife, I may procure the murder of other innocent per-ons. By pardoning and giving liberty to a robber, whom I have caught breaking open my houſe, and pillaging my goods, I embolden this villain to rob my neighbour's. Nor is it in all caſes proper or prudent for a man to forgive perſonal injuries, without legal ſa-isfaction and examplary puniſhment. Acts of lenity and mercy to offenders, ſhould always conſiſt with a proper concern for the public good, and our own per-onal ſafety.

10. CHRISTIAN mercy, however, is always ſorry for the authors of injuries, and heartily wiſhes their *repen-tance* and *eternal welfare*. It will never admit of cruelty or revenge againſt an offender. If his crime will ad-mit of it, it is willing to forgive him, upon proper marks of repentance. If puniſhment is neceſſary, it would have it to be of the mildeſt and gentleſt nature, that the offence will admit of; and it pities the perſon of the guilty ſufferer, and would rejoice if the puniſh-ment might be wholly remitted;---having nothing at heart but the intereſt of human ſociety, virtue and juſ-tice; and, like GOD, taking no pleaſure in the miſery of ſinners.

11. THERE is alſo ample room for the diſplay of mercy, in the exaction of debts. If the debtor is

fallen into poverty by accidents or misfortunes, it will bear with him, if able; or if able, and circumſtances allow, will remit *part* or *whole* of the debt: Or, if he is even bankrupt by his own fault, and therefore, juſtly deſerves to ſuffer as a criminal, yet it will conſider the neceſſitous circumſtances of his innocent family and connexions, and will remit what it can on their behalf.

12. THOUGH mercy ſhould extend to *all* in *theſe inſtances*; yet it will be ſhown in the *firſt place*, and in the *higheſt degree*, to thoſe whom GOD and nature hath connected moſt intimately with us; ſuch as our families, relations and friends: For, it would be a prepoſterous diſpoſition, and not Chriſtian mercy, to pity and help ſtrangers, while our own houſehold, kindred and friends were diſregarded by us, in their miſery.---Above all,

13. OUR *Chriſtian brethren* claim a *peculiar part* in our bowels of mercies. If one member ſuffers, all the members ſhould ſuffer with it. "We are to bear one "another's burdens, and ſo fulfil the law of Chriſt."

14. OUR *heathen ſlaves* are proper objects and excellent teſts of a merciful diſpoſition. Their *caſe* and *ſtate* is allowed to be very *pitiable* and *miſerable* upon almoſt all accounts. They often provoke us, and needs muſt. They are, in a manner, entirely at our mercy, and their very lives in our hands. They are *our fellow creatures*, and *might* and *ſhould* be our *Chriſtian brethren*. They are GOD's *creatures*, and *our neighbours*, whom we ſhould *love as ourſelves*. And ſurely, if a merciful man, will be merciful even to his beaſt, much more ought he to be ſo to his *human ſlave!*---It may therefore be depended on, that thoſe who have no pity for their ſlaves, but are of an *unfeeling*, *cruel*, *mercileſs* temper towards them, are ſtrangers to this grace.

15. THIS is one of the moſt amiable and GOD-like of all the Chriſtian virtues, being that temper by which we do,

do, in a moſt eminent manner, reſemble and bear the image of the bleſſed GOD, and his Son *Jeſus* CHRIST; who forgive us *ten thouſand talents*, and are merciful to the *evil* and *unthankful*.

16. IT is declared, that they "Shall have judg-
" ment without mercy, who ſhew no mercy *;" and,
" That if we forgive not men their treſpaſſes, neither
" will GOD forgive us ours. With the merciful, (ſays
" David) GOD will ſhew himſelf merciful; and bleſ-
" ſed are the merciful, for they ſhall obtain the mercy
" of GOD †."

17. IT needs not be added, that a merciful diſpoſition, is one of the moſt *amiable* and *endearing* accompliſhments in a man, and ſtands the faireſt chance of rendering him univerſally beloved by his fellow-creatures.

18. LET us then, *as the elect of* GOD, *holy and beloved, put on bowels of mercies*.

ESSAY

* James ii. 13.
† Pſal. xviii. 25. Matth. v. 7.

ESSAY XLII.

JUSTICE *between* MAN *and* MAN.

1. JUSTICE is a very extenſive virtue, and implies a *right* and *fit temper* and *deportment towards all beings* to whom we ſtand any ways related, with whom we are any way connected, and with whom we have any concern. In ſhort, "It is to render unto "every one his due." And, in this *general view*, it may be called, *integrity*, *uprightneſs* or *righteouſneſs*.

2. IF we act *juſtly* towards GOD, we ſhall love, reverence, and eſteem him ſupremely, and above all things; we ſhall believe, obey and truſt him without reſerve, and we ſhall worſhip and praiſe him, according to his glorious perfections.

3. IF we are *juſt* to the *holy angels*, we ſhall love them as our fellow-creatures; as the ſubjects and ſervants of our Redeemer; as pure, holy, and benevolent beings; and, more particularly, as miniſtring ſpirits ſent forth to miniſter to them who are heirs of ſalvation, and as deeply and affectionately intereſting themſelves in *our good*, and in *our Redeemer's glory*.

4. IF we are *juſt* to our *fellow men*, we ſhall love them as ourſelves; we ſhall ſympathize with, and help them in their wants and afflictions; we ſhall conſcientiouſly abſtain from *injuring* them in their perſons, families, reputation, or intereſts; we ſhall deal fairly, truly, candidly and equitably with them in all dealings and tranſactions of life; we ſhall perform to each of them the honours, duties, or ſervices, which of right belong to them, according to the various relations in which they

ſtand

ſtand to us, and we ſhall do what we *can* and *ought* to promote both their temporal and eternal welfare.

5. IF we are *juſt* to *ourſelves*, we ſhall prefer our ſouls to our bodies; eternity to time; and the favour of GOD and eternal happineſs, to all the alluring, deceitful offers of ſin. We ſhall be humble, patient, meek, modeſt, juſt, charitable, ſelf-denied, and every thing elſe which we ought to be.

6. BUT as juſtice between man and man, is that branch of equity or righteouſneſs, which we are here to conſider, it may be moſt beneficial to take a view of that excellent *rule* and *meaſure* of it laid down by our Saviour, Matth. vii. 12. "Therefore, all things, whatſo-"ever ye would that men ſhould do unto you, do ye "even ſo unto them."

7. THE meaſure of our acting towards others, here propoſed, is not what they *actually do* to us, but what *we would they ſhould do to us*. Yet this is the meaſure by which moſt men act towards their neighbours: They render evil for evil; railing for railing, &c. Nor will they do good to thoſe who will not do good to them. Nay, many think themſelves juſtified in cheating others, becauſe they firſt cheated them. But this is *retaliation* and *private revenge*, not *equity*. The goſpel has taught us a quite different rule of acting, and denies to Chriſtians the right of private revenge, farther than *ſelf-defence* requires *.

8. IT is not *in all caſes*, lawful to do unto others, what *we would* they ſhould do unto us, were we in their circumſtances, and they in ours, without preſuppoſing the *lawfulneſs* or *fitneſs* of the action. A criminal might be glad that his judge would acquit him; but could not *reaſonably* expect it. A drunkard would be glad that his neighbour would intoxicate him, yet he ought not for that reaſon to make his neighbour drunk, becauſe

* Luke vi. 31,---35. Rom. xii. 19,---21.

becauſe it would be unlawful. A poor man might be glad if his rich neighbour would give his whole eſtate to him; yet how could he reaſonably expect it?

9. THE *ſpirit* of the precept is plainly this: 'In all 'our tranſactions with our neighbour, we ought, lay-'ing aſide prejudice and partiality, to ſuppoſe ourſelves 'in our neighbour's place and circumſtances, and he 'in ours; and then we ſhould attentively conſider what 'we might *reaſonably* and *lawfully* expect from him, if 'he were in our place, and we in his; and accord-'ingly, we ſhould be the ſame to him in our thoughts, 'words and actions, as we would *have him to be unto us*, 'if the tables were turned.'

10. WHERE *ſelfiſhneſs* and *prejudice* keep the poſſeſ-ſion of the mind, men will never act right upon this rule; for, where theſe are, we ſhall ever expect *more* from others, than we would do unto them, if our cir-cumſtances were changed. How common is it to ſee perſons make very *free* and *merry* with the failings of their neighbours and their families, and think they have a right to do ſo without giving offence? Yet when it falls to their turn to be *ſo treated*, they reſent *highly*, and perhaps *juſtly*, the ſame treatment from their neigh-bour. How many, who in their neceſſity, have no bounds in their expectations from their neighbours, and never think they do enough for them; yet have no bowels of compaſſion for the poor, when the tables are turned, and they become rich. All this proceeds from ſelfiſhneſs and prejudice; a want of conſidering what is right and fit to be done.

11. As to the *excellency* of this rule, and *our obligati-ons* to conform to it, they are both ſelf-evident. It is founded on the *ſamenеſs of nature* in men, and their *natu-ral equality*. The relative and accidental differences be-tween men, are ſmall in their own nature, and very

tranſient

transient and changeable. He that is now a king, may be soon a subject: The master may soon be a servant: The rich may soon be poor; and the honourable may fall into dishonour and contempt. I may need that justice or kindness from my neighbour to-morrow, which he demands from me to-day. It is plain then, that there should be *one common rule* or *measure* of justice and equity for all men. If it is unjust to keep two kinds of weights and measures, one to *buy* with, and the other to *sell* by; it is surely equally unjust that I should have *one* law for *myself*, and *another* for *my neighbour*.

12. THIS is a rule of justice which has obtained among all nations, it being a clear dictate of reason, and of the law of nature,---'Not to do to others what 'we would not bear from them; and to do to others, 'in all cases, what we would reasonably expect from 'them.'

13. As this is a rule, the equity of which is so clear and self-evident, that none can dispute or deny it; so it is easily carried about with a man in his memory; and an honest man of the weakest judgment can easily and quickly apply it, on the most sudden emergencies. Most arts and sciences are so tedious and intricate, that they are hard to learn, and difficult to retain. The artist and mechanic can do little without his books and instruments.---But this art of doing justly depends only upon *one short single rule*, easily retained, and not easily forgotten. In short, to act justly in all cases for ordinary, needs only a *single honest appeal to the heart and conscience*, by the light of this rule; "All "things whatsoever ye would that others should do "unto you, &c."

14. THIS is *the law of the prophets*: It is a short and comprehensive summary of all the directions recorded in scripture, how one man should behave towards another:

other: For, as that precept, "Thou ſhalt love thy "neighbour as thyſelf," is the fulfilling of the whole law, in the duty of *Chriſtian charity*; ſo this is the fulfilling of the whole law in the matters of *juſtice* and *equity*.

15. THE uſe of this precept extends to the whole of our intercourſe with our fellow-creatures, and to all our *thoughts* and *words* about them. It would prevent all raſh, uncharitable and cenſorious opinions and judgments of our fellow-creatures, and all injurious actions towards them.---It would lead us to uſefulneſs and inoffenſiveneſs in converſation; to integrity and rectitude in all our dealings and commerce, and to a right method of treating thoſe who need our compaſſion or kindneſs. It would regulate our temper and conduct under provocations, and teach us a juſt and charitable way of ſpeaking and acting towards thoſe who differ from us in their *religious* or *other ſentiments*.---And, it would teach us a juſt and equitable conduct to ſuperiors, inferiors, and equals.

16. THE *excellency* and *uſefulneſs* of this rule, ſhew us the great importance of *ſelf-acquaintance* and *reflection*, on which it is founded, and by the *medium* of which it muſt be practiſed on.

17. THE equity of this great law and meaſure of juſtice, proves to a demonſtration, the *holineſs*, *juſtice*, and *goodneſs* of GOD's laws; how far they are from deſerving the character of being *hard* and *grievous* impoſitions, tending to deprive us of our natural liberty. He who acts and lives juſtly, acts and lives according to the *law of his nature*, which is the law of *eternal reaſon*:---"And "what doth the Lord thy GOD require of thee, but to "do juſtly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with "thy GOD."

18. WE ſhould pray without ceaſing, that GOD may write this law on our ſouls, and keep it ever in the thoughts

thoughts of the imaginations of our hearts, ſo that we may never ſwerve from this univerſal rule of righteouſneſs.

E S S A Y XLIII.

CHRISTIAN HOPE.

1. THE *Chriſtian hope* is a firm expectation of that future and eternal happineſs, which GOD hath promiſed to his faithful obedient people, upon a rational and well-grounded perſuaſion, that they have complied with the terms of his gracious covenant.

2. THE object of Chriſtian hope is the *divine promiſes*, contained in GOD's word; for, it is upon his word that he cauſeth his ſervants to hope: And it ever preſuppoſes, a firm faith in theſe promiſes.---Chriſtian hope, therefore, is ever built upon *faith*, and can reach no farther than its foundation: For, we cannot rationally *hope for*, or *expect* that which we do not believe that we ſhall receive.

3. I HAVE ſaid, the object of Chriſtian hope is the divine promiſes; though it may be rather ſaid to be the bleſſings contained in the divine promiſes, the chief and moſt comprehenſive of which is, GOD himſelf, as the *chief good of our natures*, the comprehenſive ſum total of all our happineſs; and therefore it is ſaid, by way of eminence, "That our hope may be in GOD," as the ultimate object of it *. For, if we purſue every pro-

* 1 Pet. i. 31.

mised blessing or happiness to the source of it, we will find it centered in GOD, and flowing from him.

4. CHRIST is also sometimes called *our hope*, as the channel of all divine blessings to us, and the great *promulgator* and *revealer* of the divine promises. And we are said to abound in hope, through the power of the *holy Ghost*; because, as he is the worker of *faith*, so of *hope*, in the hearts of Christians; bearing witness with their spirits, that they are children and heirs of GOD; confirming their rational inferences as to the goodness and safety of their state; persuading them of the power and faithfulness of GOD, and the certain accomplishment of his promises, and sweetly assuring their hearts, so as to raise them above tormenting fear, anxious doubtings, and distracting despair.

5. THE primary foundations of Christian hope, as well as of Christian faith, are the *unchangeable truth* and *almighty power* of GOD.---He *cannot lie*, and he can do all things which are the objects of power; consequently, he can neither *deceive our faith* nor *disappoint our hopes*. Whatsoever therefore GOD hath *said* or *promised*, we can never confidently enough expect and hope for, nor firmly enough believe.

6. MEN may be strong in the Christian hope, giving glory to GOD; that is, they may firmly believe the truth of his word, and the sure accomplishment of his promises to his people, while they may be very doubtful of their own state, and so be deprived of the *joy of hope*: For, as hope supposes faith, and faith rests upon a divine promise; while we cannot clearly and rationally apply this promise to ourselves, we cannot yet hope for the accomplishment of it to ourselves.---Yet we may clearly see our title to the promised blessing on condition we did but truly believe and apply the promise. Hence it clearly follows, that our hope must

muſt ever keep pace with the evidence of our title to the promiſed bleſſing. Where we have no rational evidence of this, we can have no rational hope; and according to the *ſtrength of our evidence*, ſuch will be the *ſtrength of our hope*.

7. HENCE it is alſo clear, that all the hopes of wicked men, and even of men (however ſober, moral, and orderly in their lives) who are yet without any rational evidence of their being truly religious, are mere *wicked, groundleſs preſumptions*, which only ſerve to keep up their fatal ſecurity, and to render their damnation the more certain and the more dreadful: For, how dreadful muſt it be for thoſe men to find all their *towering airy* hopes, piercing them like broken reeds, and breaking under them like a ſpider's web, only to render their fall into endleſs miſery and deſpair the deeper and more diſtreſſing?

8. HENCE it appears, that *deſpair*, is a more promiſing ſymptom in wicked men, than the moſt *confident hopes*. And that the foundation of a true Chriſtian hope in all ſuch, muſt be laid deep in an utter deſpair of ever ſeeing the face of GOD in mercy, while they continue void of true religion, and under the power of wicked habits.

9. CHRISTIAN hope is diſtinguiſhed from worldly hopes, by the *excellency of its objects*, and the *ſtability of its foundation*. Its principal object, as we obſerved, is GOD, and an eternal ſtate of glory and happineſs, in his preſence, wherein we ſhall be conformed to the image of his Son; and its foundation is the *divine power* and *faithfulneſs*; ſo that it is a *ſure, glorious* and *bleſſed* hope. But *all, all* ſublunary hopes are mean in their nature, uncertain in their attainment, and deceitful and unſatisfying in their fruition and enjoyment.

10. To hope for the perfection of our nature, and the full enjoyment of GOD, is a *glorious hope*, which by its

its very nature, tends to raiſe, purify and refine our ſouls, and which, when enjoyed, will leave us not a ſingle wiſh or deſire ungratified : But earthly hopes ; the hopes of honours, wealth, power, or ſenſual pleaſures, are of a low, mean nature, and naturally tend to depreſs and ſenſualize the mind : And, even when they come to be attained, how do they diſappoint us ? How little do they pleaſe and ſatisfy us ? How often have we cauſe to be aſhamed of them ? And how often does the very fruition of them turn out to be our greateſt evils and vexations ? But it is peculiar to the nature of the Chriſtian hope, that it *maketh not aſhamed*, becauſe the fruition exceeds our higheſt expectations.

11. How uncertain are we of the attainment of our earthly hopes and deſires ? How many have eagerly and diligently purſued ſome one trifling earthly hope (that, ſuppoſe, of being rich, or being honoured or reſpected) all their days, and yet could never attain it, but have been perpetually croſſed and diſappointed in all their expectations ? This is the reaſon why *young men* are generally more ſanguine in their hopes and expectations from the world, than *old men*, who, by a woful experience, have ſo often found all their hopes from it fruſtrated, and that all its moſt gay and promiſing appearances, are extremely flattering and deceitful. But it is the diſtinguiſhing characteriſtick of the Chriſtian hope, that it is a ſure and certain hope ; and thoſe who enjoy it know it to be ſo. Although the objects of the Chriſtian's hopes, are future and unſeen, yet his hope gives them a preſence and reality, and therefore the patient waiting for this hope, is attended with joy and comfort. The interval of a thouſand years did not weaken *Abraham's* hope of the promiſed *Meſſiah*, but he *rejoiced to ſee his day*, becauſe he knew that GOD *was faithful who promiſed.*

Such

Such alſo is the Chriſtian's hope of future glory; though he has not yet ſeen it, yet believing, he rejoices in aſſured expectation of it, with joy unſpeakable and full of glory.

12. HOPE is exceeding ſuitable to our *preſent ſtate*.--- In heaven it is excluded by full enjoyment, and in hell, by utter deſpair: But, as we are here in a *middle ſtate*, between the two worlds;---as we are now in a ſtate of trial and expectance, it is perfectly fit that we ſhould be governed and influenced by the hope of a future reward, which tends, on the one hand, to quicken our diligence in our proper work, and on the other, to preſerve us from ſlothful deſpondency.

13. HOPE is highly neceſſary to the Chriſtian in the preſent ſtate. Surrounded with temptations both terrifying and alluring, to draw us away from our duty, the hope of ſalvation is our *helmet* and *breaſtplate*; toſſed with the ſtorms of doubts, perplexities, worldly cares and perſecutions, hope is the *anchor of the ſoul*, ſure and ſteadfaſt, that enters within the vail, and, being fixed on the immortal ſhore, gives the ſoul ſecurity and reſt; harraſſed with ſore afflictions, and paſſing through the dark valley of the ſhadow of death, what could ſupport us but the Chriſtian hope? This was the boaſt of the afflicted Apoſtles: They gloried even in tribulations, rejoicing in the hope of the glory of GOD; they reckoned their greateſt ſufferings not worthy to be compared with the glory to be revealed; looking at things inviſible and eternal, they knew their *light* and *momentary* afflictions wrought out for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. This was the ſupport of the *martyrs* under all their ſufferings in the cauſe of Chriſt: "Bleſſed are ye when all men "perſecute you: Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for "great is your reward in heaven *." In ſhort, hope ſets

* Matth. v.

ſets all the ſprings of Chriſtian activity to work; ſweetens the moſt difficult and ſelf-denying duties of religion, and is that which only can make men eminent, uſeful and diligent Chriſtians.

14. TRUE Chriſtian hope, may be diſtinguiſhed from *carnal confidence* and *preſumption*, chiefly by its *quickening* and *purifying* effects. "He who hath this hope in "him, purifyeth himſelf as GOD is pure." If we believe the many great and precious promiſes of the goſpel, and are cauſed to hope for their accompliſhment, "We ſhall cleanſe ourſelves from all filthineſs "both of fleſh and ſpirit, and perfect holineſs in the "fear of GOD." When a man's hopes do not purify his ſoul, nor make him diligent in his Chriſtian duty, but leave him wicked, careleſs and ſlothful, it may be depended on, that they are mere groundleſs preſumptions; thoſe hopes of the hypocrite which periſh. The Chriſtian hope is a *lively hope*; the inward ſpring of fervent deſires, reviving joys and zealous endeavours. The man who has got a believing view of the high prize of glory, preſſes on towards it, with unremitting diligence, and purifies *himſelf*, becauſe he knows none but the *pure in heart*, will receive it, or can enjoy it.

15. THE Chriſtian hope tends to *purify*, *cleanſe* and *ſanctify* all who have it, in various ways; as, (1.) By the objects of it, which are the *pure* and *holy* GOD, and a ſtate of *pure* and holy *bleſſedneſs*. Indeed, none but ſuch as are in ſome meaſure purified from their luſts and ſins, can entertain or pleaſe themſelves with ſuch a hope at all: Whence it follows, that no wicked perſons ever *had*, or *can* have a *true Chriſtian hope*.---(2.) Thoſe who have this hope are purified by the frequent and ſerious thoughts of GOD, and heavenly glory. As the object of their hope is ſpiritual and divine; ſo the

frequent

frequent contemplation of it purifies and raifes their affections from the earth, and transforms them into the fame likenefs : As the Chriftian's hope, treafure and heart are in heaven, fo it is likely his converfation will be there alfo.

16. EVERY man will have his hope ; but it behoves us to fee to it that *our's* is rationally founded, and a true Chriftian hope, that will attend us to death, and to the gates of heaven.---If it purifies our hearts and quickens our holy diligence, it will never deceive us ; but if not it is counterfeit ; and, " what will become of the hope " of the hypocrite, when GOD taketh away his foul ?"

17. How great will their fall be, who fall from a conceited and imaginary heaven into a real hell ? Hope, of all the paffions, is the moft calm and quiet ; but when difappointed, the rage, impatience, forrow and defpair of hell muft follow. Let us therefore examine our hopes, leaft this fhould be *our* fad cafe.

ESSAY XLIV.

The NATURES *and* PERSON *of* CHRIST.

1. AS Christ is the *end of the law*, the *sum* and *substance of the gospel*; the *pearl of great price*; the *author*, *finisher* and *object of our faith*, *trust*, *hope* and *dependance*; our Redeemer, and through GOD, our *portion* and *salvation*, it well becomes us, as Christians, to grow in the knowledge of, and acquaint ourselves well with this glorious person: For, the better we know him in his *natures*, *person* and *saving offices*, the more clear and comfortable will be the grounds of our faith and trust in him; the better shall we love him, and the more chearfully shall we follow and obey him.

2. HE is, indeed, a most *wonderful* and *mysterious* person; but the holy scriptures have revealed to us a number of his glories, and given us many rich materials for the growing knowledge of him, and acquaintance with him.

3. HE is represented in one view, as the *wonderful councellor*, the *mighty* GOD, the *everlasting Father*, the *Prince of peace*; the Word which was in the beginning with GOD, and which was GOD; the Creator of all things, visible and invisible, by whom all things *are* and *consist*:---And, in another view, he is represented, as the *Son of man*; the *man Jesus*; *born of a virgin*; appearing in the *form of a servant*, and in the *likeness of sinful flesh*; *smitten*, *wounded* and *bruised*, a *man of sorrows* and acquainted with *grief*; *hungering*, *thirsting*, *weary*, *sorrowing*, *bleeding* and *dying*; *made of a woman*; made *under the law*, and

and the like;---which plainly proves, that in this myſterious perſon, there are *two* widely different and diſtinct *natures*; not only a *ſoul* and a *body* as in other human creatures, but a truly *divine* and *human nature*; by the one of which he is *truly* and *really* GOD, and by the other *truly* and *really man*.

4. SOME hereticks ſuppoſed, that the divine nature of Chriſt ſerved as a *ſoul* to his *human body*, and therefore, that he had no human ſoul, diſtinct from his *God-head*, or divine nature: but this is an error againſt ſcripture, which aſſures us, that Chriſt had a *true human ſoul*, diſtinct from his divine nature, and that this ſoul was ſorrowful even to death. Now it would be impious to ſuppoſe, that the GOD-HEAD or *divine nature* of Chriſt, *ſuffered*, or felt any uneaſy paſſion. Beſides, unleſs Chriſt had had a proper human ſoul beſides his divine nature, as we have, he could not be *truly* and *properly man*, as we are; and therefore not a proper *Kinſman-Redeemer*.

5. CHRISTIANS are divided about the time of the creation of Chriſt's human ſoul: The generality holding that is was created and joined to his body in the virgin's womb. But others, with *Dr.* WATTS, hold, that it was created the firſt of all creatures; and that the divine nature of Chriſt, acting by it, created all other worlds and creatures; converſed with *Adam* in *paradiſe*; was made viſible to the *Patriarchs*, and was the grand agent in tranſacting all the affairs of man's redemption in all ages of the world; and really deſcended from heaven, diveſted of the glory and happineſs it had there enjoyed from the beginning, and humbled itſelf, by entering into the virgin's womb *.

6. THESE *two different natures* are ſo cloſely united as to make *one glorious, myſterious perſon*; by which means Chriſt's wonderful humiliation and condeſcenſion appears

* Col. i. 15,---18.

pears in uniting his glorious divine nature to our *mean* and *frail humanity*; and his wonderful love, in exalting *our nature* to a personal union with the *Deity*:---Yet these two natures do, and must continue *distinct, unblended* and *unmixed*. By virtue of this wonderful union, the man Jesus is spoken of as GOD, and the *divine word*, which is GOD, is spoken of as *man*.

7. THAT our Lord Jesus Christ *was*, and *is* possessed of a truly divine nature, or that he is *truly* and *really* GOD in one of his natures, appears against *Socinians* and *Arrians*, from the works that he did; the divine names and attributes ascribed to him, and the divine perfections which were displayed in his miracles. As we heard above, he is expressly called GOD; the "the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person:" He is said to have been *in the beginning*, that is *eternal*; to have been *before Abraham was*; to have *created* and *made all things*. He is stiled the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the beginning and the end; the searcher of the hearts and trier of the reins of the children of men. He is *omnipotent*, for he *raised the dead*; *turned water into wine*; *created bread and fish* in the eater's hands, and *made all things*, visible and invisible. He is *omniscient*, for he *knew the very thoughts* of men. He is *omnipresent*, for although in heaven, he promises to be *where ever two or three of his disciples are*; and to be every where with his servants to the end of the world. He is therefore the *proper object of divine worship*, and accordingly *all the angels of* GOD, are commanded to *worship him*. *Stephen* worshipped him; *St. Paul* swore by him, and all sinners are commanded to believe in him, to rely and trust on him, and to honour him, even as they honour the Father; therefore he is, in one of his natures, *properly* GOD *.

8. THAT

* Heb. i. Isa. ix. 6. Col. ii. 9. Rev. i. 8.——ii. 23.——iv. 11.——v. 11, &c.

8. THAT our Lord Jesus Christ was also truly man, is evident, not only from his *conception* and *birth*, and from his being called *the seed of the woman*, the *son of David*, the *man Jesus*, and a *man of sorrows* and acquainted with griefs; but also from every proper character of humanity appearing in him. He *increased in knowledge*, and *in stature*, as other men; he *eat*, *drank* and *slept*; was *hungry* and *weary*; felt all the innocent passions of humanity in all their strength and delicacy; spoke familiarly of his soul and body, his flesh and blood; suffered, and at length bled and died;---thus giving full proof, that in one of his natures, he was, in all respects, like unto his human brethren (sin only excepted) and therefore well qualified to be a *merciful high-priest*, and *compassionate elder brother*, and *kinsman-redeemer*; the *seed of the woman*, and the *Son of David*, after the flesh.

9. As the human nature of Christ was to be the *propitiatory sacrifice* for the sins of the world; therefore, it behoved to be perfectly pure and immaculate, without any taint of *inherent* or *derived* corruption (otherwise it could not have been a sacrifice acceptable to GOD, nor available for us;) therefore, it pleased GOD to secure the sinless purity of this nature, by its being conceived and formed by the holy Ghost, in the sanctified womb of a pure virgin. Whence he was called the *holy child Jesus*; the *lamb of* GOD, "without spot or blemish; "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sin-"ners."

10. THERE is no reason to doubt but that the *human soul* of Christ was the *noblest spirit* which GOD ever created, and his body the most perfect human body that ever was formed; seeing, that in this *consecrated temple* the DEITY himself was to reside, and "all the fulness "of the GOD-HEAD, to dwell bodily." So that there is no doubt but this glorious dignified man, considered only

only as a man, *was*, and *is* the *moſt glorious creature of* GOD; and is filled with all the graces and perfections whereof a limited, created nature is capable; ſeeing that it was *by* and *through this nature*, that GOD was to diſplay and manifeſt himſelf to men.

11. As the divine nature of Chriſt was not capable of *ſuffering*, ſo neither was it capable of *humiliation*, *exaltation* or *reward*. CHRIST's divine nature could not properly be ſaid to humble itſelf; to empty itſelf of its glory, or to be rewarded for its ſervices, or exalted to a higher degree of glory, or bleſſedneſs, or dominion, than it enjoyed before; therefore, wherever we find theſe changes of ſtate aſcribed to Chriſt in ſcripture, we muſt underſtand it of his human nature, which indeed humbled itſelf in the work of our redemption, and has obtained a glorious exaltation and an increaſe of dignity and bleſſedneſs, as the reward of its humiliation, labours and ſufferings *.

12. ALTHOUGH there was a perfect union of the *Word* or *divine nature* of Chriſt with his human nature, while upon earth; yet the manner and degree in which the divine nature communicated the perfections of power and knowledge to the human nature, is, to us, a great myſtery. It appears, that Chriſt, as a man, grew up from his childhood, and increaſed in knowledge as other men do: Yet, no ſooner does he enter upon his public miniſtry, having been thereunto ſet apart by the baptiſm of *John*, and the anointing of the holy Ghoſt, but we find him poſſeſſed of *amazing*, even *infinite knowledge* and *almighty power*. From which it would ſeem to appear, that during his private life, the divine nature of Chriſt communicated little elſe to his human nature, than ſanctifying knowledge and holy influences, and that his communications became more unlimited

* Philip. ii. 5,---11. Pſal. cx. 7, &c.

unlimited and extenſive, as the great work of his miniſtry required.

13. SUCH is the *glorious object* of our *faith* and *hope*. From which it appears, how worthy he is of, and how juſtly entitled to our *truſt*, *homage*, *love* and *adoration*; For, whatever is amiable, excellent, or a perfection in GOD and *man*, he poſſeſſes in the moſt eminent degree. The offices which he ſuſtains and executes, as our Mediator, are to be conſidered below.

