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CHRISTIAN DIVINITY.

*Of the* THIRD COMMANDMENT.

HE *third Commandment is, Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.*

This commandment is enforced by a threatening, that it may appear that GOD observes the breakers of it, and will reckon with them for the breaches of it. The scope of it is, to have the name of GOD sanctified, hallowed and had in reverence by all, and that every thing may be avoided which is dishonourable to that holy name, and that the heart may be kept in a holy awe and reverence of GOD, and so in a holy way of using GOD's name; that is, with an humble and awful regard to GOD's infinite greatness and excellencies.

This commandment requires, “ that the name of GOD, “ his titles, attributes, ordinances, the word, sacraments, “ prayer, oaths, vows, lots, his works, and whatever else “ there is whereby he makes himself known, be holily and  
Vol. III. H h “ reverently

“reverently used in thought, meditation, word, writing,  
 “by an holy profession and answerable conversation, to the  
 “glory of GOD, and the good of ourselves and others.”

We are reverently to use the names given to GOD, namely, JEHOVAH, LORD, GOD, I AM, the FATHER, the SON, JESUS CHRIST, the HOLY GHOST, the SPIRIT. And we are to use his titles with reverence, such as, the LORD of Hosts, King of kings, Lord of lords, Father of lights, Holy one of Israel, Creator of the ends of the earth, Preserver of men, and the like: And also his attributes, which are those essential perfections whereby his nature is described to us, and he is distinguished from all his creatures; such as, Omnipotence, Omnipresence, Omniscience, Eternity, Immutability, Infinite Wisdom, Infinite Holiness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Mercy, &c.

It may be said that the names, titles and attributes of GOD are used by us in a holy and reverend manner, when we entertain awful, admiring and loving thoughts of them in our hearts, and mention them with gravity, respect, and tenderness with our lips. And it may be said that we use GOD's ordinances in a holy and reverend manner, when we make conscience of attending upon them, seek to have an humble reverential frame of heart in all our approaches to GOD, and earnestly desire communion in every ordinance of his: And we are to use GOD's word in a holy and reverend way, when we read it with seriousness, attend to the majesty of GOD as speaking to us, and endeavour to yield ready obedience to his holy will when revealed to us. We may be said to use GOD's works in a holy and reverend way, when we contemplate GOD's glory in his works of creation, and have an awful regard to the dispensations of his Providence, by submitting patiently to his corrections for sin, and especially by praising him for all his mercies, in the wonderful work of redemption, by JESUS CHRIST our Saviour and Redeemer.

The sins forbidden in the third commandment, “are the  
 “not using of GOD’s name as is requested, and the abuse of  
 “it in an ignorant, vain, irreverent, profane, superstitious,  
 “or wicked mentioning or otherwise using his titles, attri-  
 “butes, ordinances or works, by blasphemy, perjury, all  
 “sinful cursings, oaths, vows, and lots; violating of our  
 “oaths and vows, if lawful, and fulfilling them, if of things  
 “unlawful; murmuring and quarrelling at, curious prying  
 “into, and misapplying of GOD’s decrees and providences;  
 “misinterpreting, misapplying, or any way perverting the  
 “word or any part of it to profane jests, curious and  
 “unprofitable questions, vain janglings, or the maintaining  
 “of false doctrines, abusing it, the creatures, or any thing  
 “contained under the name of GOD, to charms, or sinful  
 “lusts and practices; the malignity, scorning, reviling,  
 “or any way of opposing of GOD’s truth, grace and ways;  
 “making profession of religion in hypocrisy, or for sinister  
 “ends; being ashamed of it, or a shame to it, by uncomfor-  
 “table, unwise, unfruitful, and offensive walking, or  
 “backsliding from it.”

They may be said to take GOD’s name in vain, who speak  
 slightly and irreverently of his name, *Deut.* xxviii. 58.  
 “That thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name, the  
 “LORD thy GOD:” And when they profess GOD’s name,  
 and do not live answerably to it, “In words they profess him,  
 “but in works they deny him,” *Tit.* i. 16. They take  
 GOD’s name in vain, who use GOD’s name in common  
 discourse. GOD is not to be spoken of but with an holy awe  
 upon our hearts, nor is his name to be mentioned without  
 reverence, as is often done, by saying, *O Lord, O God, God help  
 me, bless me,* or the like. We take GOD’s name in vain when  
 we worship him with our lips, but not with our hearts. We  
 take GOD’s name in vain when we pray to him, and do not  
 believe in him. Faith is the great grace that honours GOD:  
 “*Abraham, being strong in faith, gave glory to GOD.*”

They abuse the word, and take GOD's name in vain who adulterate the word, and wrest it to a wrong sense, as those heretics do who put their own gloss upon scripture, and make it speak that which the Holy Ghost never meant. For instance, when they expound those texts literally, that are meant figuratively. Thus the *Pharisees* were guilty, when GOD said in the law, "Thou shalt bind the commandments for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes," *Deut. vi. 8.* They took it in a literal sense; they got two scrolls of parchments, wherein they wrote the two tables, putting the one on their left-arm, and binding the other to their eye-brows. Thus they wrested the scripture, and thereby took GOD's name in vain. That scripture was to be understood spiritually, and by a figure: GOD meant by binding his law upon their hands, that they should meditate in his law and put it in practice. And so the *Papists* expound that scripture, *This is my body*, literally, of the body of CHRIST: Then when CHRIST gave the bread, he should have had two bodies, one in the bread, and the other out of the bread; whereas CHRIST meant it figuratively, "It is a sign of my body." Thus they by wresting the scripture profane it, and take GOD's name in vain. Moreover, when they expound those scriptures figuratively and allegorically, which the Holy Ghost means literally. For example, CHRIST said to *Peter*, "Lanch out into the deep, and make a draught," *Luke v. 4.* This text is spoken in a plain literal sense, namely, of lanching out the ship; but the *Papists* take it in a mystical and allegorical sense. This text proves, say they, "that the *Pope*, who is *Peter's* successor, shall lanch forth and catch the ecclesiastical and political power over the western parts of the world:" This, say they, was meant, when CHRIST said unto *Peter*, "Lanch out into the deep." But it is justly thought, that the *Papists* have lanch'd out too far beyond the meaning of the text. When men strain their wits, to wrest the word to such a sense as pleaseth them, they profane GOD's word, and take his name in vain.

The

The foundation of true religion is laid in a right knowledge of GOD and ourselves. How deficient we are in each of these, how far fallen from original righteousness, is strongly implied in the prohibition of this commandment, which would be wholly unnecessary, if we were not wholly sunk in stupidity and wickedness: That such frail dependent creatures have need to be cautioned that we do not profane the name of the GOD, in whom we live and move and have our being, is a striking proof of our depravity.

The most direct way in which the name of GOD is taken in vain, is by *perjury*: That is when he is expressly appealed to in confirmation of what is false, or when engagements are made in his name and presence, which are not strictly and literally complied with. And it hath been said by a pious and judicious author, “ that there are more, and more “ daring instances of this wickedness amongst us, than in “ all the rest of *Europe*: Perjury is perhaps peculiarly and “ eminently one of our *national sins*; and we may tremble to “ think it is so, for it gives too just ground to fear the ap- “ proach of national judgments. Surely all who have any “ regard for the honour of GOD, any sense of the worth of “ souls, ought to mourn for it, and earnestly to pray for the “ removal of this evil.”

And though the matter of an oath be strictly true, yet if it is not transacted with a serious acknowledgment and homage of that divine Being to whom appeal is made; such an oath however lawful and necessary in itself, is with regard to all such thoughtless triflers no better than taking the name of GOD in vain.

If an oath, awful and necessary in itself, may thus become criminal through inconsideration, what shall we say of the throng of profane forcerers, who wound our ears and pollute our language by a horrid mixture of execrations and blasphemies in their common conversation? “ Their throats are “ an open sepulchre, their mouths are full of cursing and “ bitterness, the poison of asps is under their lips,” *Rom.*

iii. 13, 14. A habit of swearing is a sure sign not only of an un sanctified heart, but of a conscience hardened, and as it were seared with a hot iron, callous and quite insensible. Great sins require great repentance: May profane swearers be awakened and not rush against the thick bosses of God's buckler, and not despise so terrible a threatening as is in this third commandment!

Some persons who scruple to mention the name of God, accustom themselves to swear by his creatures, *by the heavens, by the light, or by their own souls, &c.* but that this likewise is a direct violation of the law, and exposes to the same penalty, we are assured by him who best knew how to explain his own commands: "I say unto you, swear not at all; neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is his footstool. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair thereof white or black. And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it and him that dwelleth therein; and he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon. But let your communication be yea, yea; nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil."

There are other ways of taking the name of God in vain. It is often done in prayer, when we do not engage in that duty with proper dispositions and desires, and when our expressions are not the language of our hearts. The whole lives of those who live in the *allowed practice of known sin*, under the profession of the christian name, may be considered as one continual breach of this command. Those that live in sin under a profession of religion, injure the cause of CHRIST, are stumbling-blocks to the weak in the faith, grieve the hearts of all who love the LORD, and make his enemies rejoice.

We may, from what hath been said, see the necessity and value of the gospel, otherwise how can we escape the penalty, and stand acquitted before the supreme Judge? If we refuse this,

this, *there remaineth no other sacrifice for sin, Heb. x. 26.* But if we humble ourselves and apply to JESUS, there is yet hope. He died for sinners, and for his sake all manner of sin and blasphemy is pardonable. May the HOLY SPIRIT be earnestly prayed for, and be given us to enlighten, renew and sanctify us, and to lead us by a true faith to JESUS, that we may obtain those blessings that were purchased by the blood of the Lamb!

The threatenng annexed to the third commandment is in those awful words, "*For the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.*" That is, because he is the LORD and our GOD; and therefore his name is not to be profaned, or any way abused by us; especially, because he will be so far from acquitting and sparing the transgressors of this commandment, as that he will not suffer them to escape his righteous judgment, albeit many such escape the censures and punishments of men.

The threatenng is very dreadful: *The Lord will not hold him guiltless.* It implieth that he shall be found guilty, and that a great degree of punishment shall be inflicted upon him. Moreover, we should distinguish betwixt such as are favoured with grace to repent, and to look to CHRIST by faith for pardon, peace, and salvation: But it is awful to observe, that those that are habitually addicted to this sin, do seldom obtain repentance; and those that do truly repent of this sin, will lothe themselves and be in great bitterness for it; for it is a sin immediately against GOD himself. All persons ought to watch against this sin, and even to mourn for those who are guilty of it, which exposes them to the execution of this threatenng upon them.

The difference between the worship of GOD required in this third commandment, and that which is required in the first and second commandments, is as follows: The first commandment hath a respect to the *object* of GOD's worship; the second commandment hath a respect to the *means* of worship; but this third commandment hath a respect to the

manner of worship, requiring that it be performed with humility and holy fear, with sincerity, fervency, and all kind of holy affections.

*Of the FOURTH COMMANDMENT.*

REMEMBER *the Sabbath-day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work : But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God : in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates : For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day : wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath-day, and hallowed it.*

“ The fourth commandment requireth of all men the  
 “ sanctifying or keeping holy to GOD such set times as he  
 “ hath appointed in his word ; expressly one whole day in  
 “ seven, which was the seventh from the beginning of the  
 “ world to the resurrection of CHRIST, and the first day of  
 “ the week ever since, and so to continue to the end of the  
 “ world, which is the Christian sabbath, and in the New-  
 “ Testament called the LORD’s day.

“ The Sabbath or LORD’s day is to be sanctified by an  
 “ holy resting all the day, not only from such works as are  
 “ at all times sinful, but even from such worldly employments  
 “ and recreations as are on other days lawful ; and making  
 “ it our delight to spend the whole time, except so much as  
 “ is to be taken up in the works of necessity and mercy,  
 “ in the public and private exercises of GOD’s worship ; and  
 “ to that end we are to prepare our hearts, and with such  
 “ foresight, diligence and moderation, to dispose, and rea-  
 “ sonably to dispatch our worldly business, that we may be  
 “ the more free and fit for the duties of that day.

“ The charge of keeping the Sabbath is more especially  
 “ directed to governors of families and other superiors, be-  
 “ cause

“ cause they are bound not only to keep it themselves, but  
 “ to see that it be observed by all those that are under their  
 “ charge; and because they are prone oft-times to hinder  
 “ them by employments of their own.

“ The sins forbidden in the fourth commandment, are all  
 “ omissions of the duties required, all careles, negligent,  
 “ and unprofitable performing of them, and being weary of  
 “ them, all profaning the day by idleness, and doing that  
 “ which is in itself sinful, and by all needless works, words,  
 “ and thoughts about our worldly employments and recrea-  
 “ tions.

“ The reasons annexed to the fourth commandment, the  
 “ more to enforce it, are taken from the equity of it,  
 “ GOD allowing us six days out of seven for our own affairs,  
 “ and reserving but one for himself, in these words, *Six days*  
 “ *shalt thou labour, and do all thy work*: From GOD's challeng-  
 “ ing a special propriety in that day, *The seventh day is the*  
 “ *Sabbath of the Lord thy GOD*: From the example of GOD  
 “ himself, who *in six days made heaven and earth, the sea, and*  
 “ *all that in them is, and rested the seventh day*: And from that  
 “ blessing which GOD put upon that day, not only in sancti-  
 “ fying it to be a day for his service, but in ordaining it  
 “ to be a means of blessing to us in our sanctifying it:  
 “ *Wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath-day, and hallowed it.*

“ The word *remember* is set in the beginning of the fourth  
 “ commandment, partly because of the great benefit of re-  
 “ membring it; we being thereby helped in our preparation,  
 “ to keep it, and in keeping it, better to keep all the rest of  
 “ the commandments, and to continue a thankful remem-  
 “ brance of the two great benefits of creation and redemption,  
 “ which contain a short abridgment of religion: And partly  
 “ because we are very ready to forget it; for that there is  
 “ less light of nature for it, and yet it restraineth our natural  
 “ liberty in things at other times lawful; that it cometh but  
 “ once in seven days, and many worldly businessses come  
 “ between, and too often take off our minds from thinking of

“ it, either to prepare for it, or to sanctify it; and that  
 “ Satan, with his instruments much labour to blot out the  
 “ glory, and even the memory of it, to bring in all irreligion  
 “ and impiety.

It ought to be our aim and endeavour to remember the Sabbath-day before it comes, that all business the evening before may be dispatched, and that we may be in a better frame for sanctifying it when it comes; This was *Nehemiah's* care: “ and it came to pass that when the gates of *Jerusalem* began to be dark before the Sabbath, I commanded that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the Sabbath: And some of my servants set I at the gates, that there should be no burden brought in on the Sabbath-day,” *Neb.* xiii. 18. And the *Jews* had their preparation for the Sabbath-day, *Mark* xv. 42. *Luke* xxiii. 54, 56.

There have been excellent laws made by the wisest Emperors and Princes for the strict observation of the LORD'S-day, and of the divine laws concerning it. But it is to be lamented that in the present age, many in high stations and circumstances give a bad example to their inferiors in this matter, which gives too great ground of suspicion that our great ones forget GOD, and have no true sense of religion; for those that are not concerned for the salvation of their own souls, will not have any real concern for the souls of their children and servants, or any belonging to them.

Two things are essential and necessary to the promoting of the christian religion, *first*, the sincere belief of its truths, and *secondly*, the faithful practice of its duties: The first hath great influence on the second; for if the truths of religion be questioned, the christian duties will certainly be neglected. And it hath been justly judged, that the most effectual means to preserve and maintain both the one and the other, is the sanctification of the LORD'S-day.

Had it not been for the observation of this day, the truths of Christianity had, in a great measure, been forgot by many before

before this time. For as the LORD's-day is a lively memorial of our redemption by JESUS CHRIST: so upon this day we constantly hear sounded in our ears the truths of that religion which CHRIST and his apostles have taught and delivered to the world. And as the observation of the LORD's-day is a great preservative of the truths of Christianity, so also of the duties of it. The frequent return of this day with the gospel-ordinances dispensed therein, preserves the remembrance of CHRIST and heaven, keeps sin and vice under constant rebukes, and puts atheism and irreligion to the blush. If the observation of the LORD's-day was totally neglected, then all regard to GOD's worship would be quickly cast off, and dreadful confusion and disorder, atheism and profaneness, would soon ensue.

If it be questioned, *Are no sort of works lawful on the Sabbath-day?* It is answered, that there are three sorts of works ordinarily excepted, which are allowed by the fourth command, namely, the works of *Piety*, of *Mercy*, and of *Necessity*.

1. The works of *Piety*, that is, such actions as are necessary and subservient to the performance of divine worship, or contribute to order and decency therein; such were under the law, *the washing and preparing of sacrifices, the calling together the people to worship by blowing of trumpets, making short journeys to attend worship*, and the like: And now under the gospel, *the travelling to church if at a distance, the ringing of bells, and the like*, are lawful on the Sabbath-day.

2. Works of *Mercy* and *Charity* are lawful on this day, and even necessary, namely, *the feeding of our bodies and of our beasts, relieving them when in distress, attending and visiting the sick, collecting for the poor*, and the like.

3. Works of *Necessity*, are such actions as could not be prevented by our previous care, nor safely delayed till afterwards; as *the defending ourselves against our enemies, or fleeing from them; extinguishing fire; putting on clothes*, and the like: We are to see that the necessity be real and not pretended; and to have no active hand in bringing on the necessity: And when we are doing these works of necessity

and mercy, we ought to endeavour to keep our hearts in a spiritual frame, and to study to do them without giving scandal or offence to others, and to dispatch them as soon as possible, that we may return to the work of the day.