E S S A Y XLV.

CHRIST, *our* PROPHET.

1. ALTHOUGH Chriſt is, in one of his natures, GOD *equal with the Father*, yet in his complex perſon, as GOD-*man-Mediator*, he is the *Father's righteous ſervant*, whom GOD hath provided, appointed, ſanctified and ſent into the world, on the great and gracious errand of redeeming loſt ſinners; fulfilling and honouring his law, and promoting his glory; to whom he hath (for a time at leaſt) entruſted the whole management of his mediatorial kingdom; committed all power and judgment, and made him the head and governor of all things, of all the ſcenes of providence, all the kingdoms of the world, and all the angels of heaven and devils of hell, of which he is the glorious king and head.

2. IN this his *myſterious*, *complex perſon*, as GOD-*man-Mediator*, he more eſpecially ſuſtains and executes three offices for the good of the church, and for the ſalvation

tion of ſinners :---As ſinners are naturally *ignorant* and blind in the knowledge of GOD, and in the way of ſerving him acceptably, in compaſſion and relief of this miſery of our fallen race, he is become our *prophet* to inſtruct us :---As they are *guilty* and ſubject to condemnation and wrath, and have no acceſs to GOD or power with him; in this our guilty and rebellious ſtate, he is become our *Prieſt* to atone for our ſins by the ſacrifice of himſelf, and to plead, pray and intercede for us with his juſtly offended Father, and to procure us acceſs to him with humble boldneſs and favourable acceptance with him :---As we are by nature bond ſlaves of *ſatan* and of luſt, having numberleſs enemies which ſeek our perdition, and neither power nor ſkill to oppoſe them, he is graciouſly become our *King*, not only to give laws to our conſciences, but to captivate our hearts to himſelf; to rule and reign within us by the power of his Spirit, and having thus reſcued us from the power of inward enemies, to lead us on to the conqueſt of the world and the *devil*, with all their ſtratagems and temptations.

3. THE *prophetic office* conſiſts chiefly of two parts: 1. To reveal, preach, and inculcate thoſe truths and doctrines of GOD, which are neceſſary to the ſalvation of ſinners: And, 2. To foretel, with certainty, future events, relative to the church of GOD, or the members of it, or others, which ſeemed to depend, for their exiſtence, on uncertain contingencies and events. This was the twofold buſineſs of both the *Jewiſh* and *Chriſtian* prophets; and in the Jewiſh church, there were certain eſtabliſhed marks of trial, whereby the *true* prophets, were diſtinguiſhed from the *falſe*. Now, in both theſe reſpects, Chriſt is the *prime* and *chief* prophet of the church; nay, he may be ſaid, by way of eminence, to be the *only true* Prophet of GOD; becauſe all other true

prophets

prophets were only his *organs* or *inſtruments*, (if I may ſo ſpeak) deriving all their *revelations*, *predictions*, *gifts* and *graces*, from the light of his Spirit, communicated to them, illuminating, *inſpiring* them, and ſpeaking and writing *by* and *in* them.

4. WHATEVER revelations, or divine inſpirations, *Adam*, *Enoch*, *Noah*, *Abraham*, *Job*, *David*, or the prophets and the patriarchs of old, were favoured with, or have recorded in the ſcriptures, for illuminating, converting and building up the church;---or, if any Heathens of old, *Socrates*, *Heraclitus*, or any of the Heathens at this day, have obtained, or do obtain, any *juſt* and *ſpiritual* revelations of GOD or his will, or any *ſupernatural light* or *aſſiſtance*, all has proceeded from the *Mediator*, that fountain of light and grace; that *light of the Gentiles* and *glory of his people Iſrael*;---that *true light* which lighteth every man, that cometh into the world;---who, having been from eternity in the boſom of the Father, and having learned of him, declareth him to his creatures;---for none hath *thus* known the Father, but the *Son*; the *word* and *wiſdom* of GOD, and him to whom the Son revealeth him. In particular, we are aſſured, that "all ſcripture is given by inſpiration of GOD;" and that the prophets ſpake in old time, as they were moved by the holy Ghoſt, which is the Spirit of Jeſus.

5. ALTHOUGH the Mediator was *thus* the Prophet of GOD in all ages; yet he was more *viſibly*, *ſenſibly* and *ſolemnly* inaugurated and ſet apart to his prophetic office, at his baptiſm by *John*, where, inſtead of being anointed with oil (a ceremony uſed of old at the inſtalment of *prophets*, as well as of *prieſts* and *kings*) he was anointed with a plentiful effuſion of the holy Ghoſt, with which he was filled without meaſure; and all men commanded to hear him, under that character, by a voice from hea-

ven; which ſeems a ſurpriſing, literal fulfilment of *Moſes's* prophefy concerning him *.

6. IT may be obſerved, that Chriſt, in the courſe of his miniſtry, remarkably fulfilled and diſcharged the two branches of the prophetic office, mentioned above: 1. He revealed the will of GOD to men for their ſalvation; and, 2. He foretold future events.

7. IN the firſt of theſe branches, Chriſt the Mediator, reveals the will of GOD to men, for their ſalvation, both by his *word outwardly*, and by *his ſpirit* applying the word to their hearts. In this reſpect, how far has he the pre-eminence above all other prophets? Other prophets can only declare GOD's will to men, from the revelation of Jeſus Chriſt, and after this have no more that they can do, not being able to diſpenſe the quickening Spirit, without which the outward declaration of GOD's will, is ineffectual to the ſalvation of ſinners: But this divine Prophet is not only the original *revealer* and *declarer* of GOD's *will*, but alſo the *diſpenſer of the Spirit*, by which he can, when he pleaſes, reveal GOD's will inwardly to the hearts and conſciences of ſinners, and make it operative and effectual there for their ſalvation.

8. BY his perſonal miniſtry, and that of his Apoſtles, he as the Father's righteous ſervant, has revealed all truth and duty neceſſary to the ſalvation of ſinners. He expreſsly declares, that what he ſpoke and taught was *from the Father*, and not of *his own will* †. He unfolded and caſt a new light on the dark prophetic parts of the old Teſtament, and ſhewed how all the prophecies and ſacrifices there ſhadowed forth, prefigured and pointed to *himſelf* and *goſpel bleſſings*, as the *ſubſtance* ‡. He made thoſe things clear to us, which were not well underſtood

* Deut. xviii. 15, &c.
† John xii. 49.
‡ Luke xxiv. 27.

underſtood by the prophets who revealed them, by the ſecret impulſes of his Spirit *. He declared the ſpiritual nature of GOD, and that worſhip he requires, and vindicated the *purity*, *ſpirituality*, and *vaſt extent* of the divine law, from the falſe gloſſes, and corrupt interpretations of the Jewiſh teachers †. He diſtinctly revealed the way and method of our recovery through himſelf; gave a clear revelation of a judgment to come, and of an eternal ſtate of rewards and puniſhments; thus bringing life and immorality to ſuch a clear light by his goſpel, as it had never appeared in before, by former divine revelations.

9. As a Prophet, he foretold many future events, (which is deemed the higheſt proof of the prophetic ſpirit and character) ſuch as *Peter's* denial of him; the treachery of *Judas*; his *own* ſufferings, death, and reſurrection; the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, and the diſperſion of the Jews forty years before it happened ‡: The ſurprizing ſucceſs and ſpread of his own goſpel §: The ſufferings and perſecutions of his followers, and the degeneracy and corruption which ſhould prevail among them. And, as all theſe things have punctually come to paſs, we have abundant ground to believe, that the prophecies contained in the book of his revelations to his ſervant *John*, and thoſe prophecies, which by his Spirit, he enabled his other Apoſtles to utter, concerning the fall of *Antichriſt*; the reſtoration of the *Jews*; the gathering in, and converſion of the Heathen nations; the glory of his church in the latter days, and the final deſtruction of our earth by fire, will, all of them, be accompliſhed in due time.

* 1 Pet. i. 12.
† Matth. v. vi. and vii.
‡ Luke xii. 44.——xxi. 24.
§ Mark xvi. 17, 18.

10. CHRIST alſo as a Prophet, teaches not only by *outward revelations*, but by the *inward operations of the Spirit* on the ſouls of man. He not only ſpake as never man ſpoke; but his words (when he pleaſes) are *ſpirit* and *life*; working powerfully and effectually in them who believe. He opened the heart of *Lydia*, that ſhe attended to the things ſpoken by *Paul*. He opened the underſtandings of his diſciples, that they might underſtand the ſcriptures, and cauſed their hearts to burn within them, by the ſacred energy of his Spirit, while he opened to them the ſcriptures concerning himſelf. Thus does he, when he pleaſes, make the light of his glorious goſpel ſhine upon the hearts of ſinners: enlighten, transform, and renew them, and thereby give free courſe to the word of his grace, and glorify it: And to him we are to look, as our Prophet, for thoſe *inward teachings*, and *effectual illuminations* of his Spirit, to make his word effectual and ſaving.

11. CHRIST the Mediator was foretold by *Moſes*, as a Prophet, like unto himſelf, to be raiſed up, to the Jews, from among their brethren, to whom they ſhould hearken without gainſaying or reſerve. And the reſemblance between HIM and *Moſes* is remarkably ſtriking in many reſpects: (1.) In their birth; they were both *Iſraelites*; both born in obſcurity: (2.) In their early expoſure to great *riſks*, *dangers* and *hardſhips*: (3.) Both come to *their own* with ſpecial commiſſion and miraculous power from GOD, and their own received them not kindly, but evilly requited them, and perverſly rebelled againſt them: (4.) Both were exceedingly meek in their temper; expoſed themſelves to much hardſhip and ſelf-denial in their miniſtry; were zealous, diligent and faithful in all GOD's houſe: ſhewed great ſigns and wrought great miracles to confirm their miſſions: (5.) Both were authors of a new diſpenſation

of

of religion, and Mediators between GOD and *man*: (6.) Both had near access to, and familiar converse with GOD, and peculiar marks of his favour; and had their revelations immediately from GOD, and confirmed them with the seal of miracles: (7.) Both fasted forty days: (8.) Both were very zealous for the LORD GOD of *hosts*, and affectionate lovers of an ungrateful people: (9.) Both were *rulers* and *deliverers*, as well as *Prophets*; the one from the captivity of *Pharaoh* and the bondage of *Egypt*; the other from the captivity of the *devil*, and the bondage of their own lusts: (10.) Both chose *seventy disciples*.

12. LET us see to it, that we *hearken to this Prophet*, which speaketh from heaven. Let us hear with submissive attention, both what he speaks to us *outwardly* by his word, and *inwardly* by the voice of his Spirit *.

ESSAY

* Acts iii. 23. Heb. xii. 25. Matth. xvii. 5. Heb. i. 1.

ESSAY XLVI.

The PRIESTLY OFFICE *of* CHRIST.

1. THE Aaronical priesthood, was a type of the priesthood of Christ, though the priesthood of *Melchisedec*, was a more perfect one: Consequently, the Jewish high-priests, and *Melchisedec*, were types of Christ.

2. Two qualifications were necessary to the Jewish high-priests: (1.) That they should be of the same nature with their brethren *.---(2.) That they should be solemnly separated and set apart to their office, by the appointment of GOD, and by consecretion or investiture †. Now Christ, the great high-priest of our profession, had both these qualifications ‡.

3. As the priest's office, is founded on the fallen state of human nature, and appointed in relief of the guilty, it consists of two parts or branches: (1.) To offer sacrifice: And, (2.) To make intercession.

4. SACRIFICES were of two kinds under the law: Either *eucharistical*, as acknowledgments of mercies; and these were commonly called *gifts*, and were *unbloody*, consisting of the fruits of the earth, &c. Or, they were *expiatory*, or *atonements* for sin, and these were called *sacrifices*, and were always *bloody*; for, without shedding of blood, there was no remission of sins.

5. CHRIST, in this sense, was a *true* and *real sacrifice*. His soul was made *an offering for sin*. Thus he is called, "The Lamb of GOD which taketh away the sins of "the

* Heb. v. 1, 2.═══iv. 15.
† Heb. v. 1, 4.
‡ Heb. ii. 14, 17.═══v. 5, 6, 9, 10.

" the world :---Our paſſover ſacrificed for us :---The " Lamb ſlain from the foundation of the world :-- The " propitiation for our ſins, and the ſins of the world : " ---He was offered to bear the ſins of many *."

6. THE entire human nature of Chriſt was the ſacrifice which he offered up for the ſins of the world.---He not only gave his *ſoul* or *life* an offering for ſin, but bore our ſins in his own body on the tree :---And this ſacrifice received its dignity and value from his *divine nature*, which offered the human: For he, through the eternal Spirit, offered himſelf up without ſpot unto GOD †.

7. BY this ſacrifice has Chriſt made an atonement for ſin; ſatisfied the demands of divine juſtice; confirmed and illuſtrated the truth, holineſs and juſtice of GOD, and made his law exceeding honourable; purchaſed our forfeited bleſſings and loſt happineſs; opened a way for the mercy of GOD to all the ſinful race of *Adam*; and procured the pardon of ſin, the divine favour, the gift of the Spirit, and eternal life for every ſoul of man who will fall in with his ſaving deſign, and take him as their *Prophet* and *King* ‡.

8. THE interceſſory part of the Prieſt's office, was to offer up the prayers of the people and to intercede for them. The high-prieſt entered into the holieſt of all on the great day of atonement or expiation, and bleſſed the people in the name of the Lord; ſprinkling the blood of their ſacrifices before the mercy-ſeat. Chriſt, in like manner, having offered himſelf a ſacrifice of atonement for our ſins, hath entered into heaven, in the virtue of his moſt precious blood, to offer up the prayers of his people, and make interceſſion for them §.

9. As

* Heb. ii. 12, 26.
† Heb. ii. 14.
‡ 1 John i. 7. 1 Tim. ii. 5. Gal. i. 4. Heb. ix. 12, 15. 1 John ii. 1, 2. Numb. vi. 23. Deut. xxi. 5.
§ Heb. ix. 11, 24. Rom. viii. 34. Heb. 7. 25.

9. As Chrift was of the tribe of *Judah*, not of *Levi*, from whom the Aaronical priefthood defcended, fo he is faid to be a "Prieft for ever after the order of Mel-"chifedec." The refemblance between the prieft-hood of Chrift and that of *Melchifedec* is remarkable in feveral cafes: (1.) In the ancientnefs of that order, and *Abraham*'s paying tithes to *Melchifedec*, and being bleffed by him, although the father of the Aaronical priefthood. (2.) *Melchifedec* was a *prieft upon a throne*, or a *king* as well as a *prieft*; fo was Chrift. (3.) The original and defcent of *Melchifedec* was peculiar †; fo was Chrift's: For, who can declare his generation? (4.) The priefthood of *Melchifedec* was not encumbered with fuch a *ritual*, and fo many ceremonies and carnal commandments and ordinances, as that of *Aaron*; but was more fimple and catholic: So is Chrift's.

10. THERE are feveral things in the priefthood of Chrift peculiar to itfelf; as, (1.) He was perfectly finlefs, although he tranfacted with GOD for finners. (2.) Other priefts offered *brutal facrifices*, but Chrift offered *himfelf*. He was both the *Prieft* and the *facrifice*. His divine nature was the altar on which he offered up the humanity. (3.) Other priefts offered *many facrifices*, even *daily*; whereas he offered but *one facrifice* of infinite value and virtue. (4.) Other priefts and facrifices, were ineffectual for expiating or taking away *moral guilt*: They made not him who did the fervice, or for whom it was done, *perfect* as pertaining to the *confcience*: They only took away the guilt of ceremonial pollutions or omiffions: But the facrifice of Chrift takes away the guilt of all fin. This is "the Lamb of GOD, which "taketh away the fin of the world."

11. THE priefthood of Chrift, and his moft expenfive facrifice, fhould put us in mind of our guilty ftate, and

† Heb. vii. 3.

and of the malignant nature of ſin; ſeeing there could have been no remiſſion of the very ſmalleſt ſin, without the ſheding of the blood of Chriſt.

12. HENCE we ſee the wonderful love of GOD in preparing *ſuch a Prieſt* and *ſacrifice*, for our guilty race, and not ſparing him, but freely giving him up for us all:---As alſo the amazing condeſcenſion and philanthropy of Chriſt, in becoming a ſacrifice and victim for the *ungodly*; for *ſinners*; for *enemies*.

13. How *freely*, *cheerfully*, and *aſſuredly* ſhould we depend on the merit of ſuch a ſacrifice as this? And how entirely give ourſelves over to the guidance of ſuch an high-prieſt? How ſhould we reverence him? And with what humble confidence enter into, and approach the holieſt, in the new and living way which he hath conſecrated by his blood? How *compaſſionate* and *faithful* is he? How ſenſible of our infirmities, and how ready to pity them, and able to help them or remove them?

14. WHAT encouragement have we to *faith* and *prayer*, having ſuch an interceſſor? Our prayers are *poor* and *imperfect* things, but if offered up *by him*, they will *prevail* and be *accepted*. How happy alſo are all thoſe for whom he *intercedes*? They muſt be ſafe and happy; for GOD ever hears his beloved Son: "But "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." Happy *Peter!* and equally happy and ſafe all for whom Chriſt intercedes *!

* Heb. x. 19,---26.

ESSAY XLVII.

The KINGLY, *or* REGAL OFFICE *of* CHRIST.

1. KING is a *relative term*, and ſuppoſes *ſubjects* and a *kingdom*. Chriſt's kingdom is two-fold; either *natural*, founded in his eternal DEITY and GODHEAD; or *mediatorial*, given to him of the Father by commiſſion *.

2. THE ſubjects of king Jeſus are, either his *friends* or his enemies. All were indeed, at firſt his enemies; but many are made willing ſubjects in the day of his power; and thoſe that continue enemies, ſhall be broken to pieces with a rod of iron.

3. IN conſidering thoſe whom he ſubdues, and the kingly power he exerciſes over them both in ſubduing and ruling them, the following things may be obſerved: (1.) All are at firſt of *ſatan's kingdom*; *children of wrath*; they *ſerve divers luſts*, and walk according to the courſe of this world, often indeed, they meet with checks of conſcience; make reſolutions; ſeem inclinable to ſubmit to his government, and ſay, "I go, ſir--- "but go not;" the love of ſin ſtill prevailing and rendering them children of diſobedience.---(2.) CHRIST gives them to underſtand, that they are rebels, and that if they perſiſt they muſt inevitably periſh †.---(3.) He makes a proclamation of mercy and pardon to them if they return and ſubmit; both by his word and Spirit ‡.---(4.) He ſhews them by his word and by his Spirit, that it is both their *duty* and *intereſt* to ſubmit to him

* Pſal. ii. 6. Iſa. ix. 6, 7. Dan. vii. 13, 14.
† Job ix. 4. Luke xiii. 3.——xix. 27.
‡ John vi. 37. Rev. iii. 20, 21.

him as their rightful Lord and Sovereign; and that in vain they expect the benefits of his *priestly office*, if they submit not to him as *a king* *.---(5.) He convinces them of the infinite advantage resulting to them from an entire subjection to his laws and government: That they shall be pardoned;---received into favour;---made kings and priests to GOD;---kept from falling; and presented faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.---(6.) He gives them the laws of his kingdom;---shews them the duties they must perform, and the sins they must watch against; that they must be *diligent*,---*zealous*,---*fervent* and *persevering*; that they must wait upon him, and not draw back by apostacy. And, (7.) He holds out both the *crown* and the *cross*: He shews them what they may expect to *lose* and *suffer* in his service; that they must be willing to part with, and forego all things for the crown of glory in reversion; that they must be willing to deny themselves; to be hated of all men, and to lose life itself in his cause and in fidelity to him.

4. WHEN sinners become the subjects of Christ, they cast themselves at his feet,---not desiring to capitulate or stand on terms; but give him (as a victorious prince) a *blank paper* to make his own terms; resolved, cheerfully and without reserve, to subscribe them. And this subjection is accompanied with the greatest love to, and desire after Christ,---his *person* and *service*, as well as his *rewards*; with a consent to be the Lord's to all intents and purposes,---both to *serve*, to *suffer for*, and to *enjoy* him. It is accompanied with a firm reliance and dependance on him, for all needed grace and help to fulfil their duties and obligations;---with resolutions of a perpetual and unremitting warfare against all his enemies; and with zealous endeavours to promote

 the

* Psal. xlv. 11, &c.

the interests of his kingdom, and gather subjects to it.

5. AFTER the subjection of sinners to Christ, he rules him *in love*; gives them needed succours and comforts in his service;---corrects them for their sins;---supports them under temptations and sufferings;---helps them to conquer their enemies, and leads them on to triumph and a crown.

6. IN his government of enemies, he sets bounds to their power, malice and wickedness;---he turns the evil designed by them, into good; and in the end, he will exercise kingly power and authority over them, in taking vengeance on all that have continued incorrigible.

LASTLY, Christ hath exercised his kingly office in all ages of the world and church; but he will shew it more gloriously in the latter days, when the world will be full of his dutiful subjects.

ESSAY

E S S A Y XLVIII.

The due IMPROVEMENT *of* TIME.

WHEN we ſhall have conſidered the ſhortneſs of time; its vaſt importance, and pointed out the beſt methods of redeeming and improving it, we ſhall have exhauſted this ſubject.

1. THE ſhortneſs of time, both *abſolutely* and *relatively* conſidered, is ſo very obvious to perſons who are the leaſt capable of reflection and obſervation, that little need be ſaid of it: For, (1.) How ſmall a thing is the aggregate of time, making one total ſum of all its diſtinctive periods, from the firſt birth of created things, to the final diſſolution of this world and the preſent ſcene, and till time ſhall be computed no more? A few thouſands of fleeting years will ſum it all. Yet a little while, and the mighty angel ſhall lift up his hand to heaven, and ſwear by him that liveth for ever and ever, that *time ſhall be no more*. (2.) If we conſider time as *relative to us*, or the *meaſure of our duration*; what a *ſpan*, what an *hand-breadth*, what a *cypher* is it? How quickly are our years gone, as a tale that is told? A *day*, how quickly is it gone; and yet how few are the days of the years of our lives? That mighty thing a *year*, which looks ſo large and extenſive before us, how ſwiftly does it paſs, and how ſhort and trifling does it look in retroſpect? Yet how few are the years of moſt lives?---How quickly does a clock tell a *ſecond?* While we pronounce the word, it is expired? Yet a ſhort row of figures in *ſeconds*, makes the ſum of a long life. When we ſee the heap of ſand in the upper lobe of an *hour-*

hour-glaſs, and mark how ſlow it waſtes, by running into the lower; we are apt to ſay, ſurely this will be long in expending; yet within the ſhort compaſs of an hour, all is fallen! Juſt ſuch is the life of man. Look forward upon fifty or ſixty years, it ſeems an immenſe heap of time; but the fleeting tranſient minutes quickly run it out, and bring it to a period. (3.) How comparatively ſmall is the period of moſt human lives? It is ſuppoſed, that not every tenth perſon reaches the age of thirty years. The two thirds of our ſpecies die in infancy, and theſe are happy? But from that age up, in which all are moral agents, and accountable for their actions, how many graves do we find of every length? How many die of every age? The thread of time (ſhort at the very longeſt) is *ſuddenly*, and alas! *unexpectedly* cut off, and they drop into their graves, like unripe fruit.

2. THE neceſſity of improving time, will appear not only from the *ſhortneſs of its duration*, but from its *vaſt importance*. (1.) Time is our *only opportunity* both for *doing* and *receiving good*, as *accountable creatures*. *Opportunity* is abſolutely neceſſary to the accompliſhment of every great and good deſign. If we had all the *will* and all the *power* in the world, to do good for ourſelves or others; yet without opportunity, we can do nothing. The being that never exiſted, (if ſuch an *ideal being* is fairly ſuppoſable) could never have any capacity or opportunity, either of enjoying or communicating good. The being which exiſts but a ſhort time, though it may have the nobleſt capacities for doing and receiving good, yet *its opportunity* is only *as its time*. It is owing to the infinite goodneſs of GOD, that he ever created any being at all, or gave unto them capacities and opportunity of giving and enjoying good. The ſimple exiſtence of every living creature which GOD hath made, is an intentional

intentional favour and mercy to that creature; for, to *exist*, is to be in a capacity for happineſs. It is better even for *ants* and the moſt *trifling inſects to be*, than *not to be*; for, even their ſhort and inſignificant duration, is filled with a happineſs ſuitable to their nature. But, where *ſenſe*, *reaſon* and *immortality* are ſupperadded, to ſuch beings, the intentional goodneſs of GOD is even infinitely greater; becauſe, to ſuch beings, GOD hath not only given nobler capacities of communicating and receiving a higher and more ſublime happineſs, but hath alſo given them an opportunity of enjoying this happineſs eternally! O, then, under what high obligations are *men*, are *human creatures*, to GOD, even for his creating goodneſs, who hath taught them more than the beaſts of the field, made them wiſer than the fowls of heaven, ſtampt upon their nature the image of his own immortality, and made them capable of eternally enjoying the *chief good?* But, (2.) We muſt conſider that the *only opportunity* which we have of enſuring the eternal enjoyment of the chief good of our natures, is our *preſent*, *ſcanty*, *uncertain ſpan of time*. When the curtain of time falls, all opportunity ceaſes of either *doing* or *receiving* that good, which will be eternal in its fruits, conſequences and rewards: For, when the night of death cometh, no man can work the rewardable works of GOD; there is no knowledge, device or repentance in the grave. The reaſon is, becauſe we are probationary creatures, and our preſent precarious exiſtence, is the only time of our trial. Hence it appears, how *all-important* time is to us, as our *eternal all* depends on the manner in which we improve our ſhort allotment of it. It is our ſeed time for eternity. It is our working, labouring day, wherein we are to lay up in ſtore a good foundation for the time to come. It is our only opportunity of providing for, and enſuring a bleſſed immortality. (3.) Hence it will follow, that

as

as this is the talent which gives worth to all other talents, every day or hour of it abuſed, or not uſed in ſubſerviency to our eternal intereſts, though it may not totally deprive us of *eternal happineſs itſelf*, yet it will certainly leſſen the *degree of that happineſs*. He who, with *one pound*, gained *ten*, was made ruler over *ten cities*; and he who gained but *two*, was made ruler only over *two* cities. A plain proof, that a vigorous improvement of *this*, and every other talent, will be proportionably rewarded; and that the more ſlothful and idle ſervant (though he may not be altogether unfaithful) will fall ſhort of the reward which he might have obtained by diligence and circumſpection.

3. As to the beſt methods of *redeeming* and *improving* time, the following may be worthy our attention: (1.) An habitual daily conſideration of, and attention to the great importance of it, as it ſtands connected with our eternal intereſts.

(2.) DAILY ſerious reflections on its *exceeding ſhortneſs* and *uncertainty*, and how quickly our day of probation may be at an end. And this will naturally lead us,

(3.) To conſider the greatneſs of the work we have to do in this our day, and how dreadful the conſequences will be to us, if we ſhould leave it unfiniſhed.

(4.) MOST will find it worth their ſerious enquiry, whether they have ever, to this day, conſidered for what purpoſe they have had *time*, and been ſent into this world; and whether they are not yet to learn the very meaning of the *improvement of time*.

(5.) PERSONS who have a due ſenſe of the importance and value of time, will employ as little of it as poſſible in *abſolute idleneſs*; or, which is the ſame thing, in buſying themſelves in matters, which contribute nothing to their own advantage, or that of other perſons, much leſs in miſchief.

(6.) TIME

(6.) TIME employed in worldly buſineſs and cares, is not always *miſſpent* or *thrown away*; for, while we have bodies, families, and the poor and needy to care for, lawful worldly induſtry, will ever be an eſſential part of our Chriſtian duty. But that the time ſpent in worldly buſineſs be *lawfully ſpent*, it is neceſſary that we thus ſpend it in ſubſerviency to a higher, nobler end; that we do it to the glory of GOD, and in obedience to his command, and that the world is kept down from the higheſt place in our affections.

(7.) ALL time ſpent in diverſions and amuſements is not loſt or ſquandered; for, it is needful, that the mind be unbent and the ſpirits refreſhed, in order to fit both for more important duty. But diverſions ſhould never exceed this meaſure. A perſon who is running for a rich prize, ſhould not ſtop and turn aſide to catch butterflies.

(8.) WHERE perſons are conſcious, that they have trifled away the prime of life in *idleneſs*, *diſſipation* and *pleaſure*, and in a wretched unconcern about their higheſt intereſts, it becomes them to be more frugal and parſimonious of time than others;---*firſt*, becauſe much of it is already guiltily ſquandered and loſt, and in all probability little remains,---and *ſecondly*, becauſe they have peculiar need to redeem their time by a double diligence in well doing, that, if poſſible, they may make ſome amends for former trifling.

(9.) A RIGHT *contrivance* and *planning* of buſineſs, would be an excellent expedient for the better improvement of time:---So much of every day to the duties of religion;---to the improvement of the mind;---to worldly cares and labours;---to company;---diverſion, &c.

(10.) DILIGENCE and *diſpatch* in buſineſs, is abſolutely neceſſary to make the beſt of time.

ESSAY XLIX.

The CONSIDERATION *of* ETERNITY.

1. ETERNITY, what a *vast*, *amazing*, *unfathomable*, *incomprehensible* subject! It is the *existence* and *duration* of him, who is incomprehensible to all but himself!---As we quickly lose all our ideas in considering *immensity*, or *infinite space*;---so we are equally lost in considering *eternity*, or *infinite duration*; and no wonder, since they are in some sort attributes of the *incomprehensible* JEHOVAH, which none by searching can find out unto perfection!

2. THE word *aion*, which we English *eternity*, signifies *perpetual existence*; and since we are finite creatures, it is little wonder, that we should be incapable of forming any adequate conception of it: For, it is not to be supposed, that a being who has *begun to exist*, should be able to conceive the nature of a being who is *self-existent*, and never had a beginning of existence.

3. ETERNITY is generally distinguished into two periods (if one may be allowed so to express it;) the *first*, is the eternity of duration which *is past*, and which can be attributed only to GOD, who alone possesses it all: The *second*, is that eternity of duration which flows on endlessly from any given period of time. This last eternity is not peculiar to GOD, but is attributed also to all immortal creatures, such as *angels*, *men* and *devils*; who, though they have begun to exist, yet never shall cease to be.

4. THIS last eternity, I mean the eternity of creatures, is not *necessary* like the duration of GOD's existence; but wholly depending on the *power* and *will of* GOD, who has

has been pleaſed to form ſome of his creatures, for an exiſtence co-eval with himſelf; *i.e.* to *will* and *cauſe* their duration to be *eternal.*

5. How wonderful a being is *that* GOD, who is eternal in his duration, and immenſely unlimited in his exiſtence! His *duration* and his *being* admit of no limits, and therefore admit of no kind of compariſon with the *exiſtence* or *duration* of any created being.

6. How entirely are we dependent on GOD, from whoſe *neceſſary exiſtence*, we have borrowed our *limited exiſtence*; and by the very power of whoſe will, we continue to exiſt every moment?

7. THOUGH *abſolute eternity* belongs only to GOD, yet as we ſhare in all that eternity which is before us, and muſt be happy or miſerable through this endleſs duration, according as we ſpend our preſent time; it follows that we ſhould live here below, with a conſtant habitual view and regard to our eternal exiſtence and duration.

8. THIS will enable us upon all occaſions to form a proper eſtimate of things. For, if any *temporary* or *momentary* pleaſures, honours or gains, which would rob us of eternal happineſs, ſhould ſolicit our attention or purſuit, they ought, at all events, to be forborne and rejected.---And if any *temporary* ſufferings or ſelf-denials, which are neceſſary to our eternal happineſs, ſhould fall in our way, they ſhould at all adventures, be endured rather than we ſhould run the riſk of ſuffering eternal torments: For, whatever of joy or pain is *temporary*, bears proportion to that which is *eternal.* And it is a maxim of eternal reaſon, that leſſer inconveniences ought always to be preferred to greater; and that to *ſell eternal happineſs* for the pleaſures of a *moment*, yea, of *ten millions of years*, argues deſperate folly.

E S S A Y L.

The Duty *of* Masters *of* Families.

MASTERS of families are pretty universally allowed to sustain the offices of *prophets*, *priests* and *kings* in their own families, and if we borrow our ideas of the number and importance of the duties they owe to their families, from the sustaining *these three offices*, their duty, in this relation, will appear very weighty and important indeed.

1. It is the business of a *prophet* to *instruct*; it is therefore the business of masters of families, to instruct their families, not only in the maxims of prudential wisdom, but more especially in the doctrines and duties of religion.

2. It will not excuse parents in the neglect of this duty, that they are *ignorant* themselves. They ought to *learn* and get knowledge for this very purpose. And there are few, but if they take due pains, may acquire knowledge enough, to give *good*, *wholesome* and *necessary* instructions to their housholds.

3. Ignorant and unlearned parents should be the more conscientious in providing proper instructors for their families.

4. Parents may instruct their families very usefully and effectually by setting before them blameless, virtuous and religious examples; and the best instructions without this, will be very *ineffectual*, if not pernicious.

5. If it is the duty of *kings* to give good laws, and to preserve good order among their subjects; masters of families are obliged to do this in their families.

6. The

6. THE orders and regulations of maſters of families, in their families, ſhould not be more numerous than is neceſſary, leſt they be neglected or forgotten through the multiplicity of them; and their neceſſity ſhould be *made apparent*, that they may be enforced with firmneſs and reſolution.

7. In the government of a family (a ſociety often made up of perſons of very different tempers and diſpoſitions) great prudence, ſkill and attention are needful, and above all, the divine counſel and aſſiſtance.

8. IT appears to be of ill conſequence for the ruler of a family, to give way to the petulency or unreaſonable humours of a capricious domeſtic; as this would be implicitly giving up his prerogative, and foſtering ill humours, and rebellious, lawleſs diſpoſitions in the ſubject. It belongs to Chriſtian prudence to determine when this rule ought to be diſpenſed with, in order to prevent greater evils.

9. LENITY, *compaſſion* and *mercy*, ſhould be tempered with *firmneſs*, *ſteadineſs* and *reſolution*, in him, who would govern a family well. Tyranny in little domeſtic ſocieties, is odious; and too much lenity may produce great evils.

10. BODILY *puniſhment* ſhould be the laſt expedient uſed to reform or correct a domeſtic offender; and prudence alone can point out the proper time and place for this.

11. THE good example of a king is equally binding with his laws, and far more encouraging and alluring; ſo it is in the maſter of a family.

12. THE chief duties of a *prieſt*, are *ſacrifice* and *intercеſſion*. This points out the obligation of *prayer*, as a duty incumbent on all maſters of families, in their own families.

13. CHRISTIAN

13. CHRISTIAN maſters of families who neglect this duty *habitually*, act worſe than the heathens did, who daily offered prayers and ſacrifices to their *gods*.

14. IF *family prayer* and *inſtruction* are duties incumbent on all Chriſtian maſters of families, which they indiſpenſably owe to GOD, and to the ſouls of their children and other domeſtics; and if the *morning* and *evening* are the proper ſeaſons pointed out for the profitable performance of this duty; then the maſters of families who, for ordinary, or very often, ſpend their mornings and evenings abroad from their families, are not in the way of their Chriſtian duty, and their families do probably loſe more by this abſence and neglect, than they can gain by the cares and worldly labours of the day.

ESSAY

ESSAY LI.

How CHRISTIANS *may and ought to resist* TEMPTATIONS, *and make them turn out to the* BENEFIT *of themselves and others.*

1. AS we are, by nature, and by the prevailing influence of evil example, exceeding prone to sin; and as temptations to it are scattered thick in our way, so to resist temptations to evil, is certainly the most *important* and *difficult* part of our Christian duty and warfare.

2. THE difficulty of our resisting a temptation, is in proportion to our natural or habitual proneness to the particular sin to which we are tempted, and the strength or weakness of our virtue or grace, taken together.

3. A PERSON who has been, by *nature* and *custom*, and may still be by *constitution*, exceeding prone to some particular sin; yet, by improvement in virtue and strength of grace, may much more easily resist a temptation to that particular sin, than another person of weaker grace and feebler virtue, who is, and has been naturally and constitutionally less inclined to that sin.

4. SOME very vicious and wicked persons, have little inclination to some certain sins, and therefore are in less danger of being tempted to commit them than others of much better dispositions upon the whole; yet whose unhappiness it is, to be naturally prone to those sins, and easily drawn into them.

5. WORLDLY-MINDED, *covetous* persons, are not easily tempted to the sins of idleness, gaming, squandering or luxury, and but seldom have any strong propen-

sity

ſity to carnal, ſenſual indulgences, or the ſins of th
fleſh; becauſe, all theſe oppoſe and tend to deſtro
their ruling paſſion, which is the love and purſuit o
gain. But they are prone to the ſins of lying for gai
of cheating, over-reaching, injuſtice, uſury, cruelty, op
preſſion, and immoderate worldly cares, hazards an
toils; and againſt theſe their ſtrongeſt watch an
guard ſhould be placed: For, it is but a vain and emp
ty boaſt, for a covetous man to ſay, 'I am no game
'ſter, prodigal, or ſpendthrift; no careleſs, ſlothfu
'man.' The world knows he is not, cannot be ſuch
in conſiſtence with his ruling paſſion; and that care
diligence and frugality in him, are only miniſters an
hand-maids of his capital vice.

6. ANGRY, *envious, malicious, revengeful* perſons; a
alſo, *vain, boaſting, ambitious* men, are ſeldom prone t
the ſins of the fleſh, or the ſoft, ſocial, effeminate vices
This is not the complexion of their nature, or the cau
of their corruption. Their ruling paſſion leads them t
other objects, and renders them an eaſy prey to a dif
ferent ſet of temptations. Therefore it is little virtu
in them, to be free from a ſet of ſins, to which they
have naturally ſo little propenſity.

7. THOSE who are extremely addicted to the ſins o
the fleſh, are often free from the ſins of *pride, vanity*
ambition, malice, covetouſneſs and *revenge*;---not becauſe
they are *virtuous*, but becauſe they have no ſtrong biaſ
towards theſe ſins, and becauſe the current of their cor
ruptions hurries them another way, and leads them to
different objects. It would therefore be an empty boaſ
in *ſuch a perſon*, to ſay, 'I am juſt in my commercia
'dealings, eaſy in my temper, affable in my deport-
'ment, kind, charitable, and good natured to all,'---be-
cauſe the oppoſite ſins do not claſh or interfere with his
ruling paſſion.

8. THE

8. THE *firſt* rule for reſiſting temptations, is to be perfectly acquainted with our *ruling paſſion*, and our ſtrongeſt propenſities to vice ;---or in the more nervous language of ſcripture, *To know, every man*, the *plague of his own heart* ; the ſin which does *moſt eaſily beſet him* ; his *boſom ſin*, his *beloved luſt*. Every man has ſome ſinful paſſion or propenſity which *predominates* above the reſt. And to *know* this ſin, is to have diſcovered our greateſt enemy, and our greateſt weakneſs.

THE *ſecond* rule is, to ſet the ſtrongeſt guard upon the weakeſt avenue of our ſoul, and againſt our moſt powerful enemy.

THE *third* rule is, to hold no deliberate parley with this prevailing luſt, nor ever to ſpare or give it quarter, when it makes its aſſaults, however artfully.

THE *fourth* rule is, to ſhun thoſe thoughts, companies and amuſements, which we have found by experience, to prove fuel to the ſins which moſt eaſily beſet us.

THE *fifth* rule is, to pray and ſtrive in a ſpecial manner againſt theſe particular ſins.

THE *ſixth* rule is, to conſider the danger of falling under the power of theſe enemies, and the difficulty of recovering. To all theſe may be added, a

SEVENTH prudential maxim, namely, to keep ourſelves diligently employed in ſome honeſt calling or buſineſs, which is a very powerful preſervative againſt temptation, as it cuts off thoſe occaſions and opportunities which miniſter to it.

9. TEMPTATIONS may turn to the advantage of thoſe who reſiſt them many ways :

(1.) As conqueſt over them is a proof of grace, and ground of joy.

(2.) As every conqueſt of this kind ſtrengthens the habit of virtue ; gives courage and magnanimity to the

soul, and renders future victories over the same enem more easy.

(3.) As it renders those who have thus conquered the better qualified to advise and succour those that ar tempted, and gives them a better right to do so.

(4.) As it shews us experimentally the power pu into our hands to conquer other temptations, and tend to humble and give us remorse for not having availe ourselves of this power upon former occasions.

(5.) As it tends to beget gratitude in us towards tha Being, by whose grace alone we are enabled to conque any temptation; and teaches us *on whom* to rely, and *whenc* to draw our succours, in future trials. And,

(6.) As it is beating the devil in the field of battle depriving him of a triumph, and discouraging him from farther attempts upon us.

10. WE may make the resisting of temptations use ful to others, in various ways: As, (1.) If we are so licited by any particular person to sin, to resist his solici tation, may be a means of reforming him. (2.) On some occasions it may be lawful and useful to encourage and support the tottering virtue of others, by informing them of our success; or by relating it under the fictitious name of some third person: As, 'I have known 'a person, who was thus tempted, and thus resisted.' (3.) If the temptation is of *a public kind*, he who resists it, preaches a loud sermon against vice; and it is much if some one or more, in company, are not benefited by it. (4.) If none for the present are bettered by such a public testimony against vice, yet it must leave the guilty, under such a conviction of the power and merit of virtue, as may some time or other prevail.

ESSAY

ESSAY LII.

PUBLIC SPIRIT.

1. PUBLIC *ſpirit*, is a *generoſity of temper*, ariſing from the principle of univerſal benevolence, and is directly oppoſed to a *narrow, ſelfiſh, contracted* temper, which ſeeks only its own private intereſt, pleaſure and advantage.

2. A TRULY public ſpirited perſon, does not, indeed, neglect himſelf as an individual, nor his family, as parts of himſelf; but he does not live for himſelf or his family alone; his generous heart deviſeth liberal things, and takes pleaſure in forming ſchemes and projects for the good of mankind, with whoſe intereſt he feels his own intereſt to be cloſely and inſeparably connected. On the contrary, a *ſelfiſh perſon*, deſtitute of the virtue of public ſpirit, has his eye chiefly fixed on that dear idol *himſelf* (of which he conſiders his family as a part.) All his ſchemes and projects terminate there, and he takes little or no pleaſure in any advantage, or honour, but what comes in to this dear idol.

3. WHATEVER promotes the public honour or good; whatever ſcheme *brings* or *offers* benefit to one's country, or tends to promote its credit and reputation among ſtrangers, gives a peculiar pleaſure to the public ſpirited perſon, and he is ready to encourage, ſupport and aſſiſt it, to the utmoſt of his power. If he has not the talent of projecting ſuch ſchemes himſelf, he readily falls in with them when propoſed, and is ſo far from needing to be prompted to join in them, that he rejoices in having an opportunity of *doing public good*,

which is his favourite ruling paſſion. And if he can do but little himſelf in gratifying ſo benevolent a paſſion, he labours to encourage others, who are better able. On the contrary, the *ſelfiſh man*, has a thouſand prudential reaſons againſt conſenting to a ſcheme which might coſt him ſomething: 'It will beggar the public; it 'will oppreſs the poor; it is impracticable; or it will 'never anſwer the end propoſed.'---If he is out-voted by a majority, he conſents with reluctance, and is for bringing the terms of expence as low as poſſible, always having an eye to *ſelf*.---If for ſhame be is obliged to contribute, the heſitating manner in which he does it, or the boaſts he makes of it, give plain evidence that he did it unwillingly.---If the ſcheme miſcarries, or does not anſwer the intention, he reproaches and abuſes the projectors, and makes this an argument againſt all future public ſpirited projects.

4. A TRULY public ſpirited perſon has a real, ſenſible pleaſure in the proſperity and ſucceſs of his neighbours, and heartily feels for their adverſity and ill-fortune. It would give his generous benevolent heart a refined pleaſure to ſee all proſperous, all rich, all healthy, all happy, all honoured and eſteemed:---And when he ſees the reverſe, he *feels* for the calamity of his neighbours, and is himſelf the leſs happy amidſt his own health, honour, ſucceſs and abundance. On the contrary, the *ſelfiſh man* has an *unfeeling heart* towards his neighbour.---Is he happy and proſperous himſelf? He hugs and bleſſes himſelf in his good fortune: He ſacrifices to his own net, and burns incenſe to his own dreg. He imputes it to his own induſtry, diligence, honeſty or integrity, and has no pity for his neighbour's misfortunes which, according to him, are all owing to ſome neglect or miſconduct on his part. In ſhort, he *feels only for himſelf*, unaffected either with hearty joy or grief for the good or bad fortune of others.

5. THE

5. THE public ſpirit of a place may be pretty certainly inferred, from the monuments of it in that place. Do we ſee in a nation or in a neighbourhood, *learning*, *arts* and ſciences encouraged and flouriſhing; rich and ſtately churches; charity foundations for educating the poor, and healing the ſick; the public roads in good repair and the like; it may be depended on, that public ſpirit prevails in ſuch places.---On the contrary, where *public works* and *public charities* are neglected in places, otherwiſe rich and opulent, and where private property abounds, it may be depended on, that *there* a *ſelfiſh ſpirit* and *narrow, contracted principles prevail.*

6. PUBLIC ſpirit was cultivated and cheriſhed with the greateſt care amongſt the ancient *Romans*, and had wonderful effects in *that commonwealth.* It ſeems now to prevail much in *Great-Britain* and the *Britiſh colonies.* Wherever *true learning* and *noble ſentiments of liberty* prevail, it flouriſhes. Under the contrary circumſtances, it is *ſtarved* and *periſhes.* It is at a low ebb among theſe Iſlands, a few only excepted.

7. PUBLIC ſpirit is *a ſhinning* and *uſeful* virtue: (1.) It is the offſpring of univerſal charity and benevolence. (2.) It is the brighteſt reſemblance of GOD and his *bleſſed Son.* (3.) It is the certain mark of a *brave, enlarged, benevolent* ſoul. (4.) It is the parent of *noble, generous* and *uſeful* actions.---And therefore, (5.) It is the ſource of the trueſt and moſt refined delight and pleaſure to thoſe who are poſſeſſed of it.

8. THE Apoſtles of Chriſt, and thoſe of their ſucceſſors who propagated the goſpel in foreign nations, at the expence of every thing dear and comfortable in nature, gave proof of the higheſt and nobleſt public ſpiritedneſs.

9. NEXT to theſe, thoſe who charitably contribute to the propagation of the goſpel, ſtand foremoſt in the catalogue of the public ſpirited.

10. THE

10. THE Chriſtian religion lays down the fineſt and *nobleſt rules*, and the *ſtrongeſt motives* for public ſpirit; and indeed, a ſelfiſh man cannot be a true Chriſtian.

11. SELFISHNESS is the moſt deſpicable of all human vices.

ESSAY LIII.

A *proper* TEMPER *and* CONDUCT *towards* ENEMIES.

1. OUR bleſſed Saviour has laid down an expreſs precept to his diſciples, which *ſtates* and *limits* their duties towards enemies: "But I ſay unto you "love your enemies, bleſs them that curſe you, do "good to them that hate you, and pray for them which "deſpitefully uſe you, and perſecute you," Matth. v. 44. He hath alſo enforced this precept, by giving the higheſt example of obedience to it, in his own conduct. Yet there is no precept of the goſpel, the equity of which has been more diſputed than this, and the impoſſibility of obedience to it, more ſtiffly and publicly aſſerted.

2. THE reaſon of the great reluctance of men's minds againſt this precept ſeems to be this, that malice and revenge are the moſt radical parts of the *devil's* image remaining in the minds of men, through their apoſtacy and the corruption of their nature; and *theſe* together with *miſtaken notions of ſelf-preſervation*, and *immoderate ſelf-love*, diſpoſed men to imagine, that to love an enemy is *impoſſible*, and to hate him is *juſt*.

3. BUT

3. BUT when we ſpeak of the duty of *loving enemies*, we muſt carefully diſtinguiſh between the love of *approbation* and *eſteem*, and the love of *benevolence* or *good-will*. As to the *former*, we cannot have it for one who does not appear amiable to our underſtanding, even to a child ;---but the latter we owe, and ought to pay to all men. A parent for inſtance, is far from approving a *ſtubborn*, *refractory*, *immoral* child ; yet ſtill his love of benevolence and good-will, ſhall continue in its full force and efficacy. " GOD hateth the workers of " iniquity, and is angry with the wicked every day :" He cannot therefore love them with a love of *eſteem* and *complacency* ; yet is he *good* and *kind* to the *evil* and *unthankful* ; and with ſuch a love of benevolence and beneficence did he love this *ſinful*, *inimical* world, as to give his only begotten Son to it, " that whoſoever be- " lieveth on him might not periſh, but have everlaſting " life *. Chriſt could not ſurely love with eſteem and complacency the inhabitants of *Jeruſalem*, who killed and ſtoned the prophets, and were then plotting againſt his own life without a cauſe : Yet how warmly does he expreſs his love of benevolence and beneficence to them, and even prays for his own murderers †.

4. THE *extent* and *degree* of the duties of benevolence and beneficence, either to friends or enemies, is various, according to *merit*, *circumſtances*, or *relation*. The general ſcripture rule is, " To do good to all :"--The reſtriction is, *to ſome more than to others*, according to a variety of circumſtances and conſiderations.---A good maxim in this caſe, is, to prefer *compaſſion to an enemy*, before a matter of mere *generoſity to a friend*, when we cannot exerciſe both together.

5. NEITHER

* Matth. v. 45. John iii. 16.
† Matth. xxiii. 37. Luke xix. 41, 42.——xxiii. 24.

5. NEITHER reaſon nor ſcripture requires any acts of kindneſs to our enemy, which are evidently prejudicial to our own intereſt, or which might give him an advantage over us.

6. WE ſhould *forgive*, and *do good* to enemies, after the example of GOD and *his Son* *.

7. WE ſhould forgive them, and conſequently do them good, as it is the neceſſary condition of our forgiveneſs from GOD †.

8. BY forgiving and doing good to our enemy, we heap coals of fire upon his head, and take the moſt effectual method of recovering and ſecuring his friendſhip, from the moſt winning and engaging motives.

ESSAY

* Rom. v. 6,---10. 1 John iv. 10.

† Matth. vi. 12, 14, 15.——xviii. 21, 35. Mark xi. 25, 26. Luke vi. 37.——xxiii. 34.

ESSAY LIV.

TEMPTATIONS *arising from* COMPANY.

1. IT is generally allowed, that we take in moſt temptations by the ear, or by the ſenſe of hearing; and if ſo, we are expoſed to numberleſs temptations in company: Eſpecially, if we conſider, that the eye comes in, in aid of the ear, and often helps on theſe temptations.

2. THIS is occaſioned by the univerſal corruption and degeneracy of human nature, and by the conſequent carnal, earthly, impure nature of the paſſions and affections, and the ungovernable licentiouſneſs of the tongue which is actuated by thoſe inward, irregular and impure movements of the ſoul. Human ſociety, in its preſent ſtate, may be compared to a *Hoſpital*, where all are weak and diſeaſed, and where, by a ſpreading contagion, every one more or leſs infects another, and increaſes his weakneſs and diſorder: So, that every member of it, is more or leſs infected and contaminated by others. No two can aſſociate together, who are in a ſtate of perfect health and ſoundneſs.

3. UPON the whole, the *wiſer* and *more virtuous* our company is, the leſs will we be expoſed to tempations of any kind;---and it may happen, that in many occaſional interviews with wiſe and virtuous perſons, all may, upon the whole, be made better.---This effect might be expected from religious ſocieties and conferences, were they rightly conducted.---But we now chiefly mean, the *common* and *occaſional* interviews of mankind with each other, at *entertainments*, *complimental viſits*, *parties of*

pleasure, *accidential* or *occasional rendezvous*, and the like, to which we are said to resort *for the sake of company*.

4. ONE of the first temptations arising from company, which we shall mention, is to *error*. It is scarce possible to spend an hour in any company where *religion*, *morality*, or matters of *human prudence* are the topics, but some pernicious *error* is broached and maintained by some, and imbibed and embraced by others. *False maxims* are so exceeding common in the world, and so universally espoused, and adhered to by the multitude, that it is scarce possible to steer clear of them in any company; and many of them seem, at first sight, so plausible, as well as recommended by general practice, that the weak and inconsiderate readily swallow them, and he must be a resolute person indeed, who will dare to controvert them:---For instance,---'That it is lawful to hate and persecute 'our enemy, and take private revenge. That a man is 'to study his own ease, pleasure and interest, and 'the like.' These errors though they may seem, at first sight, of little consequence, yet lead men to the most pernicious and immoral practices, and confirm them in them.

5. COMPANY tempts to *levity*. In the gaiety of conversation we are often led insensibly away from that sobriety and temperance of mind (if we may so speak) which always becomes creatures in our circumstances. *Puns*, *flashes of wit*, *humour*, and a thousand hints started in almost every mixed company, *intoxicate* and *inebriate* the mind, and render it *volatile* and *unguarded*. And this is most commonly the case, where *good nature* prevails, and *good cheer* abounds; where the minds of all are opened by mutual love and good cheer, and under no restraint or reserve. Persons in

in this ſituation are often ſo far hurried off their guard, as to violate the laws of good morals, either by bearing too hard upon the weakneſs or good nature of ſome perſon in company;---by expoſing or ridiculing ſome abſent perſon, or by ſmutty jeſts and double *entendres*, offenſive to the modeſt ear, and prejudicial to all.--- And when theſe come alſo to be aided by *immodeſt looks*, or *geſtures*, and ſo, to poiſon the *eye*, as well as the *ear*,---morality muſt receive a dangerous wound, and corruption be propagated.

6. COMPANY tempts to *profanity*. It is very ſeldom, that matters of religion are converſed of in company with *that decency* and *diſcretion* which becomes ſuch ſubjects. Scripture is often quoted with a *levity* and *indiſcretion*, which betrays a great irreverence for it. The great doctrines of religion are diſputed and controverted, with an angry warmth, or a flippant lightneſs, which tends to diſcredit them both in our own minds, and in the minds of others. The names of GOD and CHRIST, *heaven* and *hell*, *ſalvation* and *damnation*, are bandied about as the meereſt trifles. Diſreſpectful and unbelieving hints are often uttered, in the heat of paſſion and diſcontent, againſt doctrines or duties, which we do not like, and which croſs the grain of our corrupt nature: All which tend to deſtroy our reverence for holy things, and eraze the very foundations of practical ſerioufneſs and piety.

7. WE do not now ſpeak of thoſe companies and ſocieties where *profanity*, and *irreligion* are the profeſſed topics of converſation; nor of thoſe ſchools of debauchery and ſenſuality, where perſons meet for the purpoſes of *drunkenneſs* and *lewdneſs*. At ſuch places perſons ſeek temptations, and not temptations perſons. But we ſpeak of thoſe *ſocial meetings*, which are deemed *innocent*, *diverting*, and even *improving*, and of the

temptations there to be met with, and guarde
againſt.

8. COMPANY tempts to a ſinful miſpenſe of tim
in idle and unprofitable diſcourſe. The danger of com
pany would be ſtill leſs than it is, if the converſatio
could be confined to ſomething *rational* and *profitable* o
any kind, though it did not turn much on matters o
morality or religion ;---ſuch as *hiſtory*, *geography*, th
laws and cuſtoms of nations, the *improvement of trade*, *huſba*
dry, *navigation*, and the other *arts and ſciences* : But to th
ſcandal of moſt companies, the converſation generall
turns upon *mere nonſenſical bagatelles* ; degenerates int
empty chit chat upon the verieſt trifles, where the heare
have a chance to learn nothing but the moſt impert
nent nonſenſe, and where the ſpeakers muſt run int
the ſame inſipid nonſenſe, if they would be heard
Thus, much precious time is often thrown away in *tho*
idle words, for which men muſt give a ſerious accour
at the laſt day ;---that fooliſh talking and jeſting whic
is not convenient, by which guilt is contracted, and
habit of trifling acquired.

9. BACKBITING, *calumny* and *detraction*, are othe
temptations frequently met with in company. It i
of the nature of human corruption, that it drives men
from one extreme to another. If companies are not be
trayed into the *ſocial* and *good-natured vices* of *levity*, *diſſi*
pation, and *intemperate gaiety* ; or ſunk into the *ſwiniſ*
vices of debauchery, *drunkenneſs* and *lewdneſs* ; or carried
away by *impiety* and *profanity* ;---they are too generally
engaged in the dirty work of *calumny* and *detraction*
The foibles and weakneſſes of abſent perſons, are pu
in the moſt ridiculous light, and their perſons expoſed to
contempt ;---or their failings are criticiſed and magnified
and their characters maliciouſly torn to pieces. And
while appeals are every moment made to you for the

truth

truth and *justice* of these slanders, you are put to the sad necessity, either of quarrelling for your absent friend---or, which is far more common, of hearing him traduced in silence, and perhaps, through a weak complaisance, joining issue with the slanderer, and granting things to the disadvantage of an innocent, injured person, which your conscience does not approve.

10. THE best methods of shunning the temptations arising from company, are, (1.) For ordinary to frequent and associate with the best companies : For, man being a social creature, cannot well be wholly without company.---(2.) When we accidentally or on business fall into company of a worse kind, to endeavour as far as our influence will reach, to give the conversation a profitable, or, at least, an innocent turn and direction.---(3.) Where we cannot do this, to be on our guard against unworthy compliances, and to discountenance, as far as we can, trifling, profanity and immorality.---(4.) If we find ourselves unable to do this, and that we are in danger of sinful compliances, to make our stay as short as possible.---(5.) To make reflections after retiring, on the temptations we have met with, and to fortify our minds against future dangers of the same kind.---(6.) To shun, if possible, for the future, those companies, or kinds of company, in which we have met with temptations too strong for our virtue and resolution : And, (7.) which ought to have been mentioned *first*, To aim our prayers and endeavours against the temptations of society, and especially of those companies, which, by the nature of our situation or business in life, we are obliged most commonly to frequent.

11. SOLITUDE, and a sequestered retirement, as we shall see anon, is no security against temptations ; and man

man, a ſociable creature, could never be deſigned fo it.

ESSAY LV.

TEMPTATIONS *arising from* SOLITUDE.

1. ALTHOUGH a ſocial life, or a life ſpent in company, has its ſnares and dangers, yet it has its advantages too; and the ſociety of our fellow-creatures, well conducted, may contribute greatly to our improvement in virtue and happineſs. How many noble and uſeful hints are often ſtarted in converſation, which we would have laboured for in vain in the way of private meditation? How many motives to virtue, and diſſuaſives againſt vice? How often has a tottering reſolution been ſupported and ſtrengthened by a ſingle word; by a ſingle look or frown?

2. NOR need we imagine, that we can flee from the danger of temptation, by ſhunning the ſociety of our fellow-creatures; for, there are a number of temptations which ſeem almoſt peculiar to *ſolitude*, and which will purſue us to the moſt remote and hidden receſſes.

3. As GOD hath made man a *ſocial creature*, and endowed him with *ſocial bents*, it appears he is chiefly deſigned for a *ſocial*, *active* life, to give aſſiſtance to, and receive aſſiſtance from his fellow-creatures; and therefore, that it is not the duty of men to ſeek and affect ſolitude and retirement, unleſs it be ocaſionally, for the purpoſes of meditation, ſelf-examination, extraordinary prayer and devotion.

4. IF

4. IF it be the intention of GOD, that men ſhould live in ſociety, and employ their ſocial powers and talents for the purpoſes of devotion; we may well ſuppoſe that a *monkiſh, recluſe* life, is againſt the intention of GOD, and that he may juſtly give over men to ſtrong temptations, who thus affect a kind of life, ſo contrary to the end and deſign of their being.

5. IT has been obſerved, that the firſt *hermits* and *recluſes*, did greatly corrupt Chriſtianity; and that the monks and nuns of later ages, have been, generally ſpeaking, a very wicked kind of people, infamous for many great vices: For, by binding themſelves up under ſolemn vows, to auſterities which GOD never enjoined, their corruptions have been the more outrageous, and they have been ſuffered to fall into the vileſt abominations.

6. IT is remarkable, that the *devil* purſued our Saviour to a wilderneſs, where he thought he could more effectually ply his temptations againſt him, than in the ſociety of men. And the evil ſpirit, in the parable, who left the poſſeſſed man, is ſaid to have wandered in *ſolitary* and *dry places*, where he conſorted with many other ſpirits. Nor is it unworthy of a remark here, that if there is any truth in *witchcraft*, and the pranks and illuſions of evil ſpirits, they have generally prevailed in places *little frequented* and *thinly peopled*, and have fled places of concourſe in the ſociety of men.

7. SOLITUDE often tempts men to ſins, through the advantage of ſecrecy, which they would be aſhamed to practiſe in human ſociety.

8. SOLITUDE naturally generates melancholy, and clouds the mind with gloomy thoughts; thereby darkening and ſpoiling the judgment.

9. RECLUSES, as they have little ſociety with the world, and know little of the force of theſe temptations which

which accompany a ſocial life, ſo they are naturally prone to an over-rigid, uncharitable diſpoſition of mind, and cenſorious reflections on the actions and conduct of thoſe who are engaged in active, ſocial life.

10. THE *devil*, ever vigilant and active to ſeduce rational creatures, when he cannot get the advantage over them, by the temptations which ariſe from ſociety, often drives them into ſullen ſolitude; puts them out of temper with the world, and the proper duties of life, and there purſues them with *blaſphemous ſuggeſtions*, *unclean thoughts*, and *deſperate reſolutions*. And it has been generally obſerved, that thoſe whom he drives to *ſelf-murder*, have been long haters of ſociety, and lovers of ſolitude and retirement.