The Sabbath is a day of holy rest, wherein men are to cease from worldly business, and to attend upon the worship of GOD. The Sabbath is a wise institution of the great GOD for his own glory and the good of his church, and all honour and regard is due to it. To keep the Sabbath in a religious manner, is one great mark of a true Christian, and it is a bad sign, in any person of whatever denomination, when the Sabbath is not kept holy.

A holy spiritual frame of spirit is necessary on the LORD'S-day, as St. *John* mentions, *Rev.* i. 10. "I was in the Spirit "on the LORD'S-day;" which imports our having our thoughts abstracted from earthly things, and our laying our souls open to the influences of the SPIRIT of GOD, and our depending upon his assistance in all the duties of the day. It is to have the graces of the SPIRIT in exercise, and to have spiritual ends in all our duties on the Sabbath, not to be seen of men, but to glorify GOD, and to enjoy communion with him.

The public duties required, are *the joining in prayers and praises with the assemblies of the people of GOD*: And it is necessary for families to join together on this day in the worship of GOD, *by reading the word, singing his praise, and calling upon his name*; and to employ some time in *catechising of children and servants, repeating the sermons, or christian conference*: The secret duties necessary, are *secret prayer, reading the scriptures and other pious books, meditation upon divine subjects, and self-examination*.

We should pray in the morning of the LORD'S-day, for the LORD'S gracious presence to be with his ministers and people, and for the assistance of his HOLY SPIRIT in all the duties of the day, for grace to attend, believe and practise what we hear, and that the word may prove the favour of life to life, and not the favour of death to death. And in the evening we should pray for the pardon of all our imperfections

in our holy duties for the sake of CHRIST's atoning blood : And at the same time we should bewail our earthly and cold affections, formality and wandering : And also we should bless GOD for the Sabbath and the joyful sound of the gospel we have heard, and for grace to walk with GOD through the week, and to live always in the view of the everlasting Sabbath above.

The great concern all serious persons ought to have for keeping the Sabbath, appears from the following considerations, 1. The strict observation of the Sabbath is a necessary duty, and the most effectual means *for preventing atheism and profaneness*; because by the frequent returns of the Sabbath, the remembrance of CHRIST and heaven is still kept up, and sin and vice may be said to be kept under rebukes and disgrace. If it were not for the observation of the Sabbath, atheism and irreligion would soon overspread the world : And there is nothing that tends more to harden the heart, fear the conscience, and give loose reins to scandalous sins than the profanation of the Sabbath. It hath been often observed, that many malefactors at the time of suffering death for their crimes, have confessed that their profaning or neglect of keeping the Sabbath, hath been the first beginning of their loose and sinful lives, and paved the way for their other wicked courses, and provoked GOD to leave them to fall into those hainous sins, which brought them to such fatal ends. The ignorance and impiety of the present age, are greatly occasioned by the bad observation of the Sabbath.

2. The great *goodness of GOD, and his gracious design in allowing us the Sabbath*, lays us under strong obligations to keep it conscientiously. It is a great privilege, to be favoured with a Sabbath, which is the day wherein ordinarily GOD distributes spiritual blessings to those that seriously hear the gospel. It is a day for giving rest to our bodies and heavenly rest to our souls. If we would have CHRIST and the riches of his grace, and have our souls nourished and graces strengthened, then let us keep the Sabbath. It is the particular day,  
wherein

wherein the gospel has been blessed to the awakening, convincing and converting many souls; and to their coming by faith to CHRIST for pardon, peace, and salvation: and also for the edification and consolation of true believers.

3. The strict observation of the Sabbath, is an excellent means to *sweeten the thoughts of death and heaven to us*. As for *death*, a retiring from the world once a week, may be a means of preparing us to welcome our final removal from it the more chearfully. It will also sweeten the thoughts of heaven to us; for the work and comforts of the Sabbath below, are the foretastes of the employments and enjoyments of the everlasting Sabbath above; and they who delight in the Sabbaths on earth, which may be called a typical resemblance of the rest that is prepared for the people of GOD in heaven, cannot but rejoice in the thoughts of keeping an eternal Sabbath above, in the immediate fruition of the presence of GOD, and beholding him as he is for ever: But the thoughts of heaven cannot be pleasant to a sabbath-breaker, for it would be an uneasy prison to him: If it be a penance to him to be a few days in the worship of GOD now, what a punishment would it be to him, to be engaged in this work for ever?

4. Our regard to the Sabbath is a trial of *the state and frame of our souls*, whether we be spiritual or carnal, love GOD or the world most. It tries the condition of grace in the soul, whether it be in a prosperous or declining state. GOD calls the Sabbath *a sign* betwixt him and his people, *Exod. xxxi. 17. Ezek. xx. 12, 20*. And our conscientious keeping and sanctifying of the Sabbath is *a sign* to us several ways. It is a sign of GOD's sanctifying our hearts, and an evidence of a good work wrought in us by the HOLY SPIRIT: And it is a clear sign to distinguish us from the un sanctified and profane people of the world: And also a sign of our having a conscientious regard to all the other commands of GOD; and all observing persons will find this sign to hold in their daily experience. It is a sign betwixt GOD and  
his



*AUGUSTINE.*

*Bishop of Hippo in Africa, an eminent Father and  
Writer: He was a great Sinner in his Youth, but after his  
Conversion he was distinguished for his great Piety: he  
died at Hippo in the Year 430, Aged 76.*

his people, that controversies are removed, and that peace and friendship are maintained: And the SPIRIT of GOD makes this duty a sign and character of a blessed man, Isa. lvi. 2. for the evangelical prophet speaking of the New-Testament times saith, "Blessed is the man that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it."

B I O G R A P H Y.

*The Life of* AUGUSTINE, Bishop of Hippo in Africa, an eminent Father, who flourished in the end of the fourth and the beginning of the fifth century. His pious mother, Monica, offered up many prayers that he might be delivered from his heresy and sinful course of life: He became an eminent convert, and was distinguished for his great piety and his labours in the church, both by his preaching and excellent writings. He defended the catholic faith against the gross heresies of the Manichees, Donatists and Pelagians. He lived threescore and sixteen years, forty of which he passed in the ministry, and that in a most laborious manner. He died at Hippo in the year 430. Aged 76.

AUGUSTINE, an illustrious Father of the church, was born at *Tagasta*, a city of *Numidia* in *Africa*, on the 13th of *November* 354. His parents were christians, and of no mean condition; his father's name was *Patricius*, and his mother's *Monica*. They were very careful to have him instructed in literature, for which he shewed very early a promising genius. Falling sick in his childhood, and being in danger of death, he desired baptism, having been already made a catechumen, which was according to the custom of the church in those days. His pious mother got every thing ready; but of a sudden he grew better, and it was deferred.

Though he shewed a genius, he shewed no inclination for study: however he was obliged to it; for his father intended

to raise him by his learning, and therefore sent him to learn Grammar and Rhetoric at *Madura*, where he continued till he was sixteen years old: when he returned to *Tagasta*, and continued a year with his father, who was making preparations for sending him to finish his studies at *Carthage*, the great desire he had of rendering his son a scholar, causing him to strive even beyond his circumstances. He spent this year at *Tagasta* without any sort of employment, because his father, not having sufficient to maintain him at *Carthage*, was raising by degrees a sum of money to send him thither. How often the pride and secular vanity of parents prove the ruin of their children! This interval of idleness probably was the cause of his falling into a sinful course of life; for he afterwards was vicious in his manners, and erroneous in his judgment, being tainted with the errors of the *Manichees*. When he came to *Carthage*, his criminal conversation was greatly promoted by his attendance on the public shows, and the theatrical performances. In the mean time he made a considerable progress in those human studies, which were intended to advance him in the world.

He went to *Carthage* about the end of the year 371. Before he was twenty, he made a considerable progress in all the liberal sciences. He now became desirous of reading the holy scriptures: but the simplicity of the stile displeased him; and he was still too great an admirer of the pagan eloquence to have any relish for the Bible. He had nevertheless a strong desire to know the truth; and imagining he had found it in the sect of the *Manichees*, he entered himself amongst them, and maintained the greatest part of their false and dangerous doctrines with a good deal of warmth. Having continued at *Carthage* for some time, he returned to *Tagasta*, where he taught Rhetoric with so much approbation that his mother was congratulated upon having a son of such uncommon merit. But this did not hinder that pious woman from being extremely afflicted on account of her son's heresy and his vicious course of life.

His mother applied herself to a worthy bishop, and besought him to talk to her son: The bishop replied, 'He is as yet untractable, and much puffed up with that heresy, which is new to him. Let him alone, and be satisfied with praying for him: he will find out by reading and inquiry in how great an error he is plunged: I myself was, in my infancy, put into the hands of the *Manichees* by my mother, whom they had seduced: I have not only read but transcribed most of their books, and I afterwards was undeceived by my own application and reason.' *Monica* would not be persuaded by the words of the bishop: and as she continued with abundance of tears to press him to talk to her son, the bishop said to her, 'Go your way in peace; it is impossible that the son of these tears can perish.'

In the year 380, he returned to *Carthage*, and taught rhetoric there with universal approbation. He began to disapprove several things in the *Manichees* system, and became a little wavering, but he did not change his profession, waiting for a better explication of his doubts. And probably the victory which he often gained over ignorant christians, in disputations with them, tended much to harden him in his errors: for eloquent and learned as he was, it was easy for him to embarrass weak and orthodox christians; an observation which should deter well-meaning people from engaging in religious controversy: they may know enough for being convinced of the truths of the gospel, but not enough to confute a sagacious adversary. Augustine himself, in one of his works, confesses, 'I almost always gained some unhappy victory which I had with some ignorant christians, by which frequent success the presumption of my youth was increased, and hurried me imprudently by its violence into that great fault of obstinacy.'

His pious praying mother *Monica* went to him to *Carthage*, in order to endeavour to rescue him from his heresy and his vicious course of life; nor did she despair, though she found her remonstrances were then to no purpose. Wanting a new

theatre, upon which to display his genius, he resolved to go to *Rome*; and, that he might not be diverted from this design he embarked without acquainting his mother or his relation *Romanian*, who had maintained him at school, his father dying about the year 372. He taught rhetoric in that place with the same success as he had done at *Carthage*: so that *Symmachus*, prefect of the city, being informed that they wanted an able professor of rhetoric at *Milan*, appointed him for that employment in the year 384. He was highly esteemed at *Milan*; where he went to visit the celebrated *Ambrose*, and was received by him in such a manner, as began to win his affection. He diligently attended the sermons of that pious Bishop, though not so much from an inward principle of piety, as from that of critical curiosity: But he was afterwards so powerfully affected with the subject of *Ambrose's* discourses, that he was reduced from the errors of the *Manichees*, and was in the rank of a catechumen in the church. At last the reading of *St. Paul's* epistles, the prayers and tears of his mother, and the good discourses of some of his friends, were attended with a divine blessing, and he became a sincere believer in *CHRIST*, and ready to abandon every thing for the sake of his blessed Saviour and Redeemer. His heart was now wholly set to seek the *LORD*, regarding neither riches nor honours. He was baptized by *Ambrose* in the year 387, and resigned his place of professor of rhetoric.

The year following he went to *Africa*, and gave himself to watching, fasting and prayer; he was chosen minister of *Hippo*, about the beginning of the year 391, where he preached diligently, both by his life and doctrine. He was recommended to the congregation at *Hippo* by *Valerius* their bishop, who was a very godly man; he rejoiced greatly and gave thanks to *GOD* for answering his prayers, by sending him a person so well furnished to edify the church of *CHRIST*; and he was particularly affected with this favourable Providence, because he, being a *Grecian* by nation, was not so fit

or able to instruct that people as was *Augustine*: And, contrary to the use and custom of the *African* churches, he permitted and even urged *Augustine* often to preach in his own presence; for which he was blamed by some other bishops: But this venerable and good man, knowing that it was usual in the eastern churches, and seeking the glory of God and the good of the people, did not regard the censures of evil tongues, while his minister did that which himself was less apt and fit to do. By this means *Augustine*, like a bright candle set in a candlestick, gave light to all who were in the house. The fame of this flying abroad, was the occasion that many Presbyters, being allowed by their bishops, preached the good word of GOD to the people in the presence of the Bishops..

At this time the *Manichean* heresy had infected many at *Hippo*, both citizens and strangers, who were deceived by a certain pestilent heretic, by name *Fortunatus*, a presbyter, remaining in that city. Hereupon many of those citizens and strangers came to *Augustine* and requested him to confer and dispute with this heretic about his opinions: *Augustine* willingly embraced the motion, being ready to render a reason of the faith and hope that was in him to every one that should ask it; being able, not only to exhort with wholsom words of sound doctrine, but also to convince the gainsayers: Hereupon they applied to *Fortunatus*, and with difficulty prevailed with him; for he had formerly known *Augustine* at *Carthage* infected with the same errors.

The time and place of this disputation being appointed, multitudes flocked to it, and public notaries were appointed to write down what passed, the disputation having continued two days. The event was, that this *Manichean* was neither able to overthrow the catholic faith, nor to defend his own erroneous opinions; which did so fill him with confusion and shame that he quickly left *Hippo* and never returned again: And so through the blessing of GOD upon *Augustine's*

labours, many who were before infected with those errors, were reclaimed and embraced the true catholic faith.

*Augustine* continued to preach the word of truth frequently, both in the church, and from house to house, confuting the heresies of the times, especially the *Donatists*, *Manichees*, and *Pelagians*: The same he did also by his writings, and the true christians greatly admiring rejoiced in it; so that, through GOD's blessing, the catholic church in *Africa* began to lift up her head, which formerly had been greatly corrupted and dejected on account of heretics, especially the *Donatists* who had infected and seduced many.

*Augustine's* books and treatises being dispersed, and greatly distinguished for learning, and the authority of the holy scriptures, so prevailed, through the grace of GOD, that not only sound christians but many heretics flocked to *Hippo* to hear him; and those that could write, and some that got others to write for them, had notes for their future benefit, so that the sweet favour of the doctrine of CHRIST was by this means dispersed all over *Africa*, which the churches beyond sea hearing of much rejoiced therein; for "when one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; so when one member is honoured, all the members rejoice with it."

About this time the *African* bishops holding a synod at *Hippo*, by their command *Augustine* being yet a presbyter, disputed before them of *faith* and the *creed*, which he performed to the joy of them all, especially of the good bishop *Valerius*, who was thankful to GOD for so great a mercy: And fearing lest some other city which wanted a bishop should choose *Augustine*, which indeed had come to pass, had he not been concealed, when search was made for him for that purpose; for bishopricks at that time were posts of labour rather than of profit, and more shuned than solicited. Wherefore this good old bishop finding himself much weakened by age, took all proper steps to keep *Augustine* at *Hippo*; and reluctant as he was, with the approbation of  
some

some other bishops, of the clergy, and the people, he was ordained bishop of *Hippo* in the year 395.

When he was ordained a bishop, he preached the word of life more frequently, more fervently, and with greater authority than he did before; and that not only in his own city and country, but in all places where he was invited; whereby the church of GOD greatly increased. But while the word of GOD was diligently preached, the *Donatists*, *Pelagians*, and other heretics, made great disturbances. And these men, seeing their number to be diminished, and envying the increase of the church, raised great persecutions against the true members of JESUS CHRIST, and especially against the godly ministers, both night and day, and sometimes robbed them of all they had; and even murdered them: They often threw lime and vinegar into their eyes to blind them, on which account these rebaptizing *Donatists* grew hateful to their own disciples: And through the mercy of GOD the word prevailed the more in *Hippo* by the ministry of *Augustine*; and the fame of it spreading abroad, many cities sent to choose their bishops out of that society, which much conduced towards the furthering of the peace of the church.

He preached and writ also very learnedly against the *Donatists*, *Pelagians*, and other heretics, whereby the *African* churches recovered their ancient splendor. All sorts of people pressed in crouds to hear him, and many brought writers to take down and preserve his discourses. His reputation spread into all parts, and his name was spoken of universally. *Augustine's* books also being dispersed, and some of them translated into *Greek*, and sent beyond sea into the Eastern churches, were a means of very much good. But these things so much the more enraged the violent *Donatists*, that when *Augustine* went abroad to preach to the churches, which he frequently used to do, they often lay in wait for him by the way to have murdered him, and had one time effected it, but that the person who was his guide, by the special Providence of GOD, mistook his way, and so led him by a by-way

to the place, whereby he escaped their hands; which afterwards came to his knowledge, for which he praised God as his only deliverer.

He took great pains also about ten years against the *Pelagians*, who were subtle disputants, and published their heresies in a very cunning way, endeavouring to propagate them not only in public, but from house to house. *Augustine* wrote many books against them, and disputed with them in the congregation, both to reduce them, and preserve others from the infection of their errors. By his means many councils were called in *Africa* against them. He wrote to the bishop of *Rome*, that that heresy was abominable, and was to be condemned by all that adhered to the catholic faith; whereupon the godly emperor *Honorius* taking cognisance of it, condemned it by his laws, and appointed the maintainers of it to be reckoned among the heretics, whereby many of them, forsaking their errors, returned to the true church again.

Thus was this holy man of God *Augustine* very solicitous about, and careful of the safety of the whole church; and indeed GOD gave him much comfort and occasion of rejoicing in the fruit of his labours, even in this life: First in *Hippo*, and the country round about, which was more immediately under his charge, these churches enjoying great unity and peace: And then in other places many bishops and ministers were established in the truth; for many *Manichees*, *Donatists*, *Pelagians* and *Pagans* were converted from their heresies; and rejoiced that they were now made members of the true church. He bore with the infirmities of the weak, and mourned for the sins of the wicked.