11. UPON the whole. To ſhun ſociety leſt we fall into temptation, is not only rank cowardice, but alſo very abſurd. There are proper times and occaſions when we ſhould ſeek ſolitude, and when retirement is both neceſſary and uſeful; but we ſhould conſider the proper duties of our ſtations as *men* and *Chriſtians*, and never fly ſociety when we have a chance of either doing or getting good by it.

ESSAY

ESSAY LVI.

How far CHRISTIANS *are obliged to recede from their proper Rights, and deny themſelves ſome lawful Enjoyments and Amuſements, out of Charity to their weak Brethren, and that they may not lay a Stumbling-block before them.*

1. CHRISTIANS, as ſuch, are not abridged of any *natural* or *acquired right* as *men* and *citizens*; nor does their religion forbid them any lawful and innocent enjoyment, or gratification of life, provided it does not fall directly in the way of ſome duty of religion, for which it ought to be denied for a time*.

2. NOT only have Chriſtians *ſuch liberty in the* LORD, but it is often their duty to plead for, vindicate and aſſert this liberty, againſt thoſe who would diſpute or infringe it; even while, for prudential reaſons, or for conſcience ſake, they may ſee it expedient to recede from it, and give it up.

3. THE Apoſtle, however, gives an important caution in this matter †: "But take heed, leſt by any "means, this liberty of yours become a ſtumbling-"block to them that are weak." It is certain, therefore, that this Chriſtian liberty of ours, may in ſome inſtances, be uſed to very bad purpoſes; and things which are lawful in themſelves, are not lawful to *all men*, nor *at all times*,---but ought to be forborn, when, through the ignorance or weakneſs of our Chriſtian brother, they may be a means of offending

 him,

* 1 Cor. ix. 3,---7.
† 1 Cor. viii. 9.

him, or leading him into guilt. *St. Paul* ſpeaks o
a *power* or *liberty* which he and the other Chriſtian
had, to do many things, and yet adds,---" Neverthe
" leſs we have not uſed this power, but ſuffer all things
" leſt we ſhould hinder the goſpel of Chriſt *."

4. THERE are, it ſeems, ſome inſtances, wherein th
uſe and exerciſe of our Chriſtian liberty, may *deſtroy*
weak and *ignorant brother*. *St. Paul*, ſpeaking of meat
forbidden by the law of *Moſes*, declares the power an
liberty which Chriſtians have to uſe them freely: "
" know, ſays he, and am perſuaded by the Lord Jeſus
" that there is nothing unclean of itſelf;"---yet h
adds---" But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat
" now walkeſt thou not charitably.---Deſtroy not him
" with thy meat for whom Chriſt died:---For, through
" thy knowledge (of thy Chriſtian liberty, and uſe o
" it) ſhall the weak brother periſh, for whom Chriſ
" died: For, when we ſin ſo againſt the brethren, and
" wound their weak conſcience, we ſin againſt Chriſt
" ---Let no man put a ſtumbling-block, or an occa-
" ſion to fall, in his brother's way. It is good nei-
" ther to eat fleſh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing
" whereby thy brother ſtumbleth, or is offended, or is
" made weak. But let us follow after the things
" which make for peace, and things wherewith one
" may edify another †."

5.---(1.) THIS Chriſtian liberty of ours is never to
be given up merely to pleaſe, humour, and gratify
ſome at the expence of *others*. This was the cauſe of
Peter's baſe diſſimulation, for which his brother *Paul*
withſtood him to his face, and on account of which he
declared, " that he walked not uprightly according to
" the truth of the goſpel ‡."

6.---(2.) OUR

* 1 Cor. ix. 12.
† See Rom. xiv. and 1 Cor. viii.
‡ See Gal. ii. 11,---14.

6.---(2.) OUR Chriſtian liberty is by no means to be betrayed or given up, in order to eſcape perſecution. This treachery ſeems to have been the chief crime of the *Judaizing teachers*, who urged it upon the Gentile converts to be circumciſed, and who themſelves obſerved all the ceremonies of the Jewiſh law, that they might paſs for *Jews*, with the Jewiſh and Heathen perſecutors, under that pretext; and for which *St. Paul*, ſo ſeverely reproaches them and their followers *.--- And indeed, all perſecution for religion, and among Chriſtians, is founded on ſome incroachment on Chriſtian liberty,---or on impoſing ſome things on the conſcience inconſiſtent with it.

7.---(3.) OUR Chriſtian liberty ſhould not be given up to meer peeviſhneſs, humour and caprice. Many perſons who know, or ought to know the extent of Chriſtian liberty, are yet ſo unreaſonable in their humours, or unhappy in their temper, that they will not allow to others the ſame innocent liberties which they allow to themſelves. Or, while they themſelves *ſwallow a camel*, they loſe all charity and temper with their brother, if he does not *ſtrain at a gnat*. Now, to endeavour to pleaſe ſuch perſons to their good unto edifying, is to aim at an impoſſibility. Caprice and contradictory humour can never be pleaſed, never be edified. Indeed, every attempt to pleaſe it, is to increaſe the diſorder, and to ſtrengthen its petulancy.

8. OUR Chriſtian liberty ought to be vindicated and adhered to reſolutely, where the giving it up is like to be hurtful to the ſouls of men, and the intereſts of religion, by propagating *idolatry* and *ſuperſtition*. And in this caſe, perſons of the greateſt note and weight in the church, ſhould be ready to ſuffer all things, rather than

* See Gal. ii. 1,---6.——iii. 1,---4.——v. 1,---13.

give it up by baſe compliance. This was *Archbiſhop Cranmer's* crime. Reformation in religion, and ſeparation from idolatrous and ſuperſtitious communities, can never be accompliſhed or juſtified, but on this principle. Upon this foundation is built the *proteſtant reformation*, and thoſe proteſtants who ſtill labour to reduce Chriſtianity to its original and native ſimplicity, act very commendably on this principle, and will ever be had in eſteem by the proper judges and true friends of Chriſtian liberty.

9. CHRISTIAN liberty, is in many caſes to be given up in compaſſion to the ignorance and inveterate prejudices of others, until this ignorance and theſe prejudices can be removed. The apoſtolic decree * was made on this account; and the Jewiſh converts were allowed to have their children circumciſed, and to abſtain from certain meats, and to obſerve certain legal ceremonies, until they would be better inſtructed in the principles of their Chriſtian liberty:---Whereas, the Gentile or Heathen converts were not indulged in theſe matters, as they had no inveterate prejudices of education in their favour †.

10. OUR Chriſtian liberty ought perhaps in many caſes to be given up in favour of *incurable weakneſs*, eſpecially where it is *general*. Suppoſe a whole neighbourhood of weak of Chriſtians had got it their heads, from the apoſtolic decree, that it was ſinful to eat blood, or things ſtrangled; or, from any other means were perſuaded, that it was an unpardonable crime to eat with unwaſhen hands, or to ſhave their heads or beards, or any other whimſy; it would perhaps become the

* Acts xv. 22.

† See the whole Epiſtle to the Galatians, compared with Acts xvi. 1,---3.——xxi. 17,---28.

the duty of an intelligent Chriſtian, living among them, and who could not reaſon them out of their ſuperſtition, to comform to theſe cuſtoms and uſages, leſt he might, by his example, induce ſome of theſe poor people to act againſt their conſciences, and ſo to contract guilt. This is that giving up of Chriſtian liberty which is plead for by *St. Paul* *.

11. BUT if ſuch a community ſhould hold it ſinful to marry; or to worſhip GOD in public aſſemblies (as the *Familiſts* and *Brownifts*); or to receive the ſacraments (as the *Quakers*); or ſhould inſiſt on the neceſſity of doing ſomething *forbidden by* GOD, or of omitting ſomething commanded by him; in theſe caſes we ought not to comply, but inſiſt on our Chriſtian liberty.

12. MANY things which are ſimply lawful in themſelves, yet becauſe of the abuſes made of them, ought to be ſhunned and denied by Chriſtians. There can be no moral evil in often viſiting a tavern, or a houſe of infamous report, ſuppoſing there is no ill deſign, or ill practice; nay, perhaps, it may be done with the beſt views and from the beſt motives: Yet, becauſe of the ſcandal that might attend this practice, it might be beſt to refrain it. I know not whether *card-playing* and *dancing* may not be perfectly innocent in themſelves; yet if theſe practices are generally abuſed, it were beſt to diſcountenance and refrain them.

13. THE general rule ſeems to be this, that wherever the uſe of our Chriſtian liberty, has a direct tendency to hurt the ſouls of others (unleſs in ſome capital point where it ought not, and cannot with ſafety be given up) it is beſt to forego it and recede from it; for, our neighbour's good and edification is a charity we owe him. But, as all things may be abuſed to evil purpoſes,

* Rom. xiv. and 1 Cor. viii. and ix.

purpoſes, ſo may the lawful uſe of our Chriſtian liberty. And after all, *prudence* and *diſcretion* muſt be the umpires in this matter.

ESSAY LVII.

What DIVERSIONS *are lawful, and the* WAY *to regulate them.*

1. THE beſt moraliſts have condemned ſome faſhionable diverſions, as unlawful in themſelves. Such are games of *hazard*, and ſucceſs in which depends in a great meaſure on *lottery*, ſuch as *cards, dice*, &c. &c.

2. IF there are any other diverſions which are either directly ſinful in themſelves, or lead unavoidably to the corruption of manners, theſe are wholly out of the queſtion at preſent, as being in themſelves unlawful, and therefore forbidden to Chriſtians; ſuch as rioting and drunkenneſs, chambering and wantonneſs, impure dalliances, laſciviouſneſs, effeminacy, &c.

3. OF *lawful diverſions*, ſome are calculated to exerciſe the body, and thoſe are beſt ſuited to ſedentary perſons, whoſe callings afford them too little exerciſe for the purpoſes of health; ſuch as *running*, *walking*, *leaping*, *fencing*, and all thoſe plays or diverſions which give motion and exerciſe to the body, and tend to circulate the blood, and promote digeſtion and perſpiration. Others are calculated to recreate and unbend the mind, ſuch are *cheſs*, and a number of others; and theſe ſeem beſt adapted for thoſe who live an active, laborious, fatiguing life.

4. THE

4. THE very words, *diverſions* and *amuſements*, point out the uſe and deſign of theſe paſtimes. They are only intended to unbend the mind, and refreſh the body and animal ſpirits, that thoſe who uſe them may be the better fitted and qualified to diſcharge the ſerious, neceſſary and important buſineſſes of life; the care of the ſoul and of the body.

5. FROM this notion of *diverſions*, *amuſements* or *recreations*, we may learn many important leſſons about the right choice, uſe and regulation of them. As,

(1.) IT is evident, that a life ſpent in a continual, or almoſt perpetual round of diverſions, muſt be a *wicked, ill ſpent* life. This is wholly to miſemploy life, and neglect the proper buſineſs of it; and that too, under the wicked notion, that it is innocent, proper and beneficial to do ſo.

(2.) IF diverſion or amuſement may be properly conſidered as the *phyſic of life*, by which the diſorders of the body and mind, contracted by an intenſe application to the ſerious and proper buſineſs of it, are relieved and cured, and their vigour, ſprightlineſs and activity reſtored, for a freſh application: Then, to ſpend one's life in a perpetual round of diverſions, is as abſurd and preposterous, as though a perſon, neglecting all food, ſhould live wholly upon phyſic, under a pretence of preſerving his health and vigour.

(3.) IF habits are contracted by repeated acts; then a life ſpent in giddy diverſions and amuſements, muſt in courſe of time ſo relax and effeminate both the body and mind, as to render them wholly unfit for any application to the ſerious and important buſineſſes of life; muſt beget an inveterate habit of the worſt kind of idleneſs; and, in fine, muſt turn perſons, thus devoted to diverſions, into meer *whirligigs* and *uſeleſs drones*, burdens and nuiſances to ſociety. A life of perpetual di-

verſion,

verſion, is a life of perpetual intoxication; and perſon devoted to it, are generally the moſt uſeleſs and miſchievous members of ſociety. Witneſs perpetual dancers and gameſters.

(4.) WHEN diverſions are turned into the conſtant buſineſs of life, they wholly change their nature, and loſe their good effects; they are ſo far from unbending the mind, that they become its only burden; they are ſo far from recreating and refreſhing the body, that they fatigue it, and exhauſt the animal ſpirits; they are ſo far from rendering the body vigorous, and the mind chearful, that they injure the health and ſink the ſpirits. This is, with a witneſs, to make a toil of a pleaſure, and to turn that cordial drop, which makes life's bitter draught go glibly down, into a *rank* and *deleterious poiſon.*

(5.) IF the proper deſign of diverſions is, by refreſhing the body and recreating the mind, to render both more lively and vigorous, and thereby fit them for a more vigorous application to the proper, neceſſary and important duties of life; then all ſuch diverſions and amuſements as evidently tend to hurt the body or the mind, and obſtruct the proper end of diverſions, muſt needs be unlawful and ſinful: And the ſame will hold true of lawful and innocent diverſions continued too long at a time. Although *gaming* were innocent in itſelf, yet it were extremely unlawful to ſpend whole weeks, night and day, in that diverſion, to the breaking of natural reſt, and thereby hurting both the body and mind, and to the neglect of all duties, civil, ſocial and religious. Although *dancing* may be innocent in itſelf, yet to ſpend whole nights in that exerciſe, to the fatiguing of the body, neglecting all the duties of the family and cloſet, and unfitting perſons for the proper buſineſs of the next day, is certainly criminal and unlawful.

ful.---For a poor man, whoſe family calls for all his time and labour to clothe and feed them, to ſpend *one day*, much more, *ſeveral days* in diverſions, is a ſin againſt *juſtice*, *charity* and *mercy*.

6. DIVERSIONS which may be innocent and lawful to *ſome*, and in *certain circumſtances*, may be yet unlawful to *others*, and in certain *different circumſtances*. As, (1.) It may not be abſolutely unlawful in a Chriſtian, to amuſe himſelf by playing an *innocent game*, or playing on a *muſical inſtrument*, or *walking*, or *riding*, or, perhaps dancing;---yet to mix with *ſwearing*, *drinking*, or *profane* company for the ſake of partaking in theſe amuſements, as it would be extremely *indecent*, ſo it would alſo be very *criminal*; as it would ſhew, that this *love of pleaſure* was ſuperior to his *averſion to vice* and *evil example*;---and as his example in this particular inſtance, would look like a giving a ſanction to the vices of his company.---(2.) To perſons who find, that by any particular diverſions and amuſements, they are ſtrongly tempted to ſin; ſuch *diverſions* or *amuſements* muſt needs be extremely ſinful:---Thus, ſuppoſing *dancing* and *gaming* to be *innocent* and *inoffenſive* in themſelves, yet to perſons who, by the one, are tempted to *fret*, *ſwear* and *cheat*; or who, by the other, are tempted to *other ſins*, theſe diverſions muſt be *highly criminal*.---(3.) Where any particular diverſion, though innocent in itſelf, is greatly abuſed in a place, and madly purſued by the inhabitants, to the prejudice of *induſtry* and *good morals*; Chriſtians ought not only to *abſtain from*, but alſo *bear a teſtimony againſt* ſuch diverſions, ſo abuſed, for the good of ſociety.---(4.) Diverſions which may be innocent in themſelves, may change their nature and become exceeding criminal, either by being *miſtimed*, or *too long continued*. For inſtance, to indulge to amuſements on the *Sabbath-day*, or in a time of *public diſtreſs* or *calamity*

which calls for conſideration, mourning, prayer and repentance;--or, to indulge to diverſions and amuſements, when *juſtice*, *charity* and *mercy* call us to *other* and *more important* buſineſs, is doubtleſs *very ſinful*. Or when, (as was obſerved above) we ſquander much of our precious time in trifling amuſements, and make them the *buſineſs of life*; this is to act the part of the *wicked* and *unprofitable ſervant*, who was juſtly condemned to outer darkneſs.

7. A LIFE ſpent in giddy diverſions, is utterly incompatible with the hopes of ſalvation; being inconſiſtent with a *due* and *ſerious concern* either for the *ſoul* or the *body*; for ourſelves, or for others.

8. IT might be a good touch-ſtone for ſuch diverſions as are *ſuitable* and *becoming* for Chriſtians; to try within ourſelves whether we could ſeriouſly aſk GOD's bleſſing upon them; or quit them at an inſtant, and addreſs ourſelves to GOD in ſolemn prayer: For, as it is our duty always to watch and pray, leſt we enter into temptation, and to be ever in a poſture of readineſs to meet the ſummons of death in the way of our duty; and as we know not the moment we may be called to give an account of our ſtewardſhip, all diverſions inconſiſtent with this frame of mind, ſeem improper for Chriſtians.

9. To render diverſions or amuſements *lawful*, they muſt have theſe properties:---(1.) They muſt be *innocent* in themſelves:---(2.) They muſt be *decent* and of *good repute*, or ſuch as the generality of good people have not condemned (and this will cut off *card-playing*, and almoſt all *games of hazard*, more eſpecially *all gaming for money*, from the liſt of innocent diverſions):---(3.) They ought to be ſuch as are not of pernicious conſequence, by the bad regulation and abuſe of them in the places where we live:---(4.) No more of our precious

cious time ſhould be conſumed by them, than is barely neceſſary for the purpoſe of recreation; nor ſhould they be oftener uſed than is needful, leſt the mind be intoxicated by them, and led off from more important matters, by contracting a habit of trifling and levity:---(5.) They ſhould be ſuch as we find by experience are not attended with ſtrong temptations to ourſelves, and as have no ſenſible tendency to draw off our minds from the duties of religion, or from the neceſſary and important duties of life. Upon the whole, they ſhould be ſuch, and ſo uſed and regulated as not to excite any remorſe of conſcience in a ſenſible, ſerious and tender mind.

10. THOUGH it does not ſeem reaſonable, or conſiſtent with the preſent frail and imperfect ſtate of human nature, to forbid all kinds of worldly amuſements and recreations, as *unlawful*, yet to perſons of a right way of thinking, and of a ſpiritual and refined taſte; theſe kinds of diverſions will he found *very little neceſſary*; and the very duties of religion, ſuch as *reading*, *ſinging of pſalms* with melody in the heart, *meditation* and *contemplation* on the works and ways of GOD, *religious conference*, and *doing good offices* to the ſouls and bodies of men, will furniſh pleaſures and delights, far preferable to any that can reſult from worldly pleaſures and amuſements.

11. IN ſhort, the faſhionable diverſions are attended with ſo many ſnares and dangers to virtue and innocence, and, at the beſt, are ſuch *thieves of precious time*, that thoſe diſcover the *ſoundeſt judgment* who have the leaſt taſte and fondneſs for them, and who leaſt frequent and join in them.

12. RELIGION promiſes the *higheſt* and *nobleſt comforts and pleaſures*, and thoſe who betray too fond a deſire for worldly pleaſures and diverſions, either prove that

they have never experienced the pleasures of religion, or, by their conduct, persuade the world, that the others are *equally necessary* and *agreeable*.

13. THE *devil*, by a surprizing dexterity, has turned some of the most solemn periods of life, into seasons devoted to the madest riot and giddy diversion; witness our *birth-days*, and the *first day of every New Year*.

ESSAY LVIII.

The VALUE *and* IMPORTANCE *of a* CHILD.

1. IMMORTALITY has stamped an amazing value on man. No conscious being, who is capable of eternal happiness or misery, can possibly be *unimportant* or *of little account*. Man, who carries about with him a *rational, undying* soul, little knows or considers of what a treasure he is possessed. All the beauties, all the riches, all the stupendous wonders of material nature are, in comparison with it, less than nothing, and vanity! If man considered this, would it not be more his endeavour to act up to the dignity of his nature? Would he not be ashamed of *base, mean* and *ignoble* actions, which vilify and debase his real importance, and degrade him below his rank in the universe?

2. THE moment in which a rational, immortal spirit animates a human *fœtus*, a spark is kindled which shall never be extinguished. The material sun will grow old, wax dim with years, and be probably put out as a lamp that burneth; the stars shall fall from their orbits, and be

be covered with darkneſs; but this breath of the Almighty, this intellectual ſpark once kindled up in the moral world, ſhall burn on with undiminiſhed and ever-increaſing luſtre, as long as GOD himſelf endures.

3. THE birth of a child we deem to be but a trifling event, and look with *indifference*, perhaps with *contempt*, on the little, helpleſs ſtranger. But if we viewed it with the penetrating eye of reaſon; if we conſidered it as emerging from eternal night into life immortal;---as an heir of worlds unknown, and a candidate for an everlaſting ſtate;---as a glimmering ſpark of being, juſt ſtruck from nothing by the all-creating rock, which muſt burn and flame on to eternity, when ſuns and ſtars have returned to their native darkneſs or non-entity;---which muſt ſurvive the funeral of nature, and live through the rounds of endleſs ages; which muſt either riſe from glory to glory, aſcending perfection's ſcale by endleſs gradations, or ſink deeper and deeper into the bottomleſs abyſs of miſery, and to which its immortality muſt either prove an *unſufferable curſe*,---or a *bleſſing inconceivable*, according to the manner in which it ſhall have acquitted itſelf in its preſent probationary ſtate---we ſhall clearly diſcern, that the value and importance of a human infant can ſcarcely be computed.

4. To illuſtrate this thought, let us briefly conſider, *The evil* or *good* which may be either *done* or *received* by a child, in the courſe of its exiſtence. And,

(1.) PERHAPS this child is an *embrio-fiend*. Knoweſt thou, O man, O parent, to what this child is born? Of what this child is capable? It is now a pitiable, helpleſs infant, but if thou kneweſt the enormous ſins and dreadful ſufferings with which its future exiſtence is pregnant, and moſt of them probably through thy own ſinful example and guilty neglect, thou wouldſt be ſo far from rejoicing at its birth, that thou wouldſt weep

and

and lament for the miſeries which are coming upon it and upon thyſelf for thy neglect of the duties which thou oweſt it. Perhaps thou haſt never prayed that GOD might ſanctify this child while in the womb. It has been indeed baptized; but haſt thou ever offered up one fervent prayer for it ſince it has been born? Haſt thou offered it up to the holy Trinity by faith, and with that ſolemnity which the baptiſmal dedication requires? Inſtead of ſetting before it a pious and virtuous example, teaching it to pray, inſpiring it with a horror againſt vice, inſtilling into its tender opening mind, the principles of piety and good morals, correcting its errors, and reſtraining its paſſions and appetites, haſt thou not ſet before it the very worſt example---taught it the language of blaſphemy and profanity, foſtered every malignant paſſion, and cheriſhing every budding vice in its ſoul? And what is the conſequence? It grows up a monſter of wickedneſs, a *devil incarnate*. It ſpreads the baneful contagion of vice as far as its influence can reach; becomes the *tempter*, the *devil* of every company; the ſpoiler and obſtructer of all good! How many of its fellow-immortals has it drawn into guilt and miſery? Perhaps it at length becomes infamous for wickedneſs, and blots the annals of hiſtory with a character diſgraceful to human nature, and with crimes before *unparalelled, unheard of!* And O who can deſcribe the miſeries which await it in a ſtate of retribution? The *Neros*, the *Herods*, the *tyrants*, the *ſcourges* of the earth, were once helpleſs infants!

(2.) PERHAPS this child is an *embrio-angel*. Knoweſt thou, O man, O parent, to what this child is born, of what this child is capable? It has been the child of thy prayers and vows. Thou haſt ſolemnly given it up to GOD in baptiſm, and he has graciouſly accepted the ſurrender. It is thy conſtant ſolicitous care to recommend

mend it daily to the guidance and protection of its Father in heaven; to set a blamelefs, pious and virtuous example before it; to inftil into its tender opening mind the principles of piety, integrity and univerfal goodnefs. Indulgent heaven fmiles on thine endeavours and renders them fuccefsful by the concurring aids of omnipotent grace. The feed of knowledge and of grace fo liberally fown, will prefently grow up into a plenteous harveft of ufefulnefs here and glory hereafter. The child, like the holy child JESUS, will grow up in knowledge, as in ftature, and in favour both with GOD and *man*. The implanted principle of grace, fhall be in him a well of water, fpringing up into everlafting life *. He fhall bring forth much fruit to the glory of GOD, and to the good of his fellow mortals. Every day will bring him fome good, or make him the inftrument of fome good to his fellow men. Nor fhall his progrefs in holinefs and happinefs be terminated by this mortal life, but probably go on through eternal ages. In a word, who can conceive the good of which fuch a child may be made the inftrument, or the degrees of happinefs and of glory to which it may be advanced? St. *Paul*, and all thofe worthies under the *Patriarchal*, *Mofaical* and *Chriftian* difpenfations, who wrought fo much good in the world, and who now fhine in fuch fuperior orbs of glory, were once *feeble*, *defpifed infants!* May I fpeak it with propriety on this occafion, The bleffed JESUS was once a child!

5. SINCE *fuch* therefore, is the *amazing importance* of a child, why fhould we wonder, that JESUS took up fuch in his arms and bleffed them, declaring, that of fuch was the kingdom of heaven? Why fhould we wonder, that their guardian angels continually behold the face of our Father in heaven? Why fhould we wonder, that fuch a ftrefs is laid on their education in the holy

* John iv. 14.

holy ſcriptures, and that our riſen aſcending Lord ſhould have given it ſo particularly in charge to his Apoſtle *Peter*, to be peculiarly attentive to this, as one of the higheſt proofs of his love to him: *Simon Peter loveſt thou me? Feed my lambs* *.

6. IF *ſuch* is the *value* and *importance* of children, can *parents*, can *maſters*, can the *clergy* ever be ſufficiently attentive to the unſpeakable important buſineſs of their religious education?

7. PARENTS, more eſpecially, are obliged to this duty by a number of the weightieſt motives and conſiderations. (1.) They have been the immediate inſtruments of bringing their children into a tempting, inſnaring world, and have tranſmitted to them an hereditary taint of corruption, the ſeed of guilt and of miſery. (2.) Providence has ſo ordered it, that children are long continued in a helpleſs ſtate under the care of their parents, that they may have a ſufficient time and opportunity to form them for uſefulneſs in this life, and glory in that which is to come; and has implanted a ſtrong *ſtorge* or *natural affection* in their hearts towards their children, which ſhould powerfully prompt them to this duty. (3.) Their own comfort and the good of human ſociety, ſhould alſo powerfully incline parents to cultivate the minds and hearts of their children with the greateſt aſſiduity.

8. THREE things ſeem of prime importance in the education of children, *inſtruction*, *government* and *example*.

(1.) INSTRUCTION ſhould be begun as ſoon as children are capable of receiving it, which is generally very early in life. The plaineſt and moſt practical truths ſhould firſt be inſtilled into the tender minds of children, and that in the plaineſt and moſt familiar manner, with ſuch

* Matth. xviii. 10. Mark x. 16. John xxi. 15.

ſuch a *ſerioufneſs* and *ſolemnity* as is not forbidding and diſguſting, but which may rather convey *pleaſure* and *amuſement* to the mind. And parents ought to improve their own underſtandings, that they may be better qualified properly to inſtruct their children; which is no eaſy taſk to the wiſeſt.

(2.) IN the article of government, parents ſhould attentively ſtudy the tempers and diſpoſitions of their children; as upon ſome ingenious tempers, gentle reproofs will have a better effect than ſtripes, and with others it is abſolutely neceſſary to uſe *ſevere reproof*, and the *rod of correction*. In government, it is beſt to begin with mildneſs in all children, as correction is a duty which is managed well with great difficulty: When correction is found neceſſary, it ſhould not be inflicted *raſhly*, without duly weighing the *nature* of the crime and its true *demerit*. The greateſt ſeverity in puniſhing ſhould be for *immoralities*; *indiſcretions* ſhould be paſſed over with a light correction. A child ſhould never be puniſhed for *dullneſs* or other *natural infirmities*. In correcting no ſigns of *revenge* or *violent paſſion* ſhould ever appear, but the child who is corrected ſhould be made ſenſible, that it is done with reluctance, and purely for its own good; and much care ſhould be taken, to give it a deep conviction of the evil of the crime, for which it is chaſtiſed.

(3.) ALL the inſtructions and corrections of parents will avail nothing, but rather make matters worſe, if their *examples* are *vicious* and *immoral*.

ESSAY LIX.

THE CONSTRAINTS OF CHRIST'S LOVE;

A

SERMON

FROM

2. CORINTHIANS v. 13, 14.

For whether we be beſide ourſelves, it is to GOD: *Or whether we be ſober, it is for your cauſe. For the love of* CHRIST *conſtraineth us.*

IT ſeems evident by the whole tenor of this epiſtle, that the holy and zealous Apoſtle had not a few enemies in the church of *Corinth*, and thoſe too ſuch as he might leaſt of all have expected---his fellow profeſſors and fellow-teachers of chriſtianity. Theſe vainglorious teachers, inſtead of building upon the Apoſtle's foundation, and ſupporting and confirming his authority over his beloved converts, endeavoured by every trick of artifice and calumny to overturn and ſubvert it. They repreſented him to the *Corinthians* as mean and contemptible, as light and inconſtant, as proud, overbearing and imperious, as a ſubverter of the law, yea, as a downright *mad-man*. They put a bad conſtruction on all his words and actions, preferred themſelves before

fore him, and endeavoured by every art to raiſe their own credit on the ruins of his apoſtolical authority and reputation.

SUCH treatment as this could not but greatly affect the good Apoſtle, not only as it tended to cool and weaken the affections of his beloved Corinthian converts towards him; but more eſpecially, as it was likely to prejudice their minds againſt the important doctrines of the goſpel which he had, with great labour, zeal and ſincerity, preached amongſt them. And hence it is, that we find ſo great a part of this epiſtle employed in *St. Paul's* vindication of his own character and conduct, as an Apoſtle of CHRIST;---in reclaiming the *Corinthian* church from an undue attachment to theſe Judaizing teachers,---and in rekindling proper regards to thoſe diſtinguiſhing and unadulterated doctrines of the goſpel, which he had, in the courſe of his miniſtry, propagated amongſt them.

As that peculiar *fervency* and *ardour* with which this eloquent Apoſtle of the Gentiles proſecuted the goſpel miniſtry, ſeems to be one of the great quarrels which his enemies had againſt him, he makes a noble and ſpirited apology to the Corinthians for his conduct in this reſpect, from the 10th verſe to the end of the chapter; alledging the *grandeur* and *importance* of the doctrines which the goſpel reveals, as a ſufficient reaſon for the greateſt poſſible zeal and importunity of addreſs.

AT the *tenth verſe* he had laid down the certainty of a future judgment, in which all men muſt appear before the tribunal of CHRIST, to receive, every one, according to the deeds done in the body, whether good or bad. And this he alledges as one powerful reaſon and motive of zeal and fervor in the goſpel miniſtry: *Knowing therefore*, ſays he, *the terrors of the* LORD, *we perſuade men*; that is, being firmly aſſured of a ſtrict and im-

partial judgment, and its awful conſequences---of that eternal and irreverſible ſentence of condemnation which ſhall then paſs upon all finally unbelieving ſinners, and which ſhall fill their ſouls with unſpeakable terror and endleſs deſpair, we uſe every argument and every art of addreſs to perſuade men ;---to *urge*, and, if poſſible, to *engage*, them to eſcape the terrors of that day, by a timous application to CHRIST, and a ſincere repentance.