So many things were dictated and published by him; so many disputations were held in the church; so many things were written against heretics, and so many books of sacred scripture were expounded by him for the edification of the godly, that even a studious person in all his life, can scarcely know and read over. And he thought it his duty, as in *1 Cor.*

vi. 1. to endeavour to decide controversies, and was there-

fore

fore willing, when he was desired by christians or by persons of a different opinion, to compromise and decide their controversies with much patience and prudence hearing both parties. But he chose rather to judge between persons with whom he was not acquainted, than between his friends; for which he gave the following reasons; that he might possibly win over an unknown person to his friendship; but that of two friends there was always a danger of losing one. In this business he often used to employ himself till the time of eating, and sometimes a whole day without breaking his fast, laying hold of the opportunity to sound the dispositions of both parties, and to endeavour to inspire them with a love of piety and true religion.

He seldom was absent from the councils which were often held in divers provinces, yet always seeking the things which were of God, and not his own advantage: His aim and endeavour was that the faith of the holy catholic church might be preserved inviolate: that such ministers as were unjustly excommunicated might be absolved; and that such as were wicked and obstinate might be cast out. In the ordination of ministers he always judged that the consent of the godly should concur in it, and that the custom of the church should not be violated.

*Augustine* once forgetting the subject he first proposed to prosecute, went upon a confutation of the *Manichees*: and one *Firmus*, a rich merchant and a *Manichee* hearing him, was so convinced, that he came to him after, and with tears on his knees confessed his errors, and promised reformation: As also one *Felix* a *Manichee*, coming to *Hippo* to spread his heresy, in a disputation with *Augustine* after the third time, was so convinced that he recanted his errors, and was joined to the church.

He was called *Hæreticorum malleus*, the hammer of the heretics. He won also many *Pagans* to embrace the truth. He took much pains in ending differences. His apparel was neither sumptuous nor sordid. His diet was usually broth and

and roots; sometimes there was added a little flesh for his guests or such as were sick. All the table-utensils (the spoons excepted, which were of silver,) were either of earth, of wood, or of marble, not from the necessity of his circumstances, but from his love of poverty. On his table two verses were engraven :

*Quisquis amat dictis absentem rodere famam,  
Hanc mensam indictam noverit esse sibi.*

*For him; the absent who delights to wound,  
Place, at this table, never shall be found.*

Certain bishops, his friends, having one day violated this rule, he reprimanded them with great severity, and said, that either the verses on the table must be erased, or he must leave the company, and retire to his apartment.

It was also a custom to have some one read while they were at meals. His clergy lived always with him in the same house, eat at the same table, and were fed and clothed at the common expence. He always reprov'd them for their faults, still bearing with them as much as was proper; exhorting them chiefly not to invent trifling and poor excuses, nor to entertain the least animosity against each other, but to be reconciled, and exercise brotherly forbearance and compassion agreeable to the rule enjoined by the gospel.

He never suffered any woman, after his ordination, either to live in or frequent his house, not even his sister, who being a widow had devoted herself to God, nor any of his female relations. 'For, said he, although persons so nearly related, do not come under the least suspicion, they nevertheless draw other women after them, in quality either of servants or visitors, and the correspondence of such persons may be of dangerous consequence, or prove an offence to some.' If at any time any women were desirous of speaking to him, he never admitted them but in the presence of some of his clerks, nor even conversed with them alone, and in private.

private. He never visited any societies of religious women (for such were already in being) but in cases of the greatest necessity: But if at any time any sick persons desired him to come and pray with them, he immediately went; this circumstance excepted, he never visited any but those who laboured under some afflictions, such as widows and orphans.

He was not forgetful of the poor, and relieved their necessities from the same stock which maintained himself and his community, that is, with the revenues of the church, or the oblations of the faithful. He was very exact in observing the laws of hospitality, and held it as a maxim, that it were much better to bear with a wicked person, than to refuse a good man either through ignorance or caution: He used to intrust such of his clergy, as he judged most capable, successively and in their turns, with the care of his house, the church, and his whole revenue, never carrying any key about him, or wearing any ring upon his finger; namely, such rings, in which the ancients used to have their seals to seal up, upon any occasion, all such things as they would have laid by. Those who had the management of his household affairs in their hands, set down the several sums received as well as expended, and gave him an account of the whole at the year's end: And when any affair was composed of several articles, he chose to trust to the honesty of the stewards, rather than to examine the several acquittances; for he bestowed but little application on the temporalities of the church, employing himself much more in spiritual things, and in his endeavours to do good to the souls of men. For this reason he never had any inclination to raise new edifices, lest they should distract and confuse his mind; however he never hindered others from building, provided they did it with moderation.

In his advanced years he set about his *Retractions*. It was now many years since he had formed a design of revising all his works which had been published, and which it was impossible to correct but by censuring them in a public manner,

now he completed his purpose in two volumes; of which the first takes in the several works written from the time of his first conversion to the time of his being a minister: and the second takes in the remainder of them to the time when he made that revival. He therein reviews all his works, according to the order of time wherein they were written, as near as possibly he could; and he desired that they might be read in the same order, the better to discover the progress he had made. He takes notice of every particular, which he judged worthy of censure, not omitting the smallest expression; and at the same time defending what had been unjustly criticised by others. He comprises the revival of ninety-three works in two hundred and thirty-two books! sufficient almost to employ a man's whole life in the reading. What then must we think of the indefatigable writer?

He continued his labours to the last; but the latter part of his life was very afflicting to him: For by the permission of GOD soon after broke out that dreadful inundation of the Goths and Vandals, and other Northern people, who were GOD's sword to punish the pride of the Roman empire. These sailing out of *Spain* arrived in *Africa*, over-running the whole country of *Mauritania* and other *African* provinces. A bishop, who was an eye-witness of their desolation, says,  
 ' That he saw the cities ruined, and the buildings in the  
 ' country rased to the ground, the inhabitants being either  
 ' slain or put to flight; the churches destitute of ministers,  
 ' the consecrated virgins, and the religious, dispersed into  
 ' all parts. Some had sunk under the torture, others had  
 ' perished by the sword; while others in captivity having  
 ' lost the purity of their body, their mind, and their faith,  
 ' were slaves to brutal and cruel enemies. He saw that the  
 ' praises of God had ceased in the churches, whose very  
 ' buildings had in many places been consumed by fire: that  
 ' the solemn sacrifices which were due to GOD, had ceased  
 ' in their proper places; that they who fled into the woods,  
 ' to the mountains, to rocks and caverns, were taken and  
 ' slain,

‘ slain, or died for hunger, and for want of necessaries.  
 ‘ That the bishops and clergy, to whom God had been so  
 ‘ gracious as to suffer them not to fall into the hands of their  
 ‘ enemies, were stripped of all things, and reduced to the  
 ‘ extremest degree of beggary. That of the great number  
 ‘ of churches in *Africa*, there were only three remaining,  
 ‘ namely, *Carthage*, *Hippo* and *Cirtba*, which were not  
 ‘ ruined, and whose cities were yet standing.’

*Hippo* was soon besieged, and the siege lasted fourteen months, and all communication was cut off from the besieged with the sea. Many other neighbouring bishops had fled thither for refuge, and were exercised in prayer and tears, intreating the Father of mercies to be merciful to them, and to preserve his church from the rage of the adversaries: And being one day at table, *Augustine* said to them: ‘ You know, brethren, that from the beginning of this siege, my daily prayers have been, that GOD would either free us from it, or give his servants patience and courage to abide his will, or at least to take me out of this present evil world: And I believe that GOD will answer my prayer.’

And indeed in the third month of the siege he was seized with a fever which proved his last sickness: And lest he should be diverted from his pious exercises, he desired those about him, ten days before his death, not to suffer any one to come to his chamber, but at such hours as the physician came to visit him, or when they brought him what he was to eat; an order strictly obeyed, so that he spent his whole time in meditation and prayer. He was perfectly sensible at his death; neither were his sight and hearing impaired. His friends who prayed with him were present when he died. He lived three-score and sixteen years, forty of which he spent in the ministry, and that in a most laborious manner. He made no will, because he was so poor, he had nothing to dispose of; but he always earnestly desired that his library, and all the books belonging to the church, might be carefully preserved. We are told, that he was very powerful in prayer, and that he hath by it cast out devils, and restored sick persons to their health.

Such was the famous *Augustine*; a most celebrated convert, and much distinguished for piety and great abilities, and his laborious diligence to promote the orthodox faith and real religion. We are told, that after his conversion to the faith, he was grievously vexed with inward conflicts against his corrupt affections, complaining of his inward habitual vices, and after long struggling with them by purposes, vows, strong resolutions, watching, fasting, self-revenge, and other good means, finding still his own weakness and the increasing violence of his corruptions, as he was seriously musing and meditating what to do more, he heard a voice saying, '*In te stas, et non stas, Thou standest in thyself, and dost not stand*.' Whereupon rightly apprehending that his own strength, carnal reason, and other powers and helps of nature could not be sufficient for effecting that which is the proper and peculiar work of grace, he betook himself to his Saviour by humble, faithful and fervent prayer; and at last found such assistance from the HOLY SPIRIT of grace, as strengthened him to stand, and make good his resolutions with more comfort than before.

His usual wish was, that Christ when he came might find him *aut precatem aut prædicantem, either praying or preaching*. When the *Donatists* upbraided him with the impurity of the former part of his life, he replied, 'Look, how much they blame my former faults, by so much the more do I commend and praise my physician.' His usual prayer was, 'Lord, give first what thou requirest, and then require of me what thou wilt.' He so admired and loved the seven penitential Psalms, that he caused them to be written out, and ordered them to be fixed to the wall near his bed, where he read them, pouring out tears incessantly.

*His sermons and comments, his city of God, and his meditations,* and all his writings have been often printed, and are numerous and valuable: They have been printed in nine volumes in folio at *Basil*: But the best edition of his works is that published at *Paris* by the benedictines of *St. Maur*.

ADIALOGUE *between* CHRISTIAN *and* TRUTH,  
*for illustrating in a spiritual manner some of the*  
*Similitudes and Metaphors in SOLOMON'S SONG*  
*or the CANTICLES.*

CHRISTIAN. **W**HAT may I apprehend by the spouse saying, chap. i. 2. "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth?"

TRUTH. By the kisses of CHRIST'S mouth, we are to understand the pledges, embraces, and manifestations of his love.

CHRISTIAN. Wherein does the love of CHRIST appear to be set forth by kisses?

TRUTH. As kisses are the seals and pledges of heart-union and strong affection between one object and another; so the fresh manifestations of CHRIST'S love, are the seals of that strong affection that he bears to his bride and spouse: And as they are signs and manifestations of love, so the displays of CHRIST'S glory, and the fresh seals of pardon, peace, and redemption, which are the kisses of his mouth; these are strong obligations on the saints to love the name of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, to adore his person, to celebrate his praise, to glorify him, and to obey his commands.

CHRISTIAN. Why are they called the kisses of his mouth?

TRUTH. It may denote the gracious words, the gracious promises, and the gracious proclamations of peace which proceed from his mouth; "for never man spake like this man:" And they wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his lips, in which respect the kisses of CHRIST'S mouth, are the openings and out-pourings of all that fulness which is contained in his person, blood, righteousness and power, as it is written, "Grace is poured into his lips."

CHRISTIAN

CHRISTIAN. Why is the spouse so particular in saying, "Let him kiss me?"

TRUTH. It shews the strength of her love, and the ardency of her desire after the fresh smiles, sweetness, and favours of the love of CHRIST to her soul, that he was the only object her soul longed for or desired; and this shews the high estimation the believing soul has of the love of CHRIST, and its ardent longings after the constant enjoyment of it; that no sweetness is so sweet as the pledges, visits and smiles of his love: therefore the spouse knowing by experience the sweetness of it, says, *Let him*, which is a relative without an antecedent, denoting that her soul was so full of *him*, that she could think of no other but *him*, because his singular excellencies, perfections and beauties, had so ingrossed all her thoughts.

CHRISTIAN. But why must it be *him* above another?

TRUTH. Because there is none like *him*, nor any equal to *him*; for he is the beauty of the creation, the glory of heaven, and the center of the Bible: therefore it is written, "To *him* give all the prophets witness;" denoting that he was the glory, sun and center of their thoughts, and the fulfilment of all their prophecies: It was to *him* above all that they pointed. In like manner he is described as the life and center of *Mary's* thoughts, when she said to the gardener, "Sir, if thou hast borne *him* hence, tell me where thou hast laid *him*, and I will take *him* away, for they have taken away my LORD, and I know not where they have laid *him*." You see it is *him*, and only *him*, who engaged her whole heart, soul and strength, which sets forth the fulness, the sweetness and perfection of the LORD JESUS to the believing soul. In a word he is the great HIM, whom the Father honour, whom the angels adore, whom the saints love for ever and ever, as it is written, "When he bringeth forth his first-begotten into the world, he saith, "Let all the angels of God worship *him*:" and the saints say, "Unto *him* that loved us and washed us from our sins,

“to *him* be glory;” and the apostle *Paul* says, “That I may be found in *him*.”

CHRISTIAN. Why is the word *kisses* used in the plural?

TRUTH. It shews that a soul that has tasted of the love of CHRIST, finds such a perfection of happiness and enjoyment therein, that it longs for the constant and renewed seals and manifestations of it; for the more the soul enjoys, the more it longs to enjoy, and though it may live securely, as to interests, yet it cannot live happy without it. Therefore these pledges, and visits of CHRIST's love, are expressed in the plural, for it is not one seal of pardon, but renewed seals of pardon that make the believer's life happy and comfortable.

CHRISTIAN. Why is the spouse so particularly desirous of the enjoyment of CHRIST's love to her own soul, *let Him kiss me?*

TRUTH. It shews that it is not CHRIST's love in general to sinners, that will satisfy the believing soul, but the particular witness and assurance of it, for it is not hearing that such a saint is saved, or such a soul is comforted, that will satisfy the soul that longs after CHRIST and his glory, for the believer longs to see, enjoy and feel the embraces of CHRIST's love for himself, as its own enjoyment of peace and salvation, ‘O, says the soul, Let *Him* love me, speak peace to me, witness by his person, blood, and righteousness my salvation. O, may the promises be sealed, and the blessings of grace applied to me, that I may assuredly know that JESUS is mine, and that I am his.’

CHRISTIAN. What may I apprehend by the argument here used, “For thy love is better than wine?”

TRUTH. It shews that the love of CHRIST is so sweet, desirable and precious, that it is beyond all comparison. For what comparisons can be given of that love which is stronger than death, that is higher than the heavens, broader than the earth and more boundless than the seas. Behold the love of CHRIST in his engagements, in the counsel of peace, in the covenant, in his incarnation, in his death,

in his resurrection, in his triumphs, in giving pardon, peace and salvation: In which respect it is a love better than wine; or that passeth all comparison.

CHRISTIAN. In what respect does the love of CHRIST appear in his engagements?

TRUTH. Greatly, inasmuch as he engaged body for body, soul for soul, and life for life for the redemption of his church. For when the spouse, the bride, the Lamb's wife, was fallen into all the ruins of sin and the fall, lo! the LORD JESUS, as her head and husband, engaged in his person to redeem her with his own blood, by becoming incarnate for her, by dying in her room and bleeding in her stead as a sacrifice and atonement for her sins; and he engaged his heart to approach unto GOD for her, and said, lo! "I come to do thy will, O my GOD!" therefore he is called, *the surety of the better covenant*, because as a surety he engaged to pay all her debts, to obey the law which she had broken, to make an atonement for the iniquity she had committed, to satisfy the justice of GOD for her offences, that her redemption might be sealed with his own blood: and this makes his love beyond comparison.

CHRISTIAN. Wherein does the love of CHRIST in counsel and covenant appear?

TRUTH. As the most solemn and firm transaction between man and man is by oath, counsel and covenant; so the love of CHRIST is settled upon his church by covenant, by counsel and by oath: therefore he is called, "The wonderful, counsellor," and the council of peace is said to be between them both.

CHRISTIAN. In what respect does the love of CHRIST appear in his incarnation?

TRUTH. Wonderfully and amazingly; inasmuch as the glory, perfection and happiness of his person and nature, was the fulness and happiness of the Godhead, called *John xvii. 5.* "A glory which he had with the Father before the world was;" which glory consisted in oneness, union and exaltation;

tation ; and this glory he veiled in flesh and blood when he took upon him our nature, and was made of a woman, and made under the law, that thereby he might become a proper surety, sufferer and sacrifice with his own blood in our stead. Was ever love like unto this love !

CHRISTIAN. Wherein does the love of CHRIST appear in his death ?

TRUTH. Inasmuch as he died in our room and suffered in our stead ; and under the agonies of his soul he bore all our sins, iniquities and transgressions, and likewise all the curse, wrath and condemnation due to us on the account of them, and by the infinite merit of his blood, death and sacrifice, he made an eternal atonement, and by this atonement wrath is removed, sin is pardoned, GOD is glorified, and the church is saved with an everlasting salvation ; this renders his love better than wine.

CHRISTIAN. Wherein does the love of CHRIST appear in his resurrection ?

TRUTH. As it is a solemn assurance and witness from heaven, that the debt of sin is fully paid, that all curse and wrath is removed, that GOD is well-pleased with the sacrifice and atonement that he has made. To this GOD has given a full assurance in that he has raised him from the dead ; and on this account the resurrection of JESUS becomes the grand foundation of our faith, hope and dependence, for his resurrection and his triumphs over death and hell, as our surety : this for ever secures our resurrection and eternal salvation, because he ever liveth to make intercession for us.