AND as ſome of theſe enemies, had probably unjuſtly charged him with a vain-glorious applauding, or commending of himſelf in his former epiſtle, he wipes off this aſſertion by telling them, that what he had been obliged to ſay of this kind, was only in his own neceſſary defence, and to furniſh his friends with a ſuitable anſwer to his cenſorious and hypocritical enemies : For, ſays he, " We commend not ourſelves again unto you, " but give you occaſion to glory on our behalf, that " you may have ſomewhat to anſwer them which glory " in appearance, and not in heart;" *i. e.* who ſeem outwardly to glory and triumph over us, although inwardly they are *ſelf-condemned*, and are conſcious, that they have no reaſon to glory againſt us.

IN the words of our text the Apoſtle ſtill continues to vindicate himſelf, and ſuggeſts a *farther* and *ſtill more powerful* motive of his zeal and earneſtneſs in the work of the miniſtry : For, ſays he, " whether we be beſide " ourſelves, it is to GOD : Or whether we be ſober, it " is for your cauſe; for the love of CHRIST conſtraineth " us." As though he had ſaid ; ' If, to *cold* and *indif-* ' *ferent* ſpectators, who are not actuated by the ſame ' motives, and have not the ſame view and ſenſe of di- ' vine things as we the Apoſtles have, we ſhould ſeem ' to ſpeak and act with a degree of zeal bordering upon ' frenzy or enthuſiaſm, and to be tranſported beyond

' our

'our *natural ſelves*---beyond the cold meaſures of hu-
'man prudence or diſcretion---it is a *zeal for the glory of*
'GOD which animates us and produces theſe *extraordi-*
'*nary effects* :---Or if, on the other hand, we be *ſober*,
'and proſecute all the arts of calm and diſpaſſionate
'reaſoning to convince ſinners, and lead them to GOD
'through CHRIST, it is *for your ſakes* we take ſuch ſerious
'pains, in a matter which ſo nearly concerns your high-
'eſt intereſts. So, that *love to* GOD, and *benevolence to*
'*men*, are the two grand principles by which we are ac-
'tuated, and well may we be zealous in ſo good a
'cauſe ; *for the love of* CHRIST *conſtraineth us*---That un-
'paralelled love of his, manifeſted in the redemption
'of a guilty world ;---that love which engaged him to
'die for a loſt and dead world ; a world of creatures
'who were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins ; void of ſpiri-
'tual life, and under the condemnatory ſentence of a
'broken law : This wonderful love of CHRIST (as
'well as the certain proſpect of a future, impartial
'judgment) *conſtraineth us*---It *beareth us away* as with a
'*ſtrong* and *reſiſtleſs* torrent, ſo that we cannot reſiſt or
'withſtand that impetuoſity, with which it carries us
'on to the moſt active and zealous diſcharge of our
'miniſterial duty.'

THE Greek word *ſunechei*, which we render *conſtrain-*
eth, is vaſtly emphatical. Sometimes it ſignifies to
throng and *preſs* on every ſide, as with a croud * ; ſome-
times, to *hold faſt* or *have in poſſeſſion*, as a priſoner † ;
ſometimes, to *ſurround*, or *inveſt a town by ſiege*, to pre-
vent the enemy's eſcape ‡ ; ſometimes, to be *in a ſtrait*
between two contrary opinions, or to have the mind in
an anxious ſtate of heſitancy or ſuſpence between two
oppoſite

* Luke viii. 45.
† Luke xxii. 63.
‡ Luke xix. 43.

oppoſite reſolutions or determinations § ; and ſometime it ſignifies to be ſtrongly *urged* or *preſſed in ſpirit*, under kind of *irreſiſtable impulſe of mind*, which forcibly urge one on to the revelation of ſome myſtery, or the decla ration of ſome truth ; as it is ſaid, Acts xviii. 5. Tha *Paul* (*ſunεicheto to pneumati*) " being preſſed in ſpirit, te " tified to the Jews that Jeſus was Chriſt." And ſeems to have much this laſt ſenſe in our text : " Th " love of Chriſt conſtraineth us,"---it irreſiſtably moves impels, and bears us on to zeal and importunity in th ſacred duties of our Apoſtleſhip, ſo that we can by n means diſengage ourſelves from the binding nature an urgency of thoſe motives and obligations it lays us un der. ' For, as though he had ſaid, how can we b ' cold and unaffected in promoting the ſalvation of ſin ' ners ; a cauſe in which our glorious Maſter not onl ' *laboured* and *ſuffered*, but even *laid down his life* :' Or " We thus judge, that if one died for all, then were " all dead : And that he died for all, that they which " live, ſhould not henceforth live unto themſelves, " but unto him which died for them and roſe again.' Therefore, this dying love of Chriſt conſtraineth us to be *inſtant* and *importunate* with ſinners, not only to accept the precious benefits it has purchaſed for them, but alſo to walk worthy of the glorious privileges and hopes it has conferred upon them.

Now, that we may the better perceive the *propriety* and *force* of the Apoſtle's reaſoning, and feel the *power* and *conſtraint* of a Saviour's love, I ſhall, in the *firſt* place, by divine aſſiſtance, briefly ſhew you the *peculiar* and *ſpecific* nature of the love of CHRIST, and by what characters it is diſtinguiſhed from, and exalted above the love of mortals. *Secondly*, Explain it by its effects, or

§ Phil. i. 23.

or ſhew in what inſtances it moſt eminently appears and is expreſſed. And *thirdly*, Apply the doctrine to ſome practical uſes, by ſhewing what influence it ſhould have upon us, both as *Miniſters* and *people*. And,

I. I AM to ſhew you the peculiar and ſpecific nature of this love of CHRIST, and by what properties it is chiefly diſtinguiſhed from, and exalted above the love of mortals. And,

1. WE will find, on the ſmalleſt reflection, that *love* is a certain mode or affection of the mind, drawing it forth with deſire and complacency towards ſome object; and, including in it (according to the ſcripture notion of it, and as it is exerciſed from GOD to man) *compaſſion*, *benevolence* and *bounty*.

LOVE, as it exiſts in us, beſides its imperfection, has generally a great mixture of *ſelfiſhneſs*. 'We are ſenſible of a penury and want in our own beings.' We feel a dependance not only upon GOD, but alſo in ſome meaſure on our *fellow-creatures*, both for *being* and *well-being*. Our happineſs in the preſent ſtate, is neither complete, nor independent, and therefore we 'ſeek 'ſome augmentation of it, and ſome addition to it, by 'union with the objects we love.' If we cloſely and impartially examine the frame of our own nature, and the motives of our actions, we will find, that perhaps the moſt pure and diſintereſted acts of our love, benevolence and charity, are mixed with ſome degree of ſelfiſhneſs.---Let even a wicked perſon, who has any remains of natural tenderneſs and humanity left in his breaſt, ſee a man who is an object of great pity and compaſſion, his heart will melt towards him,---he will *feel* for his diſtreſs, and, if poſſible, give him ſome ſuccour or relief;---not perhaps from any hope of reward in this life,

life, nor merely out of oſtentation, *that he may be ſeen a*
praiſed of men;---not out of any love to GOD, or obed
ence to his command, nor from any proſpect of a futu
reward---(the ſuppoſition excludes all ſuch motives)
but *purely* to relieve the anxious and ſympathetic feelin
of his own breaſt. He relieves the miſerable, that h
himſelf may be leſs miſerable. He endeavours to m
tigate the pain of his ſuffering and diſtreſſed fellow-crea
ture, that he himſelf may be leſs pained and diſtreſſe
And although good and truly virtuous and gracious
men may have *nobler* and *purer* motives of their charity
yet it is much to be queſtioned, whether ſomething o
ſelf-intereſt may not mix itſelf with their moſt diſinte
reſted actions.

I AM far, indeed, from condemning this natural ſym
pathy and compaſſion, ſo deeply implanted in the hu
man heart, by the GOD *of nature*, for the ſuccour an
relief of our fellow-men. I only mention this in proo
of what I have advanced, namely, 'That human love
'or charity, in the pureſt inſtances of it, is not perhaps
'wholly diſintereſted: Either *glory*, or *fame*, or *pleaſure*,
'or *profit*, or *commodity*, or ſome *intereſted ſelfiſh* motive o
'obligation ſo mix themſelves with the moſt *generous*
'*heroic* acts of our love and charity, as to blaſt their
'pretenſions to *purity* and *diſintereſtedneſs*, and greatly to
'impair their merit.'

BUT now 'the love of CHRIST is not this way excit-
'ed. We had neither done any thing to *oblige* him,
'nor had we any thing to *engage* him, farther than the
'miſery in which he ſaw us involved might *move* him.'
He loved us *only* becauſe he *would* love us. He had no
by-end, no *ſelf-intereſt* to ſerve in loving us and having
compaſſion upon us. *Herein is love*---a peculiar and diſ-
tinguiſhing love---*not that we loved him, but that he loved
us*; which is equally true of the Father and of the Son*.

2. THIS

* 1 John iv. 10.

2. THIS love of CHRIST, as it is a *pure* and *disinterested*, so it is 'a *free*, *generous* and *heroic* love; like that 'of some great and public benefactor, who touched 'with commiseration for the afflictions and distresses 'of mankind, undertakes their relief. *When we were* '*without strength*, *ungodly sinners*, *enemies*, says the Apostle, 'CHRIST *died for us* *.'' Either of these three last characters might, in the estimate of human reason, have frustrated the kind intentions of a Saviour's love: But lo! it triumhps over them all. It is a *singular*, *irresistable*, *unconquerable*, *triumphant* love;---a love, as the wise man describes that passion, *stronger than death*; *many waters*, numberless provocations and indignities, *could not quench it* †. Many and great obstacles stood in its way, the wrath of GOD, the cruelty of men, the rage of devils, the shame and pain of the cross, and, what was worse than all, the ingratitude and obstinacy of those very sinners who where the objects of this love, and their contempt of and aversion to its saving designs ---and yet it surmounted them all! Are mankind *ungodly*, *sinners*, *enemies*? Yet CHRIST will love them and die for them! O wonderful philanthropy! Surely no instance of human love can equal this. We have heard of and applauded brave and generous men, who have hazarded and exposed their lives for their friends, their country, their religion;---yea, we have heard, 'perhaps in the single instance of *Damon* and *Pythias*, of 'one friend's offering to lay down his life for another. 'And indeed, as our Saviour observes, *greater love has* no 'man *than this*, *that he lay down his life for his friends*; this 'being the very utmost extent of *human friendship* ‡: 'But greater love *hath* CHRIST, who laid down his life 'for his enemies!'

* Rom. v. 6, 8, 10.
† Cant. viii. 6.
‡ John xv. 13.

3. YEA, ſo great and unparalelled is this love of CHRIST to ſinners, that it ſurmounts all human thought and comprehenſion. The Apoſtle urges his beloved *Epheſians* to *comprehend with all ſaints, the breath, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of* CHRIST, *which*, adds he, *paſſeth knowledge* *. The breadth, and length, and depth, and height of this love are beyond our *ken* in the preſent ſtate; and indeed, we ſhall, perhaps, never be able *fully* to comprehend them. In order to know the juſt dimenſions of a Saviour's love, we muſt firſt know the full dignity of his perſon, the greatneſs of his condeſcenſion, and the depth of his ſufferings; and theſe, perhaps, no created underſtanding will ever be able fully to comprehend. What a ſtrange command or requiſition, therefore, is this?---to know and comprehend a love, which is *incomprehenſible* and *paſſeth knowledge*!--I anſwer, this is a lively expreſſion of the diſtinguiſhing greatneſs of CHRIST's love, in the Apoſtle's *grand* and *maſterly* manner. The love of CHRIST is a ſubject which all the ſaints ſearch and pry into with the greateſt attention and delight. They endeavour to comprehend it more and more: 'ſomething they know; 'more they deſire to know; they ſtoop down with the 'angels, *and deſire to look into theſe things* †.' They are daily making new diſcoveries and new reſearches into the wonders of his love which paſſeth knowledge, and which will prove the continual exerciſe and the increaſing joy and admiration of their perfected ſpirits, through the ages of eternity,---when they ſhall join in that new and perpetual ſong, "Worthy is the lamb, that was "ſlain, to receive power, and riches, and wiſdom, and "ſtrength, and honour, and glory and bleſſing:---for "thou waſt ſlain, and haſt redeemed us to GOD, by thy "blood, of out every kindred, and tongue, and people and "nation

* Epheſ. iii. 18, 19.
† 1 Pet. i. 12.

" nation *."---Now, the Apoſtle prays for theſe *Epheſians*, that the *ſame mind* might be in them, and that with all ſaints, they might ſtudy more and more to comprehend the boundleſs and amazing dimenſions of the love of CHRIST, as being the moſt powerful motive to reciprocal love, and cheerful univerſal obedience.

BY ſuch characters then is this love of CHRIST diſtinguiſhed from, and exalted above, the love of mortals. It is *pure* and *diſintereſted---free*, *generous*, and *heroic*---and exceeds all human comprehenſion. I proceed.

II. To explain this love of CHRIST by its effects; or to ſhew in what inſtances it moſt eminently appears and is expreſſed. And here the field is ſo exceeding large, that I muſt of neceſſity, be very brief and general. Were an angel, with all his heavenly knowledge and eloquence, to attempt a diſplay of the grand proofs and effects of his love, how infinitely muſt he come ſhort of doing juſtice to the ſubject? How much more *we*, whoſe views and apprehenſions are limited and confined?---But that we may attempt it in our feeble and imperfect manner,

1. THE greatneſs of our Saviour's love manifeſts itſelf in the *readineſs* and *cheerfulneſs* with which he undertook our relief in the covenant of redemption.--Great was the miſery into which mankind were fallen. *All were dead*, as the verſe below our text aſſures us. The human race, as *one man*, had revolted and apoſtatized from GOD, and were become ſlaves to *ſatan* and their own luſts. The whole world of mankind were become guilty before GOD, and were enemies to him by wicked works. This is that *ſpiritual death*,---that ſeparation of the ſoul from GOD, the fountain of *ſpiritual and eternal*,

* Rev. v. 9,---12.

as well as of *natural* life,---that *death in treſpaſſes* and *ſins*, mentioned by the Apoſtle, Epheſ. ii. 1.---And the plain and juſt conſequence of this, was a ſentence of condemnation to *eternal death.*

SUCH was the condition of lapſed man when CHRIST undertook for him; proportionably great therefore muſt that price and work of redemption be, which was neceſſary to reſtore the human race to GOD's forfeited favour, and to their own loſt purity, perfection and happineſs. GOD's majeſty was offended, and his law tranſgreſſed. The former muſt therefore be *appeaſed* and the latter *honoured.* For this purpoſe the Redeemer muſt aſſume our nature;---a body muſt be prepared for him, in which he muſt not only *obey* and *ſuffer*, but even *die! All were dead, and he muſt die for all!* Before he could ſee his ſeed;---ſee the travail of his ſoul and be ſatisfied:---before the Father would give him *the Heathen for his inheritance*, and *the uttermoſt parts of the earth for his poſſeſſion*, he muſt *bear our griefs*, and *carry our ſorrows*; he muſt be *wounded for our tranſgreſſions, bruiſed for our iniquities, and make his ſoul an offering for ſin* *.

THIS was the hard law of redemption,---*theſe* the arduous conditions to which our Redeemer muſt ſubmit! He muſt aſſume a body;---he muſt *ſuffer* and *obey*, *bleed* and *die* in the cauſe! And yet how cheerfully does he undertake it, when there was no other to help or bring deliverance?---"Sacrifice and offering thou didſt not "deſire," ſays he,----"then ſaid I, lo, I come; in the "volume of the book it is written of me: I delight "to do thy will, O my GOD: Yea, thy law is writ-"ten within my heart †". He well knew the will of his heavenly Father: He perfectly underſtood the difficult law of redemption which he had put himſelf under;

* Iſa. liii. 4, 5, 11. Pſal. ii. 8.
† Pſal. xl. 6,---8.

der: He knew how dearly he muſt purchaſe the ſalvation of ſinners. The black and diſmal ſcene of his ſufferings was full in his view; and yet he *ſo loved us* as to ſubmit with delight---rejoicing in the diſtant proſpect of relieving and ſuccouring periſhing rebels, on theſe difficult terms. *Lo, I come*, ſays the benevolent Redeemer---" I delight to do thy will, O my GOD!---He re-
" joiced in the habitable parts of the earth, and his
" delights were with the ſons of men of old, even from
" everlaſting §.

2. How ſurprizing an inſtance have we of his love, in his *incarnation*, in conſequence of theſe engagements? " In the fullneſs of time, GOD ſent forth his Son,
" made of a woman, made under the law, that he
" might redeem them that are under the law *." " The
" word, (ſays St. *John*) was made fleſh, and dwelt
" among among us †." The *Meſſiah* became IMMANUEL, GOD *with us*, GOD *manifeſt in the fleſh*, clothed with mortality, and *tabernacling* among men! So great was his condeſcenſion and abaſement, that he " laid
" aſide a glory which he had with the Father before
" the world was ‡." Although he was originally *in the form of* GOD, veſted with divine perfections and honours; yet he vailed theſe glories under the rags of humanity, and " took upon him the form of a ſer-
" vant §. For we know the grace of our Lord Jeſus
" CHRIST, that though he was rich, yet for our ſakes
" he became poor, that we through his poverty might
" be rich ||." Amazing condeſcenſion! Unparalelled grace! Had an angel, touched with compaſſion for a few periſhing mortals, and in order to do them ſome ſignal

§ Prov. viii. 31.
* Gal. iv. 4.
† John i. 14.
‡ John xvii. 5.
§ Phil. ii. 6.
|| 2 Cor. viii. 9.

ſignal ſervice, condeſcended for a while to leave his ſeraphic joys; to take up his dwelling in a human body, and be tied to its laws and its miſeries; we ſhould highly extol ſuch an act of generous condeſcenſion, and be ever ſpeaking of our *good angel*, with wonder and gratitude. But, behold! here is greater love, and a lower ſtoop of condeſcenſion! CHRIST, the Lord of angels, before whom the higheſt orders of theſe bleſſed ſpirits *bow* and *adore* in the moſt proſtrate and ſubmiſſive forms, has *done this!* He ſo loved us, "as to make himſelf of "no reputation, to take upon him the form of a ſer-"vant, and, being found in faſhion as a man, he hum-"bled himſelf yet farther, and became obedient unto "death, even the death of the croſs *."

3. IF we conſider the peculiar circumſtances of his humanity, they will greatly ſtrengthen the argument of his love. He became *an infant!* An infant of *poor*, *deſpiſed* parents! The ſon of *Mary*, and of *Joſeph* the carpenter!---'Bleſſed Lord, what grace and condeſcenſi-'on was this---that thou ſhouldſt be *born* for us---and '*thus* born---born in ſuch circumſtances of *obſcurity* and '*contempt*---thy chamber of ſtate, a *ſtable*---thy cradle, a '*manger*---thy mother, a *poor deſpiſed virgin*, and thy re-'puted father, a *labouring mechanick!*'

IN like manner, if we trace the various circumſtances of our Saviour's life, each of them will ſerve to illuſtrate the wonders of his love. While on the ſtage of public action, he ſtill appeared under the ſame diſadvantages as to any characters of worldly ſplendor or renown, and in circumſtances of low abaſement; was ſtill "a man of ſorrows and acquainted with griefs, deſpiſ-"ed and rejected of men. The ſon of man had not "where to lay his head †;" and having no worldly eſtate,

* Phil. ii. 6,---8.
† Matth. viii. 20.

eſtate, conſequently he was of *little worth* in the eyes of the world, and had but *few friends* among the children of men. Nor could his ſpotleſs reputation eſcape the keeneſt reproaches of ſinners. The *holy one* and *the juſt*; he who *did no ſin*, and in whoſe mouth was *found no guile*, who was *holy*, *harmleſs*, *undefiled and ſeparate from ſinners*, and of whom this world was not worthy, was calumniated and traduced as a *blaſphemer*, a *deceiver*, a *mad-man*, and a *confederate with devils*. Thus did he endure the contradiction of ſinners againſt himſelf---' of *ſinners*, (O ' amazing ingratitude!) towards whom he had the ' kindeſt intentions, and for whom he was actually do- ' ing the kindeſt things.' *Strange*, *myſterious* love, that reconciled the SON of GOD to ſuch treatment from his own guilty creatures, and engaged him to bear it with a meekneſs and reſignation, which the rudeſt injuries could neither conquer nor diſturb! But,

4. THE laſt ſcene of his ſufferings and death, is the moſt aſtoniſhing and incomprehenſible inſtance of his love. Here the ſcriptures lay the *grand emphaſis*. HE *died!* He died for ME! He died for ALL! " He bore " our ſins in his own body, on the tree! He gave " himſelf for US, that he might redeem us to himſelf, ' and make us a peculiar people, zealous of good " works! To him that loved us, and waſhed us from " our ſins in his own blood;---to him be glory and do- " minion for ever and ever, Amen!" Here *all* is wonder. Eloquence itſelf is dumb---and the power of words and language utterly unable to expreſs the condeſcenſions of this love. *Agonizing*, *dying* love! Love written in *tears*, and *groans* and *blood!* The *Son of* GOD *bleeding* and *expiring* for the *ſons of men*, that he might raiſe them to the dignity and happineſs of the *ſons of* GOD! Could he have purchaſed our redemption with-

out

out the pain and ſhame of the croſs, the condeſcenſion had not been ſo exceedingly amazing: But this could not be;---without *ſhedding of blood* there could be *no remiſſion*;---and therefore, *he died for us*---he humbled himſelf to the loweſt degree of abaſement, and became obedient unto the death, even the death of the croſs, the moſt cruel and painful, as well as vilifying and abaſing death;---even the death of a Roman ſlave! He took a body, on purpoſe to be *ſtriped, pierced, wounded, broken*---to *languiſh, bleed* and *die!*---He became a man, with deſign that he ſhould be a man of ſorrows and acquainted with griefs;---" That GOD ſhould lay upon him the " iniquities of us all, and make his ſoul an offering for " ſin;---might bruiſe him and put him to grief † !"

NOR was there one circumſtance of horror wanting in this *amazing tragedy*,---one bitter ingredient miſſing in this *tremendous cup*, a guilty conſcience and total deſpair excepted. Betrayed by his diſciple, relinquiſhed by his friends, inſulted by devils, ſurrounded by the cruel mocks and taunts of his enemies, forſaken of his Father, deſtitute of the ſupports and conſolations of a common martyr, pierced with nails, transfixed with a ſpear---he expired between two thieves---the ſun hiding his face, the earth trembling, graves opening, rocks rending, and all nature, as it were, ſympathizing with her expiring LORD, and feeling for the pains and indignities which he endured!---*He died*; and, O, *what a death?*---Let *this death*, therefore, be unto our ſouls the voucher of his love.---By this let us meaſure it in its amazing dimenſions!---Nor,

5. DID his love terminate with his mortal life on earth: If it had, it had been ſtill incomplete, and we might ſtill have periſhed in our ſins. But as he died for our ſins, ſo he roſe again for our juſtification, and ever

† Iſa. liii.

ever lives at the Father's right hand, making interceſſion for his people. Hence the Apoſtle's triumph: "Who "ſhall lay any thing to the charge of GOD's elect? It "is GOD that juſtifieth, who is he that condemneth? "It is CHRIST that died, yea rather, that is riſen again, "who is even at the right hand of GOD, who alſo "maketh interceſſion for us *." As the love of CHRIST engaged him to humble himſelf *even unto death* for ſinners, ſo it alſo engaged him to become not only an *advocate* and *interceſſor* with GOD the Father in their behalf, but alſo, "a Prince and a Saviour, to give repen-"tance and remiſſion of ſins †." It engaged him, "after he had led captivity captive, to aſcend up on "high, and to give gifts to men, even to the rebel-"lious;"---to ſend down his Spirit as the *renewer* and *comforter* of his people;---to enter into the holieſt as their *fore-runner*, to take poſſeſſion of the promiſed inheritance in their name and ſtead, and prepare manſions of glory in his Father's houſe for their reception,---and to "give ſome Apoſ-"tles; and ſome Prophets; and ſome Evange-"liſts; and ſome Paſtors and Teachers, for the per-"fecting of the ſaints, for the work of the miniſtry, "for the edifying of the body of CHRIST; till we all "come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge "of the Son of GOD, unto a perfect man, unto the "meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſs of CHRIST ‡."

AND how ſignal is his grace and love in *applying* the ſalvation he has purchaſed, to the ſouls of men;---in enlightning, converting, guiding, reſtoring, quickening, and comforting them? He brings them into his banqueting-houſe, and his banner over them is love; he ſatisfies their ſouls as with marrow and with fatneſs, and

 cauſes

* Rom. viii. 33, 34.
† Acts v. 31.
‡ Epheſ. iv. 8,---13.

cauſes them to eat hidden manna, and to drink living waters of divine conſolations. He knows and pities their infirmities, ſympathizes with them under their temptations, ſufferings and conflicts, and follows them with a conſtant, tender care. Whom he loveth, he loveth to the end. His affection is not *wavering*, *fickle* and *inconſtant*, but *firm* and *ſteady* as the foundation of his throne. He never leaves nor forſakes his own, but cauſes goodneſs and mercy to follow them all the days of their lives, and when their "fleſh and their heart "fails, he is the ſtrength of their heart, and their "everlaſting portion *. He giveth unto his ſheep, "(his believing people) eternal life, and they ſhall ne-"ver periſh, neither ſhall any be able to pluck them "out of his hand;" and as he has the *keys of death, and of the unſeen world*, he encourages them joyfully to commit their departing ſouls into his gracious hands, and confidently to pray with the martyr *Stephen*, in the very article of death, LORD JESUS, *receive my ſpirit* †.

6. HEAVEN is the glorious theatre on which the ſuper-abounding riches and fulneſs of the love of CHRIST, both to the ſouls and bodies of his people, ſhall be moſt earneſtly and magnificently diſplayed, in its *laſt ſcene* and *final iſſue*. Heaven is the full accompliſhment of this love. *There*, if ever, the *heights*, and *depths*, and *lengths*, and *breadths* of this love of CHRIST, will be *fully comprehended*---at leaſt, *clearly perceived*, to the everlaſting aſtoniſhment of the enraptured ſoul---ever advancing---ever improving in perfection and happineſs---ever drinking in full draughts of thoſe rivers of pleaſures which flow from the fountain-head of life, joy, perfection and immortality.---"CHRIST loved the church, and gave him-"ſelf for it, that he might preſent it to himſelf a glo-"rious

* Pſal. lxxiii. 26.
† John x. 28. Acts vii. 59.

" rious church, not having ſpot or wrinkle, or any " ſuch thing *." This was his ultimate end in *coming from heaven*, that he might advance his ſervants and followers *thither* : *I go*, ſays he, " to prepare a place for " you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I " will come again and receive you unto myſelf, that " where I am, there ye may be alſo. Father, I will " that they alſo whom thou haſt given me, be with " me where I am; that they may behold my glory " which thou haſt given me †."

AND now, having thus ſhewed you the *peculiar* and *tranſcendent nature*, and briefly pointed out to you, ſome of the moſt eminent expreſſions and effects of a Redeemer's love, what needs more to illuſtrate the force of the Apoſtle's reaſoning, or to ſhew you the conſtraints of this love ?---*Shew you*, did I ſay, ? Nay, do we not already begin to *feel* the conſtraints of this love upon our ſouls, *bearing us away* with a *ſweet*, but powerful influence to higher degrees of *faith*, *love*, *gratitude* and *obedience* ? have not our ſouls already begun to *catch the holy fire*, and to enter into the force and ſpirit of the Apoſtle's reaſoning---" the love of CHRIST con- " ſtraineth us, becauſe we thus judge, that if one died " for all, then were all dead ; and that he died for " all, that they which live, ſhould not henceforth live " unto themſelves, but unto him which died for them, " and roſe again ?" Do we not already begin to anticipate the ſongs of the redeemed nations ; " Unto HIM " that loved us, and waſhed us from our ſins in his " own blood, and hath made us kings and prieſts un- " to GOD, even HIS FATHER ; to HIM be glory and " dominion for ever and ever ; AMEN ‡ ! Surely our

 hearts

* Epeſ. v. 25.
† John xiv. 3.——xvii. 24.
‡ Rev. i. 5, 6.

hearts muſt be harder than adamant, more impenetrable than the nether mill-ſtone, if ſuch a view of the love of CHRIST, how meanly ſoever diſplayed, can have no ſoftening influence over them, no conſtraining force upon them! But this naturally leads me in the

III. PLACE to improve the doctrine to ſome practical uſes, by ſhewing *what influence* and *conſtraint* this love of CHRIST ſhould have upon us, both as Miniſters and people.

1. As *Chriſtians*, as the *diſciples* and *followers* of the bleſſed JESUS, ſurely this love of his ſhould conſtrain us to reciprocal acts of love, imitation, and obedience.

(1.) To reciprocal acts of love. The natural effects of love, are *gratitude* and *reciprocal love*. Love begets love, as naturally as a parent begets his own likeneſs. 'Tis as natural for us to love our friends, and be grateful to our benefactors, as to dread and fly from our enemies.---Now, as the bleſſed JESUS is not only moſt amiable and lovely in himſelf, poſſeſſed of every natural and moral excellency which can attract the eſteem of an intelligent being, but as he is alſo our beſt friend and moſt generous benefactor, hence our obligations to gratitude and reciprocal love are quite indiſputable. He has purchaſed our love and gratitude at the deareſt price, and has engaged us *to love him* by the moſt aſtoniſhing acts of love and beneficence to us; in ſo much, that nothing can be more juſt and equitable than that dreadful denunciation of the Apoſtle, againſt all who are inſenſible to the attractions of a Saviour's love: *If any man*, ſays he, *love not the* LORD JESUS CHRIST, *let him be anathema, maranatha, i. e.* let him be *accurſed*, and the LORD will come ſpeedily and execute that curſe upon him *. The queſtion

* 1 Cor. xvi. 22.

queſtion therefore, is not, *whether* the love of CHRIST to *us*, ſhould *be* a motive of ours to *him*; for this is ſelf-evident? But rather, *in what manner* we may beſt expreſs our love to our great benefactor? And it is plain, that this is beſt done by imitation and obedience. It follows therefore,

(2.) THAT the love of CHRIST ſhould conſtrain us to the *imitation* of him, our beloved Lord and Maſter. To imitate the beloved object, is a natural and genuine effect of love. We naturally endeavour to imitate thoſe whom we love, eſpecially in thoſe things for which we love them, and by which we hope to commend ourſelves to their favour and eſteem. Now, as the *moral perfections of* CHRIST, and thoſe divine graces and virtues which ſhone ſo conſpicuous in him, through the whole of his incarnate ſtate, are one of the principal foundations of our eſteem for him; and as the imitation of thoſe virtues and graces ſerve principally to recommend us to his friendſhip and regard: So *in theſe* we will earneſtly endeavour to imitate him, if we truly love him. We will endeavour, that the ſame mind and temper be in us, which was alſo in CHRIST JESUS *. If we are indeed his *ſheep* we will hear his voice and follow him; ---will deny ourſelves and take up our croſs, learning of him to be meek and lowly, pure and patient, humble and reſigned, that, in all things, we may be conformed unto him, and, in ſo doing, find peace, and reſt, and happineſs to our ſouls †.