CHRISTIAN. Wherein does the love of CHRIST appear in pardon and peace ?

TRUTH. Pardon is the renovation of a sense of guilt by the infinite merit of his precious blood ; peace is the fruit of pardon, all which flows from the sealing sweetness and favour of CHRIST'S love to the mind, by beholding the firm foundation of hope in his person, blood and righteousness, by seeing the greatness of his love in dying for sinners,

and viewing the examples of his mercy to the chief of sinners ; therefore pardon is a firm trust upon CHRIST's precious blood, or a sweet seal or reflection of his dying love upon the mind, from whence flows peace of conscience and joy in the Holy Ghost ; and in this respect his love is better than wine.

CHRISTIAN. Why is the love of CHRIST compared to wine ?

TRUTH. As wine is of a reviving nature to man, so is the love of CHRIST to the soul. O the reviving power and exhilarating life of CHRIST's love ! It raiseth the drooping mind that is ready to sink into the depths of despair, and comforts the poor soul that mourns on account of the hidings of GOD's face. And as wine is said to make glad the heart of man, so does the love of CHRIST communicate gladness, joy and rejoicing to the soul, as it dispels all clouds and fears from the mind, and fills it with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

CHRISTIAN. Why is the love of CHRIST said to be better than wine ?

TRUTH. The intention of the Holy Ghost is, thereby to set forth the love of CHRIST beyond all comparison ; therefore it is better than wine in its nature, being of infinite worth and value ; better than wine in its influence, as wine only revives the body, and exhilarates the natural spirits, but the love of CHRIST revives the soul, and spreads such a gladness and joy through the mind, that the believer breaks forth in a kind of rapture, ' Because thy loving kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee. O the sweetness and preciousness of thy love ! it is my life, it is my joy, it is my heaven, it is my all ! O what is heaven, or the heaven of heavens ! what are angels, sun, moon or stars ? what is the world and all things therein ? what is health, or wealth, or riches or treasures ? or what is life when compared with thy love ? ' O thy love it is sweeter than honey ; more precious than rubies, and all things that are to be desired, are not to be compared with it ! ' Therefore says the spouse, " Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth ; for thy love is better than wine. "

CASUISTICAL

## CASUISTICAL DIVINITY:

Or Religious Questions answered.

QUESTION XL. **B***Y* what marks may we know if the saving change by regeneration be wrought upon us, and that we are new-born and in a state of grace?

ANSWER. *First*, Those that are regenerated have had their eyes opened, and had new discoveries of sin, CHRIST and holiness. Sin will appear to be the greatest evil, to be of a GOD-dishonouring and soul-destroying nature, and they will be convinced that by sin their souls are in a sinful, miserable, helpless condition; and they will be convinced by the HOLY SPIRIT of the necessity of CHRIST the only Saviour, who came to save his people from their sins: They are also convinced of the beauty of holiness, *Matt. i. 21. Acts xxvi. 18. Rom. vii. 12, 13.*

*Secondly*, They have new cares and concerns of soul; their chief care is not about temporal things but what they shall do to be saved, obtain the favour of GOD, have an interest in CHRIST, and their souls be sanctified and meet for heavenly glory, *Matt. vi. 31, 32. Acts xvi. 30.*

*Thirdly*, They have a new heart and a principle of spiritual life, and they are desirous and resolved through grace to strive against sin, and to walk with God in newness of life, *Ezek. xxxvi. 26. Rom. vi. 4. Gal. v. 16, 17.*

*Fourthly*, They have new desires after the word, and the means of spiritual nourishment; they desire the sincere milk of the word, which yields solid and proper nourishment for their souls, *1 Pet. ii. 2.*

*Fifthly*, They have earnest desires after the presence of GOD in ordinances, and particularly in secret prayer, *Psalms* lxxiii. 1, 2. *Psalms* lxxiii. 28. *Acts* ix. 11.

*Sixthly*, They hunger and thirst after CHRIST's righteousness, both imputed and inherent, *Matt.* v. 6.

*Seventhly*, Indwelling sin and remaining corruption is their greatest grief and trouble, *Rom.* vii. 24.

*Eighthly*, They have a sincere love to all the people of GOD, for love to the brethren is an evidence of having passed from death to life, *1 John* iii. 4.

*Ninthly*, They are willing to come to the light, to have their state tried and examined, *John* iii. 20, 21. *Psalms* cxxxix. 23, 24.

QUESTION XLI. *What kind of remembrance of Christ ought we to have in the ordinance of the Lord's-supper?*

It ought not to be a bare historical remembrance, for so *Judas*, *Pilate* and the devils themselves may remember that CHRIST was crucified and betrayed on earth; but it is a remembrance with suitable affections and impressions on our souls.

*First*, It ought to be an awful and reverential remembrance, adoring the justice and holiness of GOD displayed in the sufferings of CHRIST his beloved Son. How strict was divine justice in not sparing the Surety, but requiring full satisfaction for sin! *Rom.* viii. 32.

*Secondly*, It ought to be a mournful and broken-hearted remembrance looking on the elements as representing CHRIST as crucified by our sins; and our eye should affect our heart with grief and sorrow for those sins that nailed and crucified the LORD of life.

*Thirdly*, We ought to have a sin-loathing remembrance; abhorring with the utmost detestation our cursed sins that caused our blessed Redeemer to sweat great drops of blood, and to groan under their weight, and brought him to the painful death of the cross.

*Fourthly*, It ought to be an affectionate remembrance; the love of CHRIST should constrain us to love him who loved us  
and

and gave himself for us. Our hearts should be filled with love to him "who humbled himself and became obedient " to the death, even to the death of the cross," that he might make an atonement and purchase redemption for his people.

*Fifthly*, It ought to be a thankful remembrance. The believer is under great obligations to say, 'What shall I ' render to the LORD for all his benefits towards me?' Our souls redeemed from sin and hell should sing of this salvation, which is purchased by the blood of the LAMB.

*Sixthly*, It ought to be a fiducial remembrance, by our souls trusting and depending on CHRIST, his blood and righteousness for justification and salvation, and by pleading it with GOD for answering all the accusations of satan, the threatenings of the law, and accusations of our own consciences. We ought to pray earnestly to be acquainted with the life and exercise of *faith*, and that we may be hid in CHRIST's wounds, washed in his blood, and clothed with his righteousness, and may be sanctified, and made meet for uninterrupted communion with CHRIST in heaven.

It appears then that in this ordinance we must remember the sufferings of CHRIST; which supposeth some acquaintance with CHRIST crucified; for we cannot be said to remember what we never knew. The ignorant therefore, to whom the great things of the gospel are a strange thing, which they are not concerned to acquaint themselves with, cannot answer the intention of this ordinance. This remembrance implies also a serious thought and contemplation of the sufferings of CHRIST in a believing manner, by the consideration of CHRIST's dying for our sins, and the Saviour of our souls; and this is the object of faith, not of fancy. Then we do this in remembrance of CHRIST effectually, when we by grace experience the death of CHRIST killing sin in us, mortifying the flesh and weaning our hearts from this present life, and enabling us to look for the blessed hope of CHRIST's second coming. *The Spirit and the bride say, Come, Amen: Even so come LORD JESUS.*

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M I S C E L L A N E O U S .

*A Letter to the Rev. Dr. Durell, Vicechancellor of the University of Oxford, occasioned by a late expulsion of six students from Edmund-hall, Oxford. By GEORGE WHITEFIELD, M. A. late of Pembroke-College. Continued. The second edition. Dilly in the Poultry. Price 4d.*

**T**HE account of these young mens expulsion may justly affect all that have a serious concern that the true gospel of JESUS CHRIST may be continued in our island; for there is ground to believe that they were persons of real piety, and gave promising hopes of their being very useful in the church of CHRIST, especially when there are so many in this degenerate age in the sacred office, who seem to be unacquainted with the life and power of religion, and therefore not properly qualified for the important work of preaching the gospel. In our last Magazine it appears that the pious and excellent author of this letter, puts the Vicechancellor in mind of an uncommon religious concern and zeal among some of the sons of the prophets for promoting their own and others salvation, which gladdened the hearts of many, and afforded matter of uncommon joy and thanksgiving to the Father of mercies and GOD of all consolation. But, alas! says our worthy author, how is this general joy decayed by the late expulsion!

It seems evident that, whatever other pretences may be made, as to any disqualification in respect of learning, &c. it is notorious and obvious to all intelligent persons, that the grand cause of these young mens expulsion was this, namely, that they were either real or reputed METHODISTS. The author gives a full description of a Methodist; he is one who professes the sound principles of the christian religion, and

and through grace practises the duties thereof. It is an honour put upon Methodists, since those that pray extempore, sing hymns, go to church or meeting, and abound in other acts of devotion, are often denominated by that name.