THE ancient philoſophers manifeſted their love to the leaders of their reſpective ſects, by a *moſt ſcrupulous imitation* of them, in the whole tenor of their behaviour: And ſhall we, the diſciples of JESUS, be leſs obſervant of the moſt holy and perfect example of our divine Maſter,

* Philip. ii. 5.

† Matth. xvi. 24.——xi. 29. John x. 27.

Maſter, than they were of thoſe of *Zeno* and *Pythagoras*, of *Plato*, and *Ariſtotle?* Eſpecially, when the Apoſtle tells us, that *even hereunto are we called; becauſe* CHRIST alſo ſuffered for us, LEAVING US AN EXAMPLE, THAT WE SHOULD FOLLOW HIS STEPS *. And when another Apoſtle aſſures us, that *he who ſaid he abideth in him*, or is his diſciple, *ought himſelf alſo* SO TO WALK, *even as* HE WALKED †.

(3.) THE love of CHRIST ſhould conſtrain us, his followers and diſciples, to a *cheerful and univerſal obedience to all his commandments.* And what is this but to *imitate his example?* For, what duty hath he commanded us to perform, of which he hath not given us an example in his own conduct, ſo far as difference of nature and circumſtances would permit? To obey him, therefore, in his moſt difficult and ſelf-denying precepts, what is it but to imitate his own example, and to do that out of love and duty for him, which he, in obedience to his Father, hath done for our ſakes, and to promote our ſalvation and happineſs? To obey him, therefore, is to imitate him, and to imitate him is to be like him both in holineſs and happineſs.

THIS *is the love of* GOD, ſays the Apoſtle, that is, the moſt certain and ſubſtantial evidence of our love to him, *that we keep his commandments* ‡. And as this is the ſureſt teſtimony of our love to the Father, ſo it is alſo of the Son. "He that hath my commandments and keep-"eth them, he it is that loveth me. If a man love me, "he will keep my words; but he that loveth me not, "keepeth not my ſayings §." We cheerfully and readily *obey* the perſon whom we *love*. Duty and inclination here unite their kindred influences; laying a powerful

* 1 Pet. ii. 21.
† 1 John ii. 6.
‡ 1 John v. 3.
§ John xiv. 21, &c.

powerful and irresistable constraint on all the faculties of the soul, and engage them in a course of ready, active, cheerful and universal obedience. Besides, this is the very use which the Apostle makes of the doctrine, in the verse below our text. CHRIST *died for all*, and the principal end of his doing so, was, that those who *spiritually live*, in consequence of his death, *should not henceforth live unto themselves, i. e.* according to the lusts of their own wills, or the dictates of their corrupt hearts; but according to the *law*, *will* and *pleasure* of HIM *who died for them and rose again.* Hence you see, that the obedience of Christians, is one of the primary ends of CHRIST'S death, as well as the highest and surest evidence of their love to him. "He gave himself for us, "that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify us unto himself, a peculiar people, zealous of good "works:" And he will be the "Author of eternal "salvation only to them that obey him ‡."

HERE then, Christians, let us bring our love of CHRIST to this touch-stone, and try its *sincerity* and its *strength.* Do we love the Lord Jesus CHRIST in sincerity? If so, then we study above all things to please him, and dread above all things to offend him;---then we have an exquisite relish for, and delight in his service, and none of his commandments seem grievous to us, but the practice of the most self-denying duties is rendered easy and delightful, by that love which is the principle of our obedience;---if so, then his Sabbaths, his house, his ordinances, his glory, honour and interest in the world, his laws and his people, are all of them dear to us, and beloved by us, for the love which we bear unto Jesus; But, and if the contrary of all this is the matter of fact, then the dreadful, tremendous conclusion is, That the *love of the Father abideth not in us*, and *that we love not the Lord Jesus* CHRIST *in sincerity!*

2. UPON

‡ Tit. ii. 12. Heb. v. 9.

2. UPON us, who are the Miniſters of his everlaſting goſpel, the love of CHRIST ought to have a mighty conſtraint. As Chriſtians, we lie under the ſame obligations of love, gratitude, imitation and obedience with others. We lie involved in the ſame common ruin with the reſt of our guilty race ;---have *ourſelves to ſave*, as well as *them who hear us*, and, therefore, have the ſame obligations to CHRIST for his great ſalvation, and have the ſame motives and neceſſity with others to *work out our own ſalvation with fear and trembling*, and to *give all diligence to make our calling and election ſure*.

BESIDES, the whole tenor and all the duties of our ſacred office, tend directly to beget and cheriſh (ſo far as inſtrumental means can) the habits of holineſs and univerſal obedience in our ſouls; and therefore, perhaps, lays us under higher obligations to an exaſmplary piety than others who enjoy not the ſame advantages. As Chriſtian Miniſters, our obligations *riſe* and *multiply*. We are ſurrounded, as it were, and preſſed on every ſide, with a vaſt variety of the moſt cogent arguments and powerful motives to *zeal*, *ardour* and *diligence* in the diſcharge of our miniſtry. We are debtors both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians, to the *wiſe* and the *unwiſe*. " A diſpenſation of the goſpel is committed un-
" to us, a neceſſity is laid upon us, and wo unto us, if
" we preach not the goſpel; if we be not inſtant in
" ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon; reproving, rebuking, ex-
" horting with all long-ſuffering and doctrine *."

THE *love of* CHRIST conſtraineth us---*charity* and *univerſal benevolence to the ſouls of men* conſtrain us---our *ordination vows* conſtrain us---the *blood of ſouls will be upon us*, if we are unfaithful or remiſs: But if, on the other hand, we are *wiſe to win ſouls* to CHRIST;---if we are faithful and ſucceſsful in our office, important will be our

* Rom. i. 14. 1 Cor. ix. 16. 2 Tim. iv. 2.

our ſervices among men, and great and glorious our reward in heaven. If we *turn many unto righteouſneſs*, we ſhall *ſhine as the brightneſs of the firmament*, and *as the ſtars for ever and ever*; we ſhall deliver immortal ſouls from perdition, and increaſe the number of the bleſſed, and the *hallelujahs* of the redeemed. By the converſion of ſinners, we ſhall *give joy in heaven*, enlarge the Redeemer's kingdom, and promote his intereſt among men;---we ſhall weaken the kingdom of *ſatan*; defeat his malice; counteract his deſtructive deſigns, and leſſen the number of his unhappy ſubjects. And, finally, every ſoul whom we are happily inſtrumental in ſaving, will be a new gem in our diadem of glory, a freſh acceſſion to our everlaſting joy and happineſs, on that memorable and important day, when the LORD ſhall "make up "his jewels, and give unto every man according to his "works, and to the deeds done in the body."

ANIMATED therefore by theſe glorious hopes; fired by theſe important proſpects; urged and preſſed, as it were, on every ſide, with theſe almighty motives and conſiderations, well might the love of CHRIST, the love of ſouls, and a ſenſe of duty and obligation, conſtrain the Apoſtles;---well may they conſtrain us their unworthy ſucceſſors, to the moſt ardent zeal and unwearied diligence in promoting the glory of GOD, the intereſt of CHRIST, and the ſalvation of ſinners;---well may they cauſe us to look down with ſovereign contempt on that *fear* and *favour* of men, which bring a ſnare, in the diſcharge of our duty, and engage us to be ſtedfaſt and immoveable, always abounding in the work of the LORD, knowing that our labour ſhall not be in vain in him;---well may they ſteel and fortify our hearts againſt all the oppoſition of *men* and *devils*, and cauſe us to cry out, with our ſtedfaſt, magnanimous Apoſtle, in the face of bonds, impriſonments and death itſelf,---"None

" of theſe things move us, neither count we our lives " dear unto ourſelves, ſo that we might finiſh our courſe " with joy, and the miniſtry which we have received of " the Lord Jeſus, to teſtify the goſpel of the grace of " GOD *."

WHEN the great Shepherd and Biſhop of ſouls was about to aſcend into heaven, he *thrice* interrogated *Peter* in the ſame terms; " *Simon*, ſon of *Jonas*, loveſt thou " me more than theſe?" To which, when the great Apoſtle had *thrice* anſwered in the affirmative; " Yea, " Lord, thou knoweſt all things, thou knoweſt that I " love thee." His Lord charged him to teſtify his love to him, by *feeding his lambs and his ſheep* †." Do we therefore love the Lord Jeſus CHRIST? Let us give proof of our love, by feeding his lambs and his ſheep, and nouriſhing up in the words of faith and ſound doctrine, thoſe ſouls whom he hath redeemed with his precious blood. And O that they who hear us might learn to be wiſe to ſalvation; that, laying aſide all malice, and guile, and hypocriſies, and evil-ſpeakings, as new-born babes, they might deſire the ſincere milk of the word, and grow thereby. Amen and Amen.

ESSAY

* Acts xx. 24.
† John xxi. 15, &c.

ESSAY LX.

CHRISTIANS, LIGHTS IN THE WORLD;

OR, THE

BEAUTY *and* EXCELLENCY *of the* CHRISTIAN LIFE:

A

SERMON

FROM

PHILIPPIANS II. 15, 16.

That ye may be blamelesſ and harmleſs, the ſons of GOD *without rebuke, in the midſt of a crooked and perverſe nation, among whom ye ſhine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life.*

THE Chriſtian character, *my brethren*, is a moſt *lovely* and *amiable* character; although alaſs! it is a moſt *rare* and *uncommon* one in the world, even in the *Chriſtian world*, where, as all are Chriſtians by *name* and *profeſſion*, ſo all ought to be ſuch in *deed* and in *truth*. "He is not a Jew, (ſays the Apoſtle) who is one outward-" ly; neither is that circumciſion which is outward in " the fleſh: But he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and

" circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not " in the letter, whose praise is not of man but of GOD *." ---So may we say with regard to *christianity*: ' He is not ' a Christian who is one meerly in name and outward ' profession; but he only who has the *heart*, the *spirit* ' the *temper*, the *principles*, and the *conduct* of a Christi- ' an, whose praise is not of *man* only, but of GOD also.' To be Christians *indeed* and in *reality*, *my brethren*, is to be lights in the world, to be harmless and blameless; unrebukeable and unreproveable, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. And not only so; not merely to be thus *negatively* good; but also *positively* so; shining as lights to direct others in the way of life and happiness---*Holding forth the word of life*---Holding forth our good examples, as luminous torches or flambeaus, to conduct the feet of erring, wandering, benighted travellers, into the path of peace and felicity.

As *natural light* is the most pleasing and comfortable object to the eye and to the mind;---as it reveals all natural objects to us;---directs our steps in this world;---points out the dangers of our way, and enables us to distinguish between that which is pleasant and eligible, and that which is hurtful and pernicious. " For truly, " (as Solomon observes) the light is sweet, and a plea- " sant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun †." So *truth* and *virtue*, which answer much the same purposes in the *moral* and *intellectual* worlds, as material light does in the *natural*, are beautifully termed the *light of the mind*, in a figurative and metaphorical sense. Hence also, GOD, the great source and examplar of all truth and virtue, is called *light*. " GOD is light, and in him there " is no darkness at all." And CHRIST, who is the " brightness of the Father's glory, and the express " image

* Rom. ii. 28, 29.
† Eccles. xi. 17.

" image of his perſon," is called, by way of eminence, " The light of the world;---and that light which light- " eth every man, which cometh into the world." The ſcriptures alſo, which are the pureſt channels of truth and virtue to a benighted world, are called, " Lights in a " dark place;---a light to our feet, and a lamp or lan- " thorn to our paths."

AGREEABLE to all this;---when ſinners are *converted*, or turned from *error* and *vice*, to *truth* and *virtue*, they are ſaid to have *their eyes opened*; their *underſtandings enlightened*, and to be *brought from darkneſs to light*, and from the power of ſatan to GOD: And GOD is ſaid to *bring them out of darkneſs into his marvellous light*. " Ye were " ſometime darkneſs, (ſays the Apoſtle) but now are " ye light in the Lord."

AND hence, true Chriſtians are called *children of the light*,---and commanded to *walk in the light*; to *ſhine as lights in the world*,---and to *let their light ſo ſhine before men, that others, ſeeing their good works, may glorify our Father which is in heaven*.

To be a *true Chriſtian*, therefore, *my brethren*, is to ſuſtain the *moſt honourable* and *beautiful* of all characters:---It is to *imitate* and *reſemble* GOD, who is the great ſource and fountain of light, and in whom there is no darkneſs at all;---to imitate and reſemble CHRIST, who is the *light of the world*, and the *life of men*;---to imitate and reſemble the *ſaints*, thoſe brave and generous ſouls, who, in all ages, have copied after GOD, and ſhone as lights in the world, in the midſt of a crooked and perverſe generation, holding forth the word of life.---To be *true Chriſtians*, is to be as like to the glorious GOD, both in virtue and happineſs,---and to do as much good to our fellow-creatures in our day and generation, as poſſibly we can:---in a word, to be as lovely, as venerable, as virtuous, as holy, as happy and as uſeful, as the

the capacities of our limited, depraved nature will permit.

ST. PAUL had founded a church in *Philippi*, which worshipped the true GOD, and received the LORD JESUS CHRIST, while many of their brethren and fellow-citizens, still continued in their idolatry and infidelity. It was, therefore, the desire and ambition of the good Apostle, that the converted *Philippians* should labour for the conversion of their heathen brethren. He desired, that the unbelieving and idolatrous *Philippians*, (who were attentive and malicious observers of their Christian brethren, because of the new religion they had embraced, and the new kind of life they had devoted themselves to) should see nothing in them, but what was *wise*, *reputable*, and of *good report*; and *such as becometh the gospel of* CHRIST.

THIS, however, it seems had not been the case, so much as the good Apostle wished. These *young converts* although they had broke off from the idolatry and infidelity of their neighbours, yet were still of very imperfect characters, in point of morality:---Although they had embraced the profession of Christianity; yet they had not fully imbib'd its spirit and temper. However found they might be in *faith*, yet they lacked that *charity*, which is the bond of *perfectness*, and without which true Christianity, cannot either *live* or *move* or have *its being*. No sooner had they broke off from their unbelieving and idolatrous brethren, than they began to quarrel among themselves. This seems to have been the true ground and motive, of the Apostle's noble and excellent exhortation, in our text; which will ever be equally useful, and equally applicable, while Christianity has a being in a corrupt, imperfect, world and state.

"Do all things, (says the Apostle) without mur-
"murings and disputings: That ye may be blameless
"and harmless, the sons of GOD, without, &c."

IN

IN the words, we have *three* things obſervable, and which ſhall (through the divine aſſiſtance) be the ſubject of the preſent diſcourſe.

I. THE *poſt* or *ſtation* of a Chriſtian in this world. He lives "in the midſt of a crooked and perverſe generation;" who are, at heart, enemies to that holineſs which he profeſſes; who will be cloſe and malicious obſervers of all his conduct; and who are capable of being either greatly benefited, or greatly hurt by his example and converſation.

II. WE have the *Chriſtian's deſtination* in this world; what divine providence deſigns he ſhould be; or what purpoſe he is deſigned to ſerve, in the midſt of a crooked and perverſe generation. He is to *ſhine as a light in the world*: *Holding forth the word of life*,---that he may ſerve the double purpoſe of both ſaving himſelf and others.

III. WE have the *duty of a Chriſtian* in this world, in order to his anſwering this deſtination of providence: "He is to be *harmleſs* and *blameleſs*; *a child of* GOD, "*without rebuke*;" that the goſpel may not be blamed; that ſinners may be converted, and that his Chriſtian brethren may be edified: In a word, "He is to let this "light of his ſo ſhine before men, that others, ſeeing his "good works, may glorify our Father which is in hea-"ven."

ARE there any amongſt us, *my brethren*, who have the noble ambition, not only of obtaining this heavenly felicity ourſelves, but alſo of leading others in the ſame road? Are there any amongſt us, who have the noble ambition of concurring with JESUS CHRIST in the work of human redemption? Let ſuch learn, to day, from St.

Paul,

Paul, to profecute fo noble a defign by fhining as lights in the world; by being *harmlefs and blamlefs* as the *children of* GOD, *without rebuke*, in the midft of a crooked and perverfe generation. May the holy Spirit himfelf infpire us with this divine ambition---and may the blefling of GOD, attending this difcourfe, give us power and fpirit to purfue fo noble a defign, until our endeavours are crowned with heavenly glory.---Amen.

I. THEN we are briefly to confider the *poft* and *ftation* of a true Chriftian in this world :---" He lives in the " midft of a crooked and perverfe generation."

THIS fentiment and expreffion of the Apoftle might be eafily *juftified* and *illuftrated*, by confidering the *religion* and *morals* of the *Jews* and *Heathens*, amongft which the primitive Chriftians lived, to whom he here writes. The character which our Saviour and his Apoftles have left us on record, both of the Jews and Gentiles of that age, (and which is abundantly confirmed by contemporary writers) makes it appear, that they were, indeed, " a crooked and perverfe generation."

THE *Jews* had fcarcely the very fhadow of religion left amongft them in that abandoned age. The meafure of their iniquity feems then to have been *filled*, and they were *ripe for deftruction*. To the *Pharifees*, the ' moft *numerous* and refpectable fect amongft them, our Saviour thus addreffes himfelf---" Ye ferpents, ye " generation of vipers, how can ye efcape the damnati- " on of hell?" And, as to the *Sadducees*, they were men of *atheiftical principles*, and deteftable morals.

FOR the *morals* and *manners* of the *Heathens* of that time, and into what a ftate of luxury, bebauchery, and univerfal corruption they had degenerated, I might refer you to their own hiftorians, moralifts and fatyrifts: But that portrait which this Apoftle himfelf has given us

us of the *Romans*, one of the moſt learned, philoſophical, and civilized Heathen nations, ſhall ſuffice in lieu of every other authority.---" Being filled (ſays the " Apoſtle) with all unrighteouſneſs, fornication, wick- " edneſs, covetouſneſs, malicioufneſs; full of envy, " murder, debate, deceit, malignity, whiſperers, back- " biters, haters of GOD, deſpiteful, proud, boaſters, " inventers of evil things, diſobedient to parents, " without underſtanding, covenant breakers, without " natural affection, implacable, unmerciful; vile in " their affections; changing the truth of GOD into a " lie; and worſhipping and ſerving the creature more " than the CREATOR, who is GOD over all, bleſſed for " ever *." What a black catalogue of vices is this? And was not that a " crooked and perverſe generation," indeed, of which this was the general and prevailing character?

BUT, *my brethren*, we need not go back to antiquity, to juſtify and illuſtrate this obſervation of the Apoſtle. In every age of the world, GOD's true church and people, " live in the midſt of a crooked and per- " verſe generation."

THE Apoſtle is ſtill addreſſing every Chriſtian amongſt us, in the words of our text, with equal propriety as he did his converts at *Philippi*---" Be ye harmleſs and " blameleſs, without rebuke, in the midſt of a crooked " and perverſe generation, amongſt whom ye ſhine as " lights in the world." The world, as diſtinguiſhed from the church, ever has been, and ever will be, " a crooked and perverſe generation." This world has been ever diſtinguiſhed into two grand claſſes of men, diametrically oppoſite in their principles, ends, motives, diſpoſitions and manners, and generally diſtinguiſhed in ſcripture by the appellation of the 'world, and the 'church;---the ſeed of the woman, and ſeed of the

 'ſerpent;

* Rom. i. 21,---34.

'ſerpent;--the ſheep and the goats;--the tares and the 'wheat;---the righteous and the wicked;---the chil-'dren of this world, and the children of light.' If we attentively read the ſcriptures, we will find that the word world, is generally uſed to repreſent the worſt of theſe two claſſes.---" The world " (ſays St. *John*) lieth in wickedneſs.---The world " (ſays he) knoweth us not.---Love not the world, " neither the things that are in the world. If any " man love the world, the love of the Father is not in " him: For all that is in the world, the luſt of the " fleſh, and the luſt of the eye, and the pride of life, " is not of the Father, but of the world." St. *James* tells us, " that the friendſhip of the world is enmity " with GOD;" and therefore beſeeches Chriſtians, *to keep themſelves unſpotted from the world.* St. *Paul* tells us, that " the LORD JESUS CHRIST gave himſelf for our " ſins, that he might deliver us from this preſent evil " world, according to the will of GOD;"---and therefore earneſtly beſeeches Chriſtians not *to be conformed to this world*, in its manners, cuſtoms, ſpirit or maxims, but *to be transformed by the renewing of their minds.* " If the " world hate you (ſays CHRIST to his diſciples) ye " know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye " were of the world, the world would love his own; " but becauſe ye are not of the world, but I have choſe " you out of the world, therefore the world hateth " you."

IT were eaſy, *my brethren*, to multiply quotations to this purpoſe; but ſurely evidence enough has been produced to prove, that the world, in which Chriſtians live; or, that that company of men with which the church is contraſted, and from which it is diſtinguiſhed every where in ſcripture, is " a crooked and perverſe genera-" tion."

THE

THE *ſame truth* will evidently appear from the *general maxims* and *prevailing manners of* the world, by which the crookedneſs and perverſeneſs of their ſentiments and conduct will be clearly manifeſted. Will either the dictates of enlightened reaſon, the beſt intereſts of ſociety, or the *goſpel of* CHRIST, juſtify ſuch maxims as the following:---'Youth is the proper ſeaſon for pleaſure 'and gallantry:---It is ridiculous to make much ado 'about religion:---We ſhould not aſpire to be ſaints: 'All that religion requires of us, is to be juſt and honeſt 'in our dealings:---Calumny and ridicule are the ſalt or 'zeſt of converſation:---It is unworthy of a man of 'honour to put up with an affront. Revenge is ſweet: '---Ambition is the vice of noble ſouls:---Impurity is 'intollerable in women, but pardonable in men. We 'ſhould be conformed to the world, and act agreeable 'to its maxims.'---Which of theſe my friends, (and a great many more might be added to the number) does not flatly contradict ſome precept of CHRIST, and the very ſpirit and genius of Chriſtianity?---And yet which of theſe maxims is not received in ſociety as a firſt principle, againſt the truth of which, it would be deemed affectation to diſpute?

AND are not the *prevailing manners* of the world, exactly conformable to *theſe maxims*?---How few regard even the ſolemnity of an oath, where intereſt is concerned?---What faith is, now a days, to be put in the promiſes or profeſſions of men? The very form of religion is in ſuch ſovereign contempt, that it is deemed highly impolite to introduce even the mention of it into company. How few in Chriſtian countries, comparatively ſpeaking, attend the ordinances of CHRIST, or pay any regard to the public worſhip of GOD?---What are the lives of the generality, but a courſe of mere extravagance, ſenſuality, and diſſipation---of enquiry how they may provide for the fleſh, to fulfil the luſts thereof---

what they ſhall eat, or drink, and wherewithal they ſhall be clothed, without a ſingle ſerious thought about the ſtate of their ſouls, or eternity? If we enquire into the ſource of mirth and pleaſantry in moſt companies, ſhall we not find the laugh almoſt perpetually raiſed, either at the expence of religion, or at the natural or moral failings and infirmities of our fellow-creatures? Subjects which drew tears from the eyes of *David*, and which no right mind can contemplate, without pain and anxiety! Indeed, what is modern wit and gaiety, but calumny, ſlander and profanity, rendered laughable, by the ludicrous garb in which they are dreſſed?---To all this, may I not add, that ſome of the moſt ſcandalous and filthy vices are become ſo common and faſhionable in Chriſtian countries, that to reſiſt or decline them, would be deemed an almoſt unpardonable ſingularity.

SURELY nothing more need be added to prove, That the *world* in which Chriſtians live, is "a crooked and "perverſe generation;"---that to follow the multitude, is to renounce the guidance of reaſon and religion; and that to be conformed to this evil world, in its general cuſtoms, maxims and manners, is to imitate the very worſt examples, and to forfeit all that glory and happineſs which the goſpel has ſet before us. I am now to lay before you, under the

II. HEAD of diſcourſe, The *Chriſtian's deſtination* in this *evil world*; or, *what purpoſes* he is *deſigned* and *appointed* to ſerve in the midſt of a crooked and perverſe generation,---"He is to ſhine as a light in the world, hold-"ing forth the word of life." Upon ſuch a view of things, Chriſtians may poſſibly ſay, 'Since *ſuch* is the 'world in which we live;---ſince human ſociety is ſo 'empoiſoned and corrupted, let us ſhun the contagion: '---Let us break off all commerce with the living:---

'Let

'Let us abandon the ſociety of men, and, like hermits, 'ſecure our innocence in obſcurity and retirement, in 'the ſolitude of deſarts and caves of the earth.' By no means, ſays St. *Paul*. Man is a ſocial creature, and is deſigned for ſociety: Flee not, therefore, from the deſtination of Providence: Continue in that world where the example of your virtue is ſo neceſſary: Labour to diſabuſe and undeceive your fellow-mortals, and to prevent them, if poſſible, from falling into miſery: Let your life, your converſation, and your whole deportment, be a reproach to their vices, and a light to direct their feet into the paths of peace, holineſs and happineſs: 'Shine as lights in the world; holding forth, in 'your example and behaviour, the word of life, for the 'direction and inſtruction of others.'

THE Greek word, which we tranſlate *light*, has a peculiar energy in the text. It is compounded of two words, which ſignify *an elevated light*, or a *light held up*, for the guidance and direction of others. The Apoſtle probably alludes to the ancient *Pharos*, a *tower* or *lighthouſe*, built by *Ptolemy Philadelphus*, on an iſland of the ſame name, in the mouth of the river *Nile* in *Egypt*, on the top of which a fire was kept continually kindled in the night, to direct veſſels into the harbour. The alluſion, *my brethren*, is very plain and very beautiful. The Chriſtian ſerves as a *guide* and *director* to a crooked and perverſe generation. Elevated above the falſe maxims and corrupt manners of the world, he holds forth before him the word of life; *i. e.* he *ſhows* and *manifeſts*, by his example, *that* which the word of GOD demands of us, in order to our entering into life eternal.

THE *word of* GOD is termed *, "A light to our feet "and a lamp to our paths," becauſe it gives us direction in the whole of our conduct. When our temporal and

* Pſal. cxix. 105.

and eternal intereſts claſh and interfere with each other, it puts that important and ſignificant queſtion, " What " ſhall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and " loſe his own ſoul?" In the time of affliction, it calls us to *conſider*, " and to humble ourſelves under the " mighty hand of GOD, that he may exalt us in due " ſeaſon."---Under the influence of riches and proſperity, it directs us, " not to truſt in uncertain riches---to " be rich in the good works of charity and liberality--- " to be good ſtewards of the manifold grace of God; " willing to diſtribute; ready to communicate:---To " make unto ourſelves friends of the mammon of un- " righteouſneſs, that when we fail here, they may re- " ceive us into everlaſting habitations."---On a death-bed, and in the near proſpect of eternity, it is a light to our feet, and a lamp to our paths---by repreſenting death as a *conquered*, *diſarmed* tyrant;---by opening an eternal world of glory to the faith of the Chriſtian;--- by aſſuring him, that when " his heart and his fleſh " fail, GOD will be the ſtrength of his heart and his " portion for ever;---that bleſſed are the dead, who " die in the Lord, for they do reſt from their labour " and their works do follow them."

Now, that which *David* ſays of the *word of* GOD, St. *Paul* here ſays of the *deſtination of the Chriſtian*. AS GOD hath given his word to be a light to men's feet and a lamp to their paths,---to guide their feet into the way of peace and happineſs,---ſo he hath alſo deſtined and appointed Chriſtians, " to ſhine as lights in the world, " in the midſt of a crooked and perverſe generation,"--- practically *holding forth*, and *examplifying* the word of life, for their guidance and direction.

THE Chriſtian's life and converſation ſhould be the word of GOD reduced to practice; a living comment on the word of life; ſo that the ignorant and wicked world,

world, who either cannot or will not read the word of GOD, may ſee it clearly held forth, and plainly examplified in the life of the Chriſtian. And indeed, *my brethren*, what have the lives of the ſaints been, in all ages, but juſt a *holding forth of this word of life?* They have preached more powerfully and more effectually, by their lives and examples, than their doctrines, to thoſe crooked and perverſe generations, among whom they ſhone as lights in the world. GOD hath *ſet them up*, in every age and generation, as *beacons* and *Pharoſes*, to ſtem the torrent of human depravity and corruption;---to ſhew the practicability of virtue in human nature; ---to be a reproof and reproach to prevailing vice and immorality, cauſing iniquity, as aſhamed, to hide its face,---and to allure mankind into the paths of virtue and happineſs.

WOULD we ſee, for inſtance, the preference which the intereſts of *eternity* ſhould have to thoſe of *time*; let us behold it examplified in the conduct of Moſes, "Who refuſed to be called the ſon of Pharaoh's "daughter; chooſing rather to ſuffer affliction with "the people of GOD, than to enjoy the pleaſures of ſin "for a ſeaſon; eſteeming the reproach of CHRIST great-"er riches than the treaſures of *Egypt*, becauſe he had "reſpect to the recompence of reward."---In the lives of *Abraham* and *Joſhua*, we have the nobleſt examples of pious maſters of families: "As for me, (ſays *Joſhua*) "and my houſe, we will ſerve the Lord." "For I "know *Abraham*, (ſays GOD) that he will command "his children, and his houſhold after him, to keep the "way of the Lord, and to do juſtice and judgment *." ---In King *David*, the moſt fervent piety and animated devotion ſhine forth conſpicuouſly.---*Job* taught the world, in his day, that *dutiful ſubmiſſion* and *entire reſignation*

* Gen. xvii. 19. Joſh. xxiv. 15.

tion which we owe to the will of GOD in times of the deepeſt calamity and affliction; "What! ſhall we receive "good at the hand of GOD, and ſhall we not receive "evil alſo; the LORD giveth, and the LORD taketh "away, and bleſſed be the name of the LORD *." In *Zaccheus* we have a bright example of the proper uſe of riches, and the great duty of reſtitution;---"Behold, "LORD, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if "I have taken any thing from any man, by falſe accu-"ſation, I reſtore him four-fold †:" And in the life of St. *Paul* himſelf, we have examplified a whole conſtellation of Chriſtian virtues and duties;---the moſt examplary humility, patience and ſelf-denial;---unparalelled zeal and diligence in promoting the glory of GOD, and the ſalvation of men,---and the moſt earneſt deſire "of being abſent from the body and preſent "with the LORD."---All theſe anſwered the deſignation of divine providence, and fulfilled this poſitive and active part of their Chriſtian calling:---All theſe were *burning* and *ſhining lights* in the world; holding forth the word of life to thoſe *crooked and perverſe generations*, among whom divine providence had ſtationed and placed them.

NOR, *my brethren*, was *this duty peculiar* to theſe *great lights* of the *ancient world*; it is equally the duty, the honour and the intereſt of every individual Chriſtian to the end of time, to be a *burning and a ſhining light* in his day and generation, and thus to *hold forth the word of life*, to the crooked and perverſe generation, among whom he is ſtationed by divine providence.

MANY Chriſtians, indeed, are not able to *build churches*, to *found hoſpitals*, to *preach* or defend the goſpel, or to propagate it to diſtant parts of the world;---but every Chriſtian is ſurely able to live a good, virtuous and examplary

* Job i. 21.——ii. 10.
† Luke xix. 8.

examplary life.---Every Chriſtian is able " to adorn " the doctrine of GOD his Saviour," to exhibit the virtues and graces of genuine Chriſtianity ;---to encourage virtue and piety, and diſcountenance vice and immorality as far as his influence and example can reach. And this is every Chriſtian's duty: " Let your " light, (ſays CHRIST, the great Lord and Law-giver of " Chriſtians) ſo ſhine before men, that others ſeeing " your good works, may glorify your Father in hea- " ven.---Be ye harmleſs and blameleſs, (ſays the Apoſ- " tle) the children of GOD without rebuke, in the midſt " of a crooked and perverſe generation.---Have your " converſation honeſt among the Gentiles ; (ſays St. " *Peter*) having a good conſcience, that whereas they " ſpeak evil of you, as of evil doers, they may be " aſhamed that falſely accuſe your good converſation " in CHRIST---and may, by your good works which " they ſhall behold, glorify GOD in the day of viſita- " tion."

THESE ſcriptures, *my brethren*, while they point out the duty of Chriſtians, alſo ſhew the propriety and expediency of it. It is proper, it is fit and expedient, that Chriſtians ſhould maintain and preſerve an immaculate and examplary character---that the goſpel may not be blamed ;---that their profeſſion may not be diſgraced; ---that ſinners may be reclaimed, and that the church may be edified. They owe this duty to GOD, to themſelves, to the Church, and to that crooked and perverſe generation, among whom GOD hath placed them as *lights*, to hold forth the word of life.

THIS is the *poſitive part* of the Chriſtian's duty. He is to be *actively holy* and *examplary*, in all manner of life and converſation ; and that, not merely from the ſelfiſh and contracted view of ſecuring his own ſalvation ;--- but alſo, from the more *catholic* and *charitable* motive of promoting the ſalvation of his fellow men ;---that he

may profecute the *noble* and GOD-*like* defign of faving both himfelf and thofe who behold his good converfation in CHRIST.---Proceed we now,

III. To the *negative* duty of a Chriftian, in order to his anfwering this deftination of providence: " He is " to live harmlefs and blamelefs, as the child of GOD, " without rebuke."

THESE words muft be underftood *here* (as indeed every where elfe in fcripture when applied to men) not in their moft rigid and ftrictly literal meaning, as implying a *finlefs perfection*: For, alas! in this fenfe, " there is not " a juft man upon earth, who doeth good and fin- " eth not. In many things we all offend: And if we " fay we have *no fin*, we are *liars* and the *truth is not in* " *us*." They muft therefore be underftood in a *qualified fenfe*, as only implying *gofpel fincerity* and *evangelical righteoufnefs*. " Be ye harmlefs, blamelefs and irre- " proachable as the children of GOD;" that is, ' pay ' a *conftant regard* to the laws of that great Mafter whom ' you ferve, fo far as human weaknefs and infirmity will ' permit; and let it appear evidently even by the very ' nature of thofe failings and fhort-comings which the ' weaknefs and imperfection of your nature fometimes ' betrays you into, that your fins are not *deliberate* and ' *allowed*, proceeding from a *fpirit of rebellion*; but arifing ' wholly from the *weaknefs* and *infirmity* of your nature, ' in the prefent imperfect ftate.' It is faid emphatically of the *wicked* *, " They have corrupted themfelves; " their fpot is not the fpot of GOD's children; they are " a perverfe and crooked generation." GOD's *children*, it feems, have *their fpots*; but they are not the fpots of the wicked. They fin not cordially, prefumptuoufly, allowedly, nor perfeveringly. They love holinefs and purfue

* Deut. xxxii. 5.

purſue it, as far as the weakneſs and infirmity of their nature will permit. It is their honeſt and hearty endeavour, "to be harmleſs and blameleſs, the children "of GOD, without rebuke;" and with the charitable and right-thinking part of mankind, they generally obtain a good report, an irreproachable character. A real Chriſtian can join *Job*, with ſome ſincerity, in ſaying: "I will not remove my integrity from me; my righte-"ouſneſs I hold faſt, and will not let it go: My heart "ſhall not reproach me ſo long as I live." And what was predicated of *Job*, may, with ſome propriety, be ſaid of *him*; "That he is a perfect man, and an up-"right; one who feareth GOD and eſcheweth evil †." It will be his great ambition and earneſt endeavour, as a child of GOD, not only to imbibe the temper and diſpoſition of a child, crying Abba Father; but alſo to imitate his heavenly Father in all thoſe virtues and graces which conſtitute his moral character, being *holy* as GOD is *holy*, *pure* as he is *pure*, and *merciful* as he is *merciful*, in all manner of life and converſation.

IN VAIN, *my fellow Chriſtians*, do we *aſſume the character* of being the *children of* GOD.---*In vain* are we the expectants of a glorious immortality, in conſequence of this aſſumed character:---and, *in vain* do we impoſe on a credulous world, by this hollow and hypocritical profeſſion, while we are unlike our heavenly Father in the temper of our minds, and the conduct of our lives; while, inſtead of being *harmleſs*, *blameleſs*, *unrebukeable* and *examplary*, we continue to be a *perverſe* and *crooked generation*, and have lives and converſations all blurr'd over with the *ſpots of the wicked*. Indignant heaven muſt juſtly ſpurn ſuch affrontive inſolence; and that *omniſcient* GOD, who requires *truth in the heart*, and *ſincerity in the inward part*, will appoint us our portion with hypocrites, where ſhall be weeping and wailing,

 and

† Job i. 1.——xxvii. 6.

and gnaſhing of teeth. But I have already treſpaſſed too long on your patience, and ſhall beg leave to conclude, by addreſſing my moſt tender exhortations to *two ſorts of perſons*: And, *1ſt*, To ſuch of you, *my brethren*, who, by your Chriſtian profeſſion, and by a correſpondent examplary life, have the honour of ſhining as lights, in the midſt of a crooked and perverſe generation, holding forth the word of life.

I CALL you, my brethren, to conſider the *grand* and *ſublime* of your Chriſtian character and calling. When St. *Paul* would animate his ſon *Timothy* to a zealous diſcharge of the duties of his miniſtry, he tells him, "Take heed unto thy ſelf, and unto thy doctrine: "For, in doing this, thou ſhalt both ſave thy ſelf, and "them that hear thee *." He makes him a kind of ſubordinate ſaviour; a fellow-labourer and fellow-worker with CHRIST, in the glorious work of human redemption.

BUT what *Timothy did by his miniſtry*, every Chriſtian is called, in our text, to do by his *example*. If, indeed, *my brethren*, you are "harmleſs and blameleſs, the chil-"dren of GOD, without rebuke, in the midſt of a "crooked and perverſe generation, among whom you "ſhine as lights in the world, holding forth the word "of life," you ſhall not only *ſave yourſelves*, but alſo be highly inſtrumental in *ſaving others*. And oh! what an *honour*, what a bleſſednefs is this?---In purſuing this deſign, you enter into the plan of redemption, and partake of the honours of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, the Redeemer;---you do a *work* the moſt pleaſing to GOD; the moſt profitable to yourſelves, and the moſt beneficial to your fellow-creatures:---A *work* which employed the counſels of GOD from all eternity;---and a *work*, on which he laviſhed (if I may ſo ſpeak with reverence) the

* 1 Tim. iv. 16.

the life and blood of his dear Son; I mean, the ſalvation of poor mortals.

BY *this divine* and *God-like labour* of love, you are alſo brightening your immortal crowns and doubling your eternal rewards. "For what is our hopes, (ſays St. "*Paul* to the *Theſſalonians*,) or our joy, or our crown of "rejoicing? Are not even ye in the preſence of our "LORD JESUS CHRIST, at his coming? For ye are "our glory and our joy."---In like manner, *my brethren*, thoſe ſouls, to whoſe ſalvation you have contributed, by your virtuous and pious examples, will be your crown, your joy, and your glory, through eternal ages. In thoſe regions of perfect love, you will be happy, not only in ſeeing the happineſs of thoſe whom you loved here, but alſo in having promoted their eternal happineſs;---in having preſerved them from the contagion of the age;---in having recovered them from a crooked and perverſe generation, and in having ſnatched them as brands from the burning.---And O! my friends, can there be any difficulty unconquerable---any virtue too ſevere---any ſelf-denial too painful with ſuch motives as theſe before your eyes? Is it poſſible, that any frivolous pleaſure, or trifling emolument of ſin, ſhould have power or influence enough to rob you of this glory, this joy, and this crown of rejoicing? I would,

2. BEG leave to addreſs myſelf in a few words, to ſuch as are unhappy enough ſtill to make a part of that crooked and perverſe generation, amidſt whom the few righteous ſhine as lights in the world.

MY unhappy fellow-ſinners! Let me beſeech you in the ſpirit of *love* and *meekneſs*, to enter into the views of providence, who has ſet thoſe eminent examples of virtue and piety before your eyes! For what reaſon hath GOD, the Father of mercies, kindled up ſo many *burning* and *ſhining lights* in this world of his---Men of

our

our own nature and make, adorned with ſo many conſpicuous virtues---who have been ornaments to human nature, and benefactors to the world ?---Is it only that we ſhould behold them with an eye of *envy* and *contempt?* Is it only that we ſhould blacken their characters, and purſue them with calumny and ſlander; thus aggravating our own guilt and condemnation ?---Is it not that we ſhould emulate their virtues, imitate their examples, and be corrected, reformed and inſtructed by their manners ?

LET us *bluſh* to think that men of the *ſame common nature* with ourſelves; compoſed of the ſame fleſh and blood; animated with the ſame paſſions, and born heirs of the ſame corruptions and infirmities, ſhould have yet ſo far outſtripped us, in every thing *noble*, GOD-*like*, *rational* and *divine ?*---Are not the ſame ſuccours, the ſame promiſes of aid and aſſiſtance, the ſame ſources of grace, virtue and holineſs, open to us, as were to *Abraham*, to *Moſes*, to *Job*, to *Elijah*, to *Paul*; and as are to all the good, the virtuous, the pious, and examplary, of this as well as every foregoing age ? Wherefore then do we not avail ourſelves of theſe advantages ?---Is there any aſſignable reaſon why any of our fellow-creatures ſhould outdo us in any thing *amiable*, *lovely*, *virtuous*, *praiſe-worthy* and *of good report ?* Why any of our fellow-men ſhould excel us in the care of their own ſouls, or of the ſouls of their fellow-creatures ? "The ſaints, are "the excellent ones of the earth, in whom ſhould be "all our delight:" Let us reſpect their virtues: Let us cheriſh their acquaintance: Let us love their ſociety, and follow their examples. Too, too long have we ſcandalized the church, it is now time we ſhould edify it. Too, too long have we laboured for the deſtruction of our fellow-men, it is now time we ſhould labour for their converſion and ſalvation. Too, too long have

we

we been *joined to this crooked and perverſe generation* ; *this world which lies in wickedneſs*.---It is now time we ſhould ſhine as lights in the world ; holding forth the word of life, for the guidance and direction of thoſe whom our bypaſt evil examples have perverted and confirmed in their wickedneſs !

To conclude in one word : Let me addreſs that exhortation to all of you, *my dear hearers*, which St. *Peter* addreſſed to the Jews---" Save yourſelves from this " untoward generation."----Deliver yourſelves from their *principles*, *maxims*, *cuſtoms* and *manners* ; from their *ſins* and from their *judgments*.---" Make haſte, flee for " your lives, leſt ye periſh." May GOD, the merciful Father of our ſpirits, give weight to this exhortation, and ſet it home powerfully upon each of our conſciences ; and to his great name ſhall be the eternal praiſe, through JESUS CHRIST our only Lord and Redeemer. Amen and Amen.

ESSAY

ESSAY LXI.

THE

AGGRAVATED GUILT OF MURDER:

A

SERMON

FROM

EXODUS XX. 13.

Thou ſhalt not kill.

IT may perhaps be deemed a little unſeaſonable and impolite to handle a ſubject of this kind, before a civilized and chriſtianized aſſembly. Methinks, I hear ſome of my hearers object, and ſay, 'You pay us but a 'rude and unwelcome compliment, by even ſuppoſing 'us capable of committing ſuch an atrocious and un-'natural crime as this. Murder! The ſhedding of in-'nocent blood! Our blood runs chill, and freezes at 'the very thought of it. No; GOD forbid! Our 'hearts are too tender and humane ever to harbour 'ſuch a deſign, or liſten to ſuch a temptation!'

THERE was a time, *my hearers*, when moſt murderers could doubtleſs have ſaid all this, with as much *confidence* and *ſincerity* as any of us now can, and when their very ſouls

ſouls would have ſhuddered at the thoughts of committing ſo great a wickedneſs. But there was alſo a time when the increaſed ſtrength of their corruptions hurried them on to commit it with greedineſs, and under the moſt aggravated circumſtances of guilt.

ALAS! we little know the *deceitfulneſs* and *deſperate wickedneſs* of our own hearts, or the *depth* and *inveteracy* of our corruptions, when we imagine ourſelves above the danger or poſſibility of committing the greateſt and moſt atrocious crimes. "The heart (ſays the pro-" phet) is deceitful above all things and deſperately " wicked; who can know it? It ſtarts aſide like a " broken bow *."

WE look upon murder, (and juſtly) as the moſt atrocious crime which can be committed by man---we have no compaſſion for the perſons of murderers, but regard them as *monſters of iniquity*, who have even no claim to *human pity* :---But I am perſuaded, *my friends*, that nothing but the reſtraining grace of GOD, prevents multitudes, who are thus *mercileſs* in their judgment of others, from committing the very ſame crime. '*Cruel* ' *man!*---Thou haſt no mercy on thy fellow-ſinner!--- ' Thou thinkeſt him unworthy the pity either of GOD ' or man!---Thou deemeſt it impoſſible for thee to fall ' into the ſame wickedneſs!---Yet thou art *proud*, *imperi-* ' *ous*, *intolerant* and *unforgiving*! Yet thy ſoul often *boils*, ' *ferments*, and *rankles* with the paſſion of *anger*, *fury*, *re-* ' *venge*, *envy*, and *malice prepenſe* againſt thy neighbour! ' Yet thou prayeſt for his damnation, and deviſeſt evil ' againſt him, and wiſheſt him dead, becauſe he ſtands ' in the way of ſome gratification, or has wounded thy ' imaginary honour, or hurt thy pride! Be it known ' unto thee, *O blind* and *mercileſs man*, that *thou art the* ' *very murderer* whom thou condemneſt without pity;

* Jer. xvii. 9.

'and that nothing but ſome *prudential motive*, or rather, 'the *reſtraining grace of* GOD, bridling thine outrageous 'paſſions, for the ſafety and ſecurity of human ſociety, 'prevents thee from perpetrating the very fact thyſelf, 'which thou thinkeſt *unpardonable* in *another*.'

Thou ſhalt not kill, ſays GOD.

IT would be paying a bad compliment to the underſtandings of my hearers, to take up much of your time in ſhewing you---That there are many circumſtances, wherein the taking away of human life, is not to be deemed *ſinful* or *criminal*;---ſuch as *chance-medly*, when one man takes away the life of another, by *mere accident*, without any *knowledge* or *deſign* in the action;---or *man-ſlaughter*, *on one's own defence*, when a man from a principle of *ſelf-preſervation*, is, as it were, compelled to take away the life of another who aſſaults him unprovoked, in order to ſave his own. The ſame alſo happens in *a lawful*, *defenſive war*, when men are forced to deſtroy an invading enemy, in defence of their own lives, liberties and properties;---or, *laſtly*, when men have forfeited their lives, by ſuch crimes as eſſentially affect the public good and ſafety, and which are adjudged worthy of death, by laws *human and divine*. In all theſe caſes, and perhaps in ſome others, the taking away of human life, is ſo far from being criminal, that it may be a duty which we owe to GOD, *our neighbour* and *ourſelves!*

THE crime therefore *here* forbidden by GOD, and which is emphatically expreſſed in the Engliſh language by the word murder, is the *ſhedding of innocent blood*; ---or 'wilfully and feloniouſly killing of another, upon 'prepenſed malice; whether ſecretly or openly; whether 'ourſelves, or by others.' And this prepenſed malice, is either, (1.) Expreſs, when it may be evidently proved, that there was ill-will;---or, (2.) Implied; when one kills another ſuddenly, having nothing to de-

fend

ſend himſelf: For, in ſuch a caſe, the law juſtly preſumes, that there muſt have been *malice*.---*To this* may alſo be added, the atrocious crime of *ſuicide*, or a man's laying violent hands upon himſelf;---as alſo, *duelling*, which contains in it the eſſence and guilt of both the above crimes.

IN farther improving this ſubject, I ſhall, I. *A little* expoſe the heinous and and aggravated guilt of murder. ---II. Shew you that it is a crime juſtly puniſhable by death.---III. Endeavour to expoſe thoſe *paſſions*, *tempers* and *practices* which lead to it. I am,

I. A LITTLE to open and *expoſe* the *heinous* and *aggravated guilt* of murder. And this may be ſhown 1ſt, From the very *nature* and *conſequences* of the crime itſelf; and, 2dly, From the light in which both the *word of* GOD, and the *conſciences of men* repreſent it. And,

1. FROM the very nature and conſequences of the crime itſelf. (1.) Man is fearfully and wonderfully made; *made*, we are told, in the *image* and *likeneſs* of GOD. Man is GOD's offſpring and *repreſentative* on this earth. His body is, perhaps, the nobleſt piece of divine workmanſhip; and GOD, when he had made it, breathed into it the breath of life, and made it *a living* and *intelligent image* of *himſelf!* Now to break to pieces this *living temple*;---to *deface*, *undo*, and, as much as in us is, *wantonly to deſtroy* this workmanſhip of GOD;---to ſeparate this ſoul and body whom GOD hath joined together;---to diſunite and take down this tabernacle, which GOD hath built and ſet up, by a miracle of his power, wiſdom and goodneſs;---what a *daring* crime? What an *audacious* wickedneſs? All our power, wiſdom and contrivance cannot give *form*, *exiſtence* or *life* to a

worm; and ſhall we dare to deſtroy a fellow-man? Shall we perſume to take away, in the wantonneſs of our pride and paſſion, that which all the powers on earth, and all the angels in heaven cannot give?

(2.) THAT GOD *makes nothing in vain*, is a maxim not to be diſputed. Who knows the deſtiny of a human creature, or for what purpoſes Providence may have deſigned him? Preſumptuous, ſhort-ſighted mortals that we are, we are apt to pronounce a being worthleſs and uſeleſs, on whom his Maker may ſet much value, and by whom he may do great things! When we ſee *Saul perſecuting the church*, and aſſiſting in the ſtoning of *Stephen*, we may adjudge him worthy of death, and think the world would be well rid of ſuch a monſter; yet this very *Saul* was *a choſen veſſel*, who was to proſelyte half the Roman empire to JESUS! How many wicked and worthleſs men, have become benefactors to the world and ornaments to humanity!

How many peſts to human ſociety have become fathers of children, who have done honour to human nature, and become the ſaviours of their country?---This ſhould teach us not to deſpiſe the meaneſt of the creatures of GOD, or the wickedeſt of men, who are ſtill in a place of repentance. But the murderer does what in him lies to defeat the deſigns of GOD's providence, and cut off the purpoſes of his will. True, he can never effect this: "GOD's counſel ſhall ſtand, and the "thoughts of his heart to all generations: For there "is neither wiſdom or device, or counſel againſt the "Lord!"---Yet no thanks to the murderer for this---who, in the rage or wantonneſs of his paſſions, cuts off a human creature, who, for all he knew or conſidered, might have been appointed by GOD to anſwer the nobleſt purpoſes, and to bring about the nobleſt deſigns in the world!

'CRUEL

'CRUEL and inhuman mother!---Knoweſt thou how 'uſeful, how worthy, how ornamental a member of 'ſociety, that child might have proved, whom thou art 'now about to *ſtrangle* or *abandon* to certain death;---to 'what honours, to what happineſs, to what uſefulneſs, 'to what degrees of future glory it might have been 'advanced!'---'Vile and *ſavage barbarian*, who, for the 'ſlighteſt provocation, or to gratify the moſt diabolical revenge, art juſt about to plunge the murderous 'ſteel into thy neighbour's bowels, or to level him to 'the earth by a leaden death!---Stop thy hand, till 'thou haſt conſidered, That thou art now about to rob 'helpleſs children, of a father---a helpleſs wife, of her 'provider---the poor and needy, of a helper---his 'friends, of a friend, and the world, perhaps, of a 'more uſeful member of ſociety than thy worthleſs 'ſelf!'

(3.) THE chief end and deſign of this world and ſtate is, that men ſhould prepare and provide for a better, and an eternal world. Human life was given chiefly for this purpoſe, and would be worth nothing on any other ſuppoſition. I may even affirm it, with confidence, that it would be unworthy of the wiſdom and goodneſs of GOD to create ſuch a being as man, and to expoſe him to the many calamities and afflictions of this life, *merely* for the ſmall portion of pleaſure and happineſs which he enjoys in it.

LIFE, *human life*, is a *time* and *ſpace* of *trial* and *probation* for eternity. In this view of it, human life is an *invaluable treaſure*, and every moment of it is of the *utmoſt importance!* For this purpoſe the Pſalmiſt importunately prays; "LORD, cut me not off in the midſt of "my days; thy years are throughout all generations *."

For

* Pſal. cii. 24.

For this purpoſe we pray againſt *ſudden deaths*; leſt we ſhould be hurried into eternity, and before the judgment ſeat, with our ſins upon us, and in an unprepared ſtate.

BUT, now, the murderer robs us of all our precious time,---ſends us ſuddenly and unexpectedly before the tribunal of GOD, without the poſſibility of a GOD *have mercy*; and, perhaps, plunges us, impenitent, into an everlaſting hell of miſery and deſpair!---O! *what reſtitution* can be made in this caſe! What reparation for this injury! If any guilt can look too big for divine mercy, it muſt be ſuch guilt as this!

WHAT can *our ſorrow*, what can *our tears*, *what* can *even our blood* do towards atoning ſuch aggravated guilt as this? Can we redeem this ſoul from hell? Can we again give it a new ſtate of trial and probation; or one hour wherein to work out its own ſalvation?

(4.) THIS is a crime againſt *humanity*; a crime againſt all the ſoft, tender and ſympathetic feelings of the heart! It ſpeaks an infatuated underſtanding, a hard heart, a ſeared conſcience!---A man muſt firſt kill himſelf as it were; do violence to all his feelings, as a man; have totally diveſted himſelf of his humanity before he could imbrue his hands in the blood of his fellow-creature, his neighbour, his friend, his brother of the human race.

(5.) IT is a crime truly *diabolical*. The *devil* was a murderer from the beginning; and hence he is called *Abaddon* and *Apollyon*, the *deſtroyer*. *Envy*, *malice* and *revenge*, from which murder ſprings, as from its proper ſource, are paſſions *truly diabolical*; and a man muſt indeed be a *devil incarnate*, before he can coolly premeditate murder, and take pleaſure, or enjoy gratification, in ſpilling innocent blood. And this is the infamous glory of thoſe, who ſcruple not to declare, that *revenge is ſweet!*

ſweet! If there be, indeed, a pleaſure in this kind of revenge, it is truly the pleaſure of a devil, and perhaps the only ſpecies of pleaſure of which a devil is capable!

(6.) GREAT and *horrible* as the crime of murder is *in itſelf*, yet there are many circumſtances which may exceedingly aggravate and increaſe its guilt; from the time when, and place where it is committed; from the perſons upon whom, and deliberate manner in which it is perpetrated. Perhaps it was a poor innocent, a helpleſs infant! Perhaps it was an aged, indulgent father, or the child of our bowels! Perhaps it was a brother, or a friend who ſticketh cloſer than a brother, and whom we ought to have protected at the hazard of life! Perhaps it was done deliberately, in cold blood, after long premeditation, and for ſome ſlight provocation, or upon ſome mere punctilio of honour! Perhaps it was the father of a family, whoſe helpleſs children depended wholly upon his life for their ſupport! Theſe, and a number of other circumſtances, render this crime exceedingly heinous.

2. THE aggravated guilt of murder farther appears from the light in which both the *word of* GOD, and the conſciences of men, repreſent it. When *Cain* ſlew his brother *Abel*---" The LORD ſaid, what haſt thou done? " The voice of thy brother's blood cryeth unto me " from the ground. And now thou art curſed from " the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive " thy brother's blood from thy hand *.---Your blood " of your lives will I require, at the hand of every beaſt " will I require it; and at the hand of man, at the " hand of every man's brother will I require the life of " man †."

IT

* Gen. iv.
† Gen. ix.

IT is a crime of a *deep die*, and of a *crimſon colour* ;---a *land-polluting*, *land-defiling* ſin. " Ye ſhall not pollute " the land wherein ye are, for blood it defileth the land, " and the land cannot be cleanſed of the blood that is " ſhed therein, but by the blood of him that ſhed it *." " By ſwearing, and lying, and killing, and ſtealing, and " committing adultery, they break out, and blood " toucheth blood: Therefore ſhall the land mourn, " and every one that dwelleth therein ſhall languiſh †." " Ye know, (ſays the Apoſtle) that no murderer hath " eternal life abiding in him ‡." And how earneſtly does the Pſalmiſt pray, " Deliver me, O LORD, from " blood-guiltineſs §."---" Surely, at the command of " the LORD came this upon *Judah*, to remove them " out of his ſight, for the ſins of *Manaſſeh*, and for the " innocent blood which he ſhed: For, he filled *Jeru-* " *ſalem* with innocent blood, which the LORD would " not pardon || !"

THE heinouſneſs of this crime is alſo manifeſt from *thoſe terrors of conſcience* which generally follow the commiſſion of it. How dreadful was the caſe of *Cain?* " My puniſhment, (ſays he) is greater than I am able " to bear;---from thy face ſhall I be hid, and I ſhall " be a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth, and it " ſhall come to paſs that every one that findeth me ſhall " ſlay me **."---How piercing is the lamentation of unhappy *Lamech?* " Hear my voice, ye wives of *La-* " *mech*, hearken to my ſpeech: for I have ſlain a man " to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt! If " *Cain* ſhall be avenged ſeven fold, ſurely *Lamech*, ſeven- " ty

* Exod. xxi. 12,---15.
† Hoſ. iv. 2, 3.
‡ 1 John iii. 15.
§ Pſal. li.
|| 2 Kings xxiv. 3, 4.
** Gen. iv. 14.

" ty and ſeven-fold!" (See how his terrors are multiplied, from a ſenſe of his guilt * !)---The ſame truth might be illuſtrated from the hiſtory of *Joſeph's brethren---of David*---of *King Herod*---of *Pontius Pilate*---of *Judas* the traitor, and of many other murderers, in profane hiſtory. Indeed, it is very remarkable, that *man-ſlayers* are haunted with the moſt frightful terrors, which leave them little eaſe or peace of mind; and that many of thoſe who have perpetrated the moſt horrid murders, in the moſt ſecret manner, have been driven by theſe terrors, to *betray their guilt*, to confeſs *their crimes*, and to die for them, rather than enjoy a life, wholly inſupportable!

NOR, my friends, are theſe terrors *vain things*:---They have their ground in the very conſtitution of our nature, and in that moral law which GOD hath written on the human heart. They are *peculiar* to *men*, to *moral agents*, *accountable creatures*: And *that* GOD, who hath implanted them in the human breaſt, muſt be a *liar* and a *deceiver*, (with all reverence be it ſpoken) if theſe terrors have not an object in nature, and if they are not the forerunners of future puniſhment! I ſhould now, in the

II. PLACE, ſhew you that this is a crime juſtly puniſhable by death. But indeed, this is a truth almoſt too obvious to need either *proof* or *illuſtration*. Surely, if there is any *capital crime* committed among men, *murder* is that crime. The divine law is expreſs in the matter, and ſeems to inſiſt on the death of the murderer, at the riſk of the community, without leaving any room or plea for mercy. " At the hand of every man's bro-
" ther will I require the life of man: Whoſo ſheddeth
" man's blood, by man ſhall his blood be ſhed †."

* Gen. iv. 24.
† Gen. ix. 6.

" He that ſmiteth a man that he die, he ſhall ſurely be " put to death.---He ſhall have no refuge.---Thou " ſhalt even take him from mine altar, that he " may die †. Ye ſhall take no ſatisfaction for the life " of a murderer ; but he ſhall be ſurely put to death. " Ye ſhall not pollute the land wherein ye are ; it can- " not be cleanſed of the blood ſhed therein, but by the " blood of him that ſhed it ‡."---The moſt barbarous nations, even from the light of nature and reaſon, have always deemed murder worthy of death---as appears from the hiſtory of *Jonah* and the *mariners*---and the *Barbarians* of the iſland *Melita*, who, when they ſaw a viper faſten on the hand of *Paul*, ſaid, " No doubt this man " is a murderer, whom, though he hath eſcaped the " ſea, yet vengeance ſuffereth not to live §.

THE ſame paſſions and barbarity of temper which have led a man to commit *one murder*, may lead him to commit many ;---and ſuch are the dreadful conſequences of this crime, that it would be dangerous to ſpare the life of ſuch a criminal, unleſs we could be aſſured of his true converſion, which is a matter not eaſily aſcertained : And therefore no ſecurity could be given to ſociety, for his future good behaviour.

It is very remarkable, that above all crimes, *murder* ſeldom goes unpuniſhed even in this life ; Providence often ſtrangely ſo ordering it that thoſe who have committed this crime in the moſt *ſecret manner*, have frequently been diſcovered by the moſt ſurpriſing means, and brought to condign puniſhment, often many years after the commiſſion of the fact.

SINCE, therefore, *my brethren*, murder is ſuch an atrocious crime, and condemned by the laws of GOD and *man*

† Exod. xxi. Lev. xxiv.
‡ Deut. xix. Exod. xxi.
§ Acts xxviii. 4.

man to ſo ſhameful and ignominious a puniſhment; how careful ought we to be, both as *men* and *Chriſtians*, to mortify ſuch *paſſions* and *tempers*, and ſhun ſuch *practices* as tempt and lead to it?---To *expoſe theſe*, therefore, in a practical manner, and to caution my hearers againſt them, is the

III. AND laſt head of diſcourſe propoſed.

1. THEN let us ſet a ſtrict watch *over our hearts*, in their very inmoſt thoughts, deſires and *movements*. *Out of the heart*, ſays the wiſe man, *are the iſſues of life*. This is the *cockatrice's neſt*, where all the viperous brood of malignant paſſions are hatched and brought forth. How often has an unfriendly thought, harboured there, boiled up into malice and broke out into *murder*?--- We are apt to think little of anger, and freely to indulge it: With *Jonah*, we think we do well to be angry: We let the ſun go down on our wrath---and keep it from day to day, from week to week, and from month to month, fermenting in our boſoms: We call to mind every circumſtance that may aggravate our wrath, and brood upon it in our minds night and day, 'till it rankles and feſters into malice---never conſidering, that anger and malice are the very *ſeeds of murder*--- nay, that they are *murder* itſelf in GOD's account, and by the determination of the goſpel of CHRIST!---What ſays Chriſt? "Ye have heard, that it hath been ſaid "by them of old time, Thou ſhalt not kill: But I ſay "unto you, whoſoever is angry with his brother without "a cauſe, ſhall be in danger of the judgment: And "whoſoever ſhall ſay unto his brother, *Raca* ſhall be "in danger of the council: But whoſoever ſhall ſay, "thou fool, ſhall be in danger of hell-fire *." We are commanded to be angry and not ſin; and cautioned not

* Matth. v. 21, 22.

to let the ſun go down upon our wrath !---But alas ! How difficult a duty is this ? And yet how important : How quickly does anger degenerate into malice and envy ? And how often do theſe malignant paſſions break out into rage, and end in *bloodſhed* and *murder* itſelf ! Of what importance is it, therefore, that we ſhould keep the heart with all diligence, and cruſh and ſtifle thoſe ſeeds of *murder* there, before they become ungovernable and *bring forth fruit unto death ?*---How dangerous is an *irraſcible temper ?* And therefore the wiſe man counſels, " Make no friendſhip with an angry " man, and with a furious man thou ſhalt not go ; " leſt thou learn his ways, and get a ſnare to thy " ſoul *." " From within, (ſays our Saviour) out of the " heart proceed evil thoughts, murderers, adulteries, " fornications, thefts, falſe witneſſes ;---theſe are the " things which defile a man †." This is the ſource of all corruption ; the fountain and origin of all the outward evils of the life, which ſendeth forth iniquity, as a fountain ſendeth forth its waters. Of what importance is it, therefore, to *watch over the heart*, and to have *this fountain of the life cleanſed* and *purified* by grace ! Were men at any pains with their *hearts*---would they look into theſe *chambers of imagery*, and put a ſtop to the workings of iniquity there ;---would they give no quarter, no indulgence, to the ſenſual and malignant paſſions, but inſtantly *cruſh* and *exterminate* them as they riſe in the imagination, and check the thought of wickedneſs, which is ſin ; and, while they attempt this, would they *pray for* GOD's *help*, and that he would create in them a clean heart, and renew a right frame of ſpirit within them, they would have few out-breakings of ſin in their lives.---But juſt the reverſe of this is the caſe

* Prov. xxii. 24.
† Matth. xv. 18, 19, 20.

caſe of ſinners; they not only totally neglect the government of the heart, but freely invite evil thoughts into it, and fondly cheriſh them there; ſo that their hearts are like *the ſluggard's garden*, a nurſery of every poiſonous and noxious weed, and over-run with all the *ſenſual* and *malignant* paſſions. "Whoſoever "hateth his brother, (ſays St. *John*) is a murderer; "and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abid-"ing in him *."

2. AVARICE, or *covetouſneſs*, is often the cauſe of murder. "The love of money, hath, in this reſpect, been "the root of much evil---which, while many have "coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and "pierced themſelves through with many ſorrows †." Many of the *wholeſale murders* committed under the pretext of war---and moſt of the *private murders* committed in robberies, have ſprung from this ſource.

AHAB committed this kind of murder on *Naboth*, for his vineyard. A king covets a neighbouring ſtate, and ſends his ſoldiers to murder the inhabitants, the rightful proprietors, that he may poſſeſs it: And yet *this* ſhall be ſanctified by the name of *a lawful war*,---and the *murderers* who fall in the attempt, ſhall be ſaid to *die in the bed of honour*; and the *chief murderer*, who ſet them on, ſhall be called a *mighty hero!* And his name ſhall ſhine in the annals of hiſtory! But that GOD who ſitteth on the throne of the univerſe, and is the avenger of innocent blood, ſeeth his guilt and ſhall repay it.---If the poor wretch, who, under a ſenſe of provocation, taketh away the life of his neighbour, ſhall be deemed a murderer---What ſhall we think of *Cæſar* and *Alexander*, and many other doughty *heroes* ſince their time, who have ſhed the blood of many *millions* of innocent men, merely

* 1 John iii. 11.
† Tim. vi. 7,---10.

merely through *avarice*, or in the wantonneſs of their *pride* and *ambition*, to acquire the fame of *mighty conquerors*?---What ſhall we think alſo of thoſe, who, under a pretence of religion, have ſhed tuns of Chriſtian blood, by *inquiſitions*, *racks*, *faggots*, and every cruel invention of perſecution, both heathen and antichriſtian?---Is it eaſy to find a name for theſe *wholeſale murderers*? But the ſouls of them who were ſlain, are crying from under the altar, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, doſt thou "not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell "on the earth *?" And verily GOD will hear their cry; for vengeance belongeth unto him, and he will repay it! Let us therefore beware of covetouſneſs, ambition and ſuperſtition, which ſo often lead to blood-guiltineſs!

3. DRUNKENNESS often *leads to*, *and ends* in the ſin of murder. What ſays the Wiſe Man? "Who hath "wo? Who hath ſorrow? Who hath contentions? "Who hath babblings? Who hath wounds without "cauſe? They that tarry long at the wine; for at laſt "it biteth like a *ſerpent* and ſtingeth like an *adder* †." "While they are drunken as drunkards, (ſays *Naham*) "they ſhall be devoured as ſtubble fully dry."--- "Wine is a mocker, (ſays *Solomon*) ſtrong drink is a "raging, and whoſoever is deceived thereby, is not "wiſe." How many unnatural quarrels; wounds without cauſe, and even murders, have been the conſequences of intoxication? And, indeed, what elſe can we expect, when the underſtandings of men are extinguiſhed, their paſſions enflamed, and their reaſon dethroned? In ſuch a ſituation as this, to what lengths of exceſs may not men go? Or what is to reſtrain them from committing the moſt atrocious crimes?---The light of reaſon *is put out*;

* Rev. vi. 9.
† Prov. xxiii. 29,---32.

out ; the judgment is all *darkneſs* and *confuſion* ; and the paſſions, like a boiſterous ſea, are all in a rage and ferment ! They have no guide ; no guard ; no director ! Their words and actions are all at random ; and are more likely to have a bad than a good direction.

INDEED, the generality of *private murders*, are owing more or leſs to this cauſe. Ought not this, therefore, to be better than a thouſand arguments *for ſobriety*, and *againſt drunkenneſs ?* Can we poſſibly be over cautious againſt an exceſs, which *unmans us*, which deprives us of the guidance of reaſon, proves a *ſtimulus* to all the paſſions, and renders us the dupe of every temptation, and liable to commit the greateſt and moſt deſtructive crimes ?---How many thouſands are there this day in the world, who have ſuddenly committed ſuch crimes in their liquor, in a drunken, unguarded moment, as have ruined themſelves and their families, and as they never would probably have thought of in ſobriety ?

WE have reaſon to thank GOD, indeed, that this vice is not very common amongſt us. But ſurely we cannot guard too much againſt it. The

4. AND laſt ſource of murder which I ſhall mention, is the *falſe notions of honour and ſhame*, which prevail in the world ; and it is the *devil's* intereſt to maintain them and keep them up in the minds of men, as they contribute ſo largely to the peopling of his kingdom.

THE *fear of ſhame* has drove many unhappy mothers, to commit the moſt unnatural and barbarous of all murders, upon the *fruit of their own bodies*---their ſmiling, helpleſs infants ?---A dread of the imputation of cowardice, from the meaneſt and vileſt part of the human ſpecies, has driven many a man to commit murder upon his neighbour, or to expoſe himſelf to the ſame fate, againſt every dictate of reaſon, humanity, charity, and even ſelf-preſervation.

How

How many men deem themſelves as much in *honour* and duty bound, to take away a man's life, who, in paſſion, would *give them the lie*, (when, perhaps, it was only giving them their due!)---as to perform any duty of juſtice, charity or mercy! And what is very remarkable, *theſe men of honour*, theſe *heroes of the point*, are often perſons of the moſt *infamous principles*, and of the moſt *inſolent* and *provoking* behaviour; ſo that thoſe who converſe with them, are under the ſad dilemma, either of treating them with a reſpect which they by no means deſerve; or, of being run through the body, for telling them a *naked*, and oftentimes a *ſeaſonable* truth!

AND yet the perſon who, from Chriſtian principles, or from the principle of ſelf-preſervation, would decline this way of determining a point of honour, muſt loſe the eſteem of the world, and be poſted and ſtigmatized as a *coward!*

How many murders have had their riſe from a word miſunderſtood, from an affront never deſigned, or from other punctilios ſo trifling, as not to deſerve the ſmalleſt degree of reſentment?

To conclude. Would we be removed at the greateſt poſſible diſtance from the commiſſion of this heinous and atrocious crime,

(1.) LET us labour to obtain a *ſound converſion!* Let us pray that GOD would give us a *new heart* and a *right frame of ſpirit*; that he would root out of our heart every bitter root of *malice*, *envy* and *revenge*, and that he would implant, in their ſtead, the principles of *humanity*, *mercy*, *meekneſs*, *patience* and *Chriſtian charity*; that we may *do juſtly*, *love mercy* and *walk humbly* with our GOD!

(2.) LET us keep a ſtrict watch and guard over our *paſſions* and *appetites*; thoſe luſts which war againſt the ſoul, and hurry it on to every ſpecies of exceſs.

AND while we watch, let us *pray* that we enter not into temptation; that GOD would, by his grace, keep

us

us from falling; and powerfully *aſſiſt* and *uphold* us in every time of need. And,

LASTLY; let us ſhun evil company, which is often the occaſion of theſe ſins. " Evil communications cor-
" rupt good manners."

THE miſchiefs which have ariſen from evil company, and the ſnares which men have been brought into by it, are innumerable. " Bleſſed is the man, that walketh
" not in the counſel of the ungodly, nor ſtandeth in the
" way of ſinners, nor ſitteth in the ſeat of the ſcornful,
" (ſays *David* *). He that walketh with the wiſe, ſhall
" be wiſe; but a companion of fools ſhall be deſtroyed.
" My ſon, (ſays *Solomon*) if ſinners entice thee, conſent
" thou not: walk not thou in the way with them: Re-
" frain thy foot from their path: For their feet run to
" evil, and make haſte to ſhed blood. Enter not into
" the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of
" evil men: Avoid it, paſs not by it; turn from it
" and paſs away: For they ſleep not unleſs they have
" done miſchief."

MAY GOD ſanctify theſe inſtructions of his word to us, and make them *operative on our hearts*, and *fruitful in our lives*, through the power and Spirit of CHRIST. Amen.

* Pſal. i.

THE END.

A

LIST

OF THE

SUBSCRIBERS.

N. B. Thoſe whoſe places of reſidence are not particularly ſpecified, are all, either inhabitants of St. Croix, or perſons who are connected with that Iſland, and who have ſubſcribed there.

A

CHARLES Aitkin, Eſq; 2 books.
George Aitkin, Eſq;
Alexander Armſtrong, Eſq; 3 books.
Thomas Armſtrong, Eſq;
Peter Adjett, Eſq;
Mr. Francis Adjett.
William Armſtrong.
Robert Allen.
Andrew Anderſon, 2 books.
Nathanael Allt.
Mrs. Elizabeth Abbot.
Mrs. Jermina Allen, Edenton, N. Carolina.

B

Lucas Von Beverhoudt, Eſq; Commiſſary-General of War, 3 books.
Lucas Uytendaele, Baron Von Bretton, 2 books.
John Balthazar Uytendaele, Baron Von Bretton.
John Uytendaele, Baron Von Bretton, 2 books.

Fredrick Uytendaele, Baron Von Bretton, 2 books.
Lieutenant Creuzer Von Beverhoudt.
Lieutenant Severin Bagge, 2 books.
Dominicus Bragg, Esq; King's Weigh Master, 2 books.
Peter Severin Balling, Esq; 2 books.
Johannes Broen, Esq;
Mr. Fredrick Brandt, King's Clerk.
Jorgen Biering.
Jacob Boffron jun. Esq; 2 books.
Doctor John Barnes,
John Barnes, sen. Esq;
Mr. Isaac Barnes.
Thomas Bogle.
James Bladwell.
James Barret, Esq;
Richard Brown, sen. Esq;
Mr. John Bryan.
Richard Brown.
Joshua Buntin.
James Bran.
Alexander Berry, 3 books.
Francis Berry, 2 books.
William Berry.
Richard Brampton.
John Bean, Tortola.
Simeon Banyea, St. Eustatius.
Abel Blyden, sen. Ditto.
Abel Blyden jun. Ditto, 2 books.
Col. Thomas Bouner, Edenton, N. Carolina, 6 books.
Mr. James Boush, Hertford Town, N. Carolina.
Mrs. Jean Blair, Edenton, North Carolina, 3 books.
Mr. William Bennet, Edenton, N. Carolina, 6 books.
Mr. William Boush, Hertford Town, N. Carolina.

C

His Excellency PETER CLAUSEN, Esq; his *Royal Majesty's* Knight of the order of Danebrog, Major General

ral, and Commander in Chief, over his Daniſh *Majeſty's* Charibee Iſlands in America, 2 books.
Hans Chriſtian Cretz, Eſq; King's Treaſurer, 2 books.
Ferdinand Auguſtus Chariſius, Eſq; Receiver of his Majeſty's old debts.
The Honourable Major Cronenberg, Eſq; St. Thomas.
Thomas Collins, Eſq;
Thomas Craven, Eſq; 6 books.
Nicolas Cruger, Eſq;
Mr. Joſiah Crane, St. Thomas.
John Coyler, Ditto.
Robert Crawford, 2 books.
Arthur Cooper.
John Coakley, jun.
Lewis Culture.
James Chriſty.
John Conner, 2 books.
Capt. George Godiviſe, 2 books.
William Cox, Eſq; Tortola.
Mr. Joſeph Cox, St. Euſtatius.
Mrs. Elizabeth Eſter Cox, Ditto.
Doctor Anthony Clark, St. Kitts.
Capt. John M'Crohan, Edenton, N. Carolina, 6 books,

D

The Honourable Jan Dewindt Eſq; General and Commander in Chief, of the Iſlands St. Euſtatius, Saba, and St. Martin, 12 books.
Guert Spt. Dewindt, Eſq; Commiſſary at War, 2 books.
John Jacob Dewindt, Eſq; 12 books.
G. S. Dewindt, Eſq; St. Thomas, 2 books.
Jacobus De Veer, Eſq; 4 books.
The Reverend Terrence M'Donnel, St. Thomas, 2 books.
The Reverend James Des Vories.
Thomas Dunbavin, Eſq;

Mr.

Mr. Thomas Durant, 2 books.
Cornelius Durant, 2 books.
William Samuel Dracott, Efq; 3 books.
Charles Daly, Efq; 4 books.
Doctor Peter Duncan, 2 books.
Mifs Elizabeth Delaney Colhoun, 2 books.
Mr. Judah De Leon.
Mr. Samuel Dewindt.
Capt. Jacob Difchingthun, King's Pilot.
Jacobus Dam, Efq; 2 books.
Mr. Frederick Dellgaft.
Capt. Booy Dircks, from Copenhagen.
Mr. James De Luy.
Francis De Luy.
The Honourable James Dawfon, Efq; M. D. Tortola, 6 books.
John Downing, fen. Efq; Ditto.
John Downing, jun. Efq; Ditto.
Doctor Doty, Ditto.
Doctor Robert Dougan, Ditto.
Mr. Daniel Davis, St. Euftatius.
Thomas Davis, Ditto.
John Deweaver, Ditto.
Mrs. Ann Deweaver, Ditto.
Rebecca Deweaver, Ditto.
Doctor Samuel Dickinfon, Edenton, North Carolina, 6 books.
Mr. William Dermofdy, Schoolmafter, Edenton, N. Carolina, 12 books.

E

The Reverend Mr. Sven Egeroed.
Ifaac Evens, Efq;
Mr. Richard Edney.
James Every, St. Euftatius.
Rev. Daniel Earl, Rector of St. Paul's parifh, Chowan county, North Carolina, 6 books.

Mr.

Mr. Benjamin Elliot, Hertford Town, N. Carolina.

F

Henrick Fibeger, Esq; Collector of the King's Customs at Fredrickstæd.
Roger Ferral, Esq;
Mr. Daniel Fraser, 3 books.
Thomas Fletcher, 2 books.
Daniel Fox, Esq;
Mr. Robert Fulton.
George Faulkener.
William French.
William Freeman.
Florence Fret, Esq; Tortola,
Martin Fret, Esq; Ditto.
Mr. Robert French, Merchant, Ditto, 6 books.

G

Hans Gionge, Esq; Naval Lieutenant.
Tycho Christian Grutsmann, Esq; King's Store-keeper, 2 books.
The Reverend Mr. Cecil Wray Goodchild, Christianstæd, 4 books.
John Guldager, Esq; Comptroller, 2 books.
George Goslein, Esq; 2 books.
George Gordon, jun. Esq; 2 books.
John Gordon, Esq; 2 books.
Mr. Alexander Gordon.
Alexander Grant, 5 books.
Collin Grant.
Capt. Thomas Guion.
Mr. Paul Gallaudet, St. Thomas.
James Gardner, Ditto.
Mr. John Gibbs, Tortola.
Mr. John Green, Edenton, North Carolina, 3 books.

H

Johan. Friderich Heinrich, Esq; Intendant.

Engebret

Engebret Heſſelberg, Eſq; Commiſſary General of War, 2 books.
Chriſtian Siegfried Heldwad, Eſq; Judge in Chriſtianſtæd, and dependencies.
Chriſtoph. Kinck Hanſteen, Eſq; King's Book-keeper, 2 books.
Rapzart Heyliger, Eſq; 2 books.
Mr. Hans Hoij.
Adam Gotlob Horrebow, King's Clerk.
Honourable Major Henderickſen, 4 books.
Madam Ruth Home, 4 books.
Madam Mary Aletta Heyliger, 3 books.
Capt. Martin Heyliger, Eſq; 2 books.
Capt. John Heyliger, Eſq; 4 books.
Pieter Heyliger, Eſq; A. Z. 3 books.
Mrs. Mary Hartman, 2 books.
Mrs. Martha Hanſen.
Miſs Mary Haſſel.
Iſaac Hartman, Eſq; ſen. 6 books.
William Hartman, Eſq; 2 books.
Mr. Joſeph Hartman.
Thomas Hill.
Horatio Herbert, 4 books.
F. C. Heitmann Eſq;
Capt. Samuel Howard.
Secretary Hoſt, Eſq; St. Thomas.
G. Hanſler, Eſq; Ditto.
Capt. Benjamin Hammatt, 2 books.
Abraham Howel, Eſq;
Mr. John Hatchett.
Abraham Hatchett.
Robert Hallet.
Joſeph Hallet.
Adam Henderſon.
Patrick Hughes.

Mr.

Mr. Samuel Haynes.
Richard Tothill Hunt.
Richard Hetherington, Efq; Tortola.
Rev. Benjamin William Hutchinfon, St. Kitts.
Mr. Jofeph Hovey, St. Euftatius.
Hercules Haffel, Ditto.
John How, Ditto.
William Hill, Ditto, 2 books.
Anthony Hill, Ditto.
Jofiah Hill, Ditto,
William Holman, Ditto.
Lawrence Haddocks, Ditto, 2 books.
John Herbert, Ditto.
Mrs. Rebecca Heiffernam, Ditto.
Col. John Harvey, Speaker of the Affembly of North Carolina, Perqueman's county, 6 books.

I

The Honourable Reinkard Ifelin, Efq; in Copenhagen, Counfellor of Conferences, 2 books.
Elias Jacobi, Efq; Counfellor of Chancery.
Charles Frederick Ifelin, Efq; Copenhagen.
Mr. Henning Junghans, King's Clerk.
John Irwin Efq; 4 books.
Doctor James Irwin, 2 books.
Doctor John Johnfon.
John James, Efq;
John Jukes Efq; 2 books.
Mr. John Jamifon.
Honourable Robert Johnfton, Tortola, 2 books,
John Johnfon, Efq; St. Kitts.
Mr. John Johnfon, St. Euftatius.
James Iredell, Efq; Collector of the Cuftoms of Port Renoke, Edenton, North Carolina, 4 books.
Thomas Jones, Efq; Attorney at Law, Edenton, North Carolina, 6 books.

K

The Honourable Colonel Krauſe, 5 books.
Capt. Cornelius Kortright, Eſq; 4 books.
Mr. Alexander Kennedy, 4 books.
William Kuembel.
Samuel Knox.
Joh. Nicol. Kragh, Eſq; St. Thomas.
Mr. Phil. Peter Krogh, Ditto, 2 books.
John Chriſtoph. Kempff.
Lieutenant Carl Adolph Von Kohl.
Chriſtian Frederic Kipmaſſe, Eſq;
Mr. Johannes Knudſen.
Uz. Kender, St. Euſtatius.
William Keeve, Ditto.
Mrs. Clarinda Kaels, Ditto.
Eleanor Kelly, Ditto.
Andrew Knox, Eſq; Merchant, Hertford Town, North Carolina, 12 books.

L

Wilhelm Anthony Lindemann, Eſq; Counſellor in the government, 2 books.
Chriſtian Frederick Laurberg, Eſq; Regiment Quarter-Maſter, 2 books.
Jacob Linberg, Eſq; 6 books.
Mr. James Love, 2 books.
Abraham Lynſen.
Steven Large.
Richard Lindſey.
Victorious Looby.
Capt. William Lightbourn, 3 books.
Mr. James Leitch, Tortola.
John Lynch, St. Euſtatius.
James Le Cand, Ditto.
Charles Sim. Leverock, Ditto.
Mr. William Littlejohn, Merchant, Edenton, North Carolina, 6 books.

Mrs.

Mrs. Sarah Lindſay, Hertford Town, N. Carolina.
Miſs Sarah Lippencott, Hertford Town, N. Carolina.
Mr. Samuel Loudon, Bookſeller, New-York, 12 books.

M

Frederic Chriſtian Moth, Eſq; his Daniſh Majeſty's Grand Bailiff, and Counſellor of State, for ſelf, and The Right Honourable Bolle William Luxdorph, Knight of the Order of Dannebrog, Counſellor of Conferences, and firſt Deputy of the Royal Chancery, 5 books.
Frederic Moth, Eſq; Capt. of Infantry.
Otto Chriſtian Muller, Eſq; Secretary, and Notary Public of St. Croix, 3 books.
Mrs. Elizabeth Maas, relict of the Rev. J. T. Wilhelmus Maas, deceaſed.
Jorgen Hans Muller, Eſq; 2 books.
Martin Meyer, Eſq; 4 books.
Mrs. Elizabeth M'Grath.
Chriſtopher Mardenbrough, Eſq; 6 books.
Mr. David M'Farlane, 3 books.
Walter M'Farlane, 3 books.
John M'Farlane.
Capt. William M'Dougall, Eſq; 2 books.
Mr. John Murray.
John Mitchell.
Donald M'Gillivray.
Paul Martin.
Doctor John Martin.
Mr. Thomas M'Nobney.
Andrew Murdoch.
Allen M'Laghlan, 3 books.
Lachlan M'Laghlan.
Capt. John Morris.
Mr. Hugh Morris, M. D.
Peter Markoe.

Mr. Charles Molineux, 2 books.
Arthur Miller, 2 books.
Hon. --------- Malleville, Commandant, St. Thomas.
Chrift. Morch, Efq; Cammerreer, Ditto.
Mr. John Magens, Ditto.
Thomas Magens, Ditto.
James Moreton.
James M'Leverty, Efq; Lieutenant in the Britifh Navy, 2 books.
Mr. Chrift. Mardenbrough, St. Kitts.
The Honourable Henry Martin, Tortola, 12 books.
Mr. Peter Markoe, St. Euftatius.
George Markoe, Ditto.
Mrs. Elianor Markoe, Ditto.
Elizabeth Markoe, Ditto.
Mr. Daniel Markoe, Ditto.
Mrs. Judith Markoe, Ditto.
Mr. Ifaac Moore, Hertford Town, N. Carolina.
Doctor Nathaniel Martyn, Hertford Town, N. Carolina.
Reverend John Mafon, Minifter of the Scotch Church, New-York.

N

Pieter Heyliger De Nully, Efq; 2 books.
Johan. Auguft. Nofer, Efq; Surgeon of the King's troops in St. Croix.
Honourable George Norman, Tortola, 2 books.
Mr. Francis Newby, Hertford Town, N. Carolina.
Mr. William Newbold, Hertford Town, N. Carolina.

O

Capt. James Ogilvie, 2 books.
Mr. Matthews Ofborn.
Hans P. Obel.
Daniel Outwait.
Mr. Richard O'Cain, Printer, St. Croix.

P

Paul Prihn, Efq; Commiffary for the Reconciliation Court in

in Chriſtianſtæd, and Agent for the Royal Guinea Company, 2 books.
Honourabe Judge Prihn, Frederickſtæd, 4 books.
Peter Nicholas Porth, Eſq; Copenhagen.
David Porth, Eſq;
Mr. Lucas Paſſavant, London.
Leonhard Paſſavant, in Tranquebar.
Hans Ulrich Paſſavant, St. Croix, 2 books.
James Paterſon.
Doctor John Porter.
Pieter Pieterſon, St. Thomas.
James Potter, Merchant, Tortola, 6 books.
Mrs. Catherine Pantophlet, St. Euſtatius.
Daniel Peterſon, Ditto.
Mr. Michal Payne, Merchant, Edenton, North Carolina, 6 books.
Mr. Benjamin Philps, Hertford Town, N. Carolina.
Mr. William Reed, Perqueman's county, N. Carolina. 2 books.

Q

Mr. Iſaac Quereau.

R

Julius Von Rohr, Eſq; Director of his Majeſty's buildings, and Surveyor.
Lieutenant Joſeph De Rogiers, 2 books.
Johannes and Pieter De Rogiers, Eſqrs. 2 books.
Pieter Heyliger Robinſon, Eſq; 3 books.
John Peter Richardſon, Eſq; 2 books.
William Ravenſhaw, Eſq; 2 books.
John Rengger, Eſq; 2 books.
Raſmus Gottfried Robel, Eſq;
James Robertſon, Eſq; 3 books.
Mr. James Rodger.
William Rayn.
John Rogers, Eſq; 2 books.
Mr. John Ruſſell, 2 books.
Mannin Rogers, Eſq; 4 books.

John

John Rattune, Esq;
Mr. John Ruan.
Christian Robel, Esq; St. Thomas.
Mr. Levien Jorgen Rohde, Ditto.
Johannis Revene, Esq; St. Eustatius.

S

The Right Honourable Hinrich de Stampe, Esq; in Copenhagen, Knight of the Order of Danebrog, &c.
The Honourable Ludwig Hindrich Schimmelmann, Esq; Lieutenant Colonel of the King's infantry, and Commandant of St. Croix, 3 books.
Jens Reimert Schumacher, Esq; Counsellor in the government, 2 books.
Johannes Sobotker, Esq; in Copenhagen, Counsellor of Exchequer, 2 books.
Abraham Schneider, Esq; his Majesty's Agent in Copenhagen.
Adam Sabother Esq;
The Honourable Niels Bernt Suhr, Esq; Upper-Judge in St. Croix, 3 books.
Lieutenant Johann Ernst Sturup.
Peter Sorensen, Esq; Attorney at Law.
Doctor John Smith, 3 books.
Madam Elizabeth Sevel.
Christ. Anth. Seybeck, Esq; Attorney at Law.
Doctor John Smith, 3 books.
Mr. Nathanael Strode.
Hans Schafte.
James Skinner, 2 books.
Cornelius Stallaerdt, Esq;
Mr. Thomas Stridiron.
Thomas Smith, jun. Esq; 2 books.
Thomas Smith, sen. Esq; St. Thomas.
Mr. Fran. Schattenbrand, Ditto.
Anth. Surian, St. Thomas.
Daniel Sharry, St. Kitts.

Mr.

Mr. Peter Sandiford, St. Euſtatius.
John S. Simmons, St. Euſtatius, 2 books.
Mrs. Mary Stevenſon, Perqueman's county, N. Carolina.
Mr. Humphrey Simons, Hertford Town, N. Carolina.
Mr. John Stafford, Hertford Town, N. Carolina.

T

Fridrick Trott, Eſq; Comptroller of his Majeſty's Cuſtoms, 2 books.
Johann Chriſtopher Teſtman, Eſq; 2 books.
Pieter Taarling, Eſq; 2 books.
Mr. Arnoldus Ten Hoorn.
Samuel Thompſon, Eſq; 2 books.
James Towers, Eſq; Dealing-Maſter, 3 books.
John George Thomas, Eſq; 6 books.
Mr. Alexander Towers, M. D. 2 books.
Daniel Thomas.
Daniel Thibou, Printer.
Doctor Thomas Trow, 2 books.
Thomas Tucker, Eſq;
Mrs. Mary Turnbull.
Mr. Francis Taylor.
George Tucker, M. D. St. Thomas.
Mr. Thomas Transfield, Ditto.
Thomas Tomlinſon, Eſq; Tortola.
Mr. James Todd, St. Croix.

V

Capt. Paul Vaughan, Eſq;
Mr. William Venton.
John Vanderpool, jun.
Mr. Albert Urſin.
William Vanderpool, Eſq; Tortola.
Mr. Thomas William Vaughan, St. Euſtatius.
William Vanderpool, Ditto.

W

Gottlieb Wolff, Eſq;
Laers Wiel, Eſq; 3 books.

George

George Werligh, Esq;
Mr. James Warden, 5 books.
Thomas Wylly, Esq; 3 books.
Mr. William Van Wyck.
James Waterson, 2 books.
Capt. George Wells, 2 books.
Mr. Gilbert Woodward.
Joshua Whitehead.
Christopher Williams.
Miss Mary Willis.
Mr. John Wallace,
R. Willumsen, Esq;
Thomas Willard.
John Wharton.
Robert White, St. Eustatius.
Nathaniel Williams, Esq; Merchant, Hertford Town, North Carolina, 6 books.
Mr. Benjamin Wright, Hertford Town, N. Carolina.
George Whedbec, Esq; Perqueman's county, 2 books.
Mr. Joseph Wyall, Tyrell county, N. Carolina, 2 books.
Mr. Judith Wilkins, Chowan county, N. Carolina.

Y

Mr. Benjamin Yard.
Matthew Yorath.
William Young.

☞ The Author begs leave to return thanks to all his Subscribers, for the genteel encouragement they have given him; but more especially, to the inhabitants of St. Croix, of all denominations, who have subscribed for not less than 450 books; which is, indeed, but one among many instances of respect and civility he has received from them since his residence among them. He heartily wishes the work was more worthy of their acceptance, and hopes, that his distance from the press will apologize for any little errors or inaccuracies which may appear in the work.

DA775
K74m