The reverend author takes notice of an amazing omission in the Society for promoting christian knowledge, that the book of homilies, which ought to be in every hand hath never found a place in the large catalogue of books given away by that laudable Society. This ought to be remedied; for the Common-Prayer-Book, the Articles of Religion, and the Homilies, ought to be much perused, and in the hands of those who profess to be members of the established church.

The Rev. Mr. *Whitefield* also observes how bad the times are by the degeneracy of the morals of the people. It is much to be lamented by all real christians that ignorance and impiety abound, and that there are so many thousands and tens of thousands, who, as to spiritual things, know not their right-hand from their left, and never go either to church or meeting at all. May our LORD JESUS CHRIST, the great Head of the church, send forth true evangelical ministers to be laborious in instructing the people, and in preaching the good news of salvation through JESUS CHRIST to the sinful and miserable posterity of *Adam* our fallen head and representative.

The bounds allowed for our Magazine, determine us to refer our readers to the excellent letter itself, which is sold at the small price of four-pence. And those that are desirous to enquire farther into the extraordinary expulsion of the six pious students, may see it in a well-written pamphlet just published, intitled, *Pietas Oxoniensis*, or a full and impartial account of the expulsion of six students from *St. Edmund-hall, Oxford*. With a dedication to the Earl of *Litchfield*, chancellor of that University. By a Master of Arts of *Oxford*. *Keith and Dilly*, Price 1s.

*Thoughts on Perfection, sent by a pious correspondent.*

*To the Authors of the GOSPEL-MAGAZINE.*

GENTLEMEN,

I SHALL not trouble you with vain questions, and sophistical niceties about *Perfection*; but according to that light which I have, would attempt to state the scriptural notion of it. I have never met with any thing that I could call a just account of this matter. Let me for the benefit of my fellow-creatures shew my opinion; and if it doth not agree with the word of GOD reject it; but if it corresponds with the sacred writings, then receive it. I am not going to speak of perfection with respect to the great GOD, who is infinitely perfect; nor of angels, whose perfection we are ignorant of; but I would speak of perfection with respect to man; and that relative to this world, considered as a believer in CHRIST, and a new creature.

The word *Perfection* seems to carry in it the idea of completeness: but I think the word is sometimes used in a lower sense in the sacred writings. In treating of this matter I would make the following distinctions.

*First,* There is a state-perfection. The word of GOD speaks of the two great doctrines of sanctification and justification; and they are both essential to the salvation of the soul: without being enjoyers of the former, and being made partakers of the latter, we shall never see GOD with comfort. The apostle mentioneth these two doctrines, 1 Cor. vi. 11. "But ye are washed; but ye are sanctified; but ye are justified in the name of the LORD JESUS, and by the Spirit of our GOD." Our justification is in CHRIST. JESUS has made atonement for sin; he has paid a perfect ransom-price for his people. He has likewise fulfilled all righteousness, and fulfilled

fulfilled the law in every jot and tittle. This is the matter of our justification and acceptance in the sight of GOD. When a person is convinced of sin, sees his ruined state and condition, and that he cannot help himself out of it; when with this he sees CHRIST's ability, and willingness to save him, and so ventures his soul upon him for salvation, trusts in his blood as the matter of his atonement, and relies upon his righteousness for salvation; such a one is in a justified state.

This is what I call state-perfection: For this has respect to our state in the sight of GOD. Every such person is set free from the condemning power of the law, and is in a state of acceptance in the sight of GOD; as he is justified in CHRIST. This to me appears plain from the following texts of scripture, *Rom. viii. 1.* "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in CHRIST JESUS." "Against such there is no law," *Gal. v. 23.* "And ye are complete in him," *Col. ii. 10.* "Who, saith the apostle, 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."

In this sense believers are perfect: for they by faith receive a perfect righteousness. Justification is not a thing that grows or admits of degrees: It may be so as to the sense that the soul may have of the matter; a person may grow as to the clearness of his views of his interest in CHRIST; but as to what he is as to his state, that admits of no growth. Then a believer with respect to his state is perfect; he is perfectly freed from the guilt of sin by the blood of CHRIST: he is perfectly justified in his righteousness, and GOD in CHRIST looks upon him as such. This is one part of Christian perfection, and it is what the soul attains to in this world, and it is desirable to live in the sense of it.

*Secondly,* There is a perfection as to parts. I have before spoke of that part of the Christian character, that comes under the notion of justification: I would now speak of it with

respect to the work of sanctification. It ought to be observed, that one is complete at once, the other is not so, for it gradually advances towards maturity. We read of several classes of christians, 1 *John* ii. 13, 14. namely children, young men, and fathers: and we read of babes in CHRIST, 1 *Cor.* iii. 1. Let it be observed that christian-babes are in CHRIST, as well as strong men: they are ingrafted into CHRIST, and are become new creatures. Such indeed are in the infancy of their christian-state; yet they have all the essentials of the christian. They are perfectly justified, as well as the more advanced; and they are regenerated and born again. When a child is born, as soon as it sees the light, it hath all the parts and properties essential to the man: but not grown to manly perfection. This is the christian's case; when he is born into the spiritual world he has the principle of grace communicated: he has the grace of faith, hope, love, resignation, humility, &c. for these are all contained in the general principle of grace, there is not one thing wanting that is necessary to constitute the real christian. But then it is necessary for such to grow and advance in the things of GOD: they are but babes, and as babes grow up gradually to manhood; so the new-born christian grows under the means of grace and the Spirit of grace to a perfect christian.

In this sense christians are all perfect as to those parts and properties, that are essential to the christian temper and general character; in this sense they are so perfect that there is not one thing wanting, only a growth in them.

*Thirdly,* There is a perfection as to degree; this is to be viewed comparatively and not strictly. I think it appears evident to every one that understands what he reads, that the word perfection is sometimes in the sacred writings, when spoken relative to man, in this state signifies his being far advanced in the divine life, and not designed as expressive of absolute perfection; you know it is so in common language; we are ready to say when one man excels another that he is a perfect artist; that he is so when compared with

one whose judgment and skill are not equal with his; but he is not absolutely perfect, for what he has attained to may admit of some degree of growth. So the Christian that is far, very far advanced in the things of GOD, that has much knowledge, a great degree of heavenly-mindedness, and is very beautiful in his conduct, he is in scripture-language a perfect man, that is, he is so when compared with one that is below him in these things; but when we carry the comparison to the human spirits now with GOD, he is far from perfection, then he is perfect only in a comparative sense. Let me a little illustrate this in order to make the subject plain.

This sort of perfection may be viewed with respect to wisdom and knowledge. That man that is far advanced in knowledge in any science is perfect, when compared with one that is only acquainted with the first principles of it; this is the christian's case: the word is often used in this sense in the sacred writings, 1 Cor. ii. 6. "We speak wisdom among them that are perfect." We, as if the apostle had said, speak of the more abstruse things of the gospel, and the greater mysteries of divine love, to those that are so far advanced in knowledge, as to be capable of understanding and receiving them. It was for this end that the apostles taught "that they might present every man perfect in CHRIST JESUS." They were for having them so instructed in the things of GOD and in the doctrines of the gospel, that they might be considered under the character of *perfect men*; those that know much of the love of GOD, of the doctrine of the cross, and enter deeply into the covenant of grace, they are in a comparative sense perfect.

Perfection may likewise be considered with regard to real experience. The apostle saith, "strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age;" those that know much of a work of grace in their hearts, who are well versed in experimental acquaintance with divine things, they are to be fed with strong meat, because they can bear it. When a person first sets out in the way to heaven, he is like a raw

undisciplined soldier, not fit to engage in the more difficult things belonging to the spiritual life: the more advanced christian is the properest person for this, his heart is more established, he has a deeper sense of his corruptions and weakness, and a firmer reliance upon the LORD for aid. Being thus fortified he can endure hardness as a good soldier of JESUS CHRIST. This man in a comparative sense is perfect, he is so in his faith, love, hope, &c. when compared with the young christian. This man's faith is stronger, his love more fixed and steady, but when we carry the thought to the happy spirits above, then we must consider him as falling short of that perfection which they possess.

This may be viewed with respect to enjoyment; some persons are but very little indulged with sensible communion with God; they hardly know what it means by happy experience, but others are greatly favoured, they have such nearness to God and delightful communion with him, that with respect to degree they are perfect in enjoyment in a comparative sense, when the enjoyment such a person is favoured with, is compared with the gloomy christian, he is in a soft sense perfect, but yet at the same time it falls very short of what the happy spirits above are favoured with.

This may be viewed with respect to conduct; some that talk much about religion, commit many faults in their walk, and by so doing bring disgrace on the good ways of God; others walk honourably, they credit religion, and cause the good ways of God to be well spoken of, and in a comparative sense may be said to be perfect.

In order to our being raised to an exalted degree in the divine life, and to eminency in the things of God, we are exhorted to press after *Perfection*; hence it is that our LORD faith, *Be perfect, Matt. v. 48.* and it is in this view the apostle exhorts to it in the eleventh verse of 2 *Cor. xiii.*

*Fourthly,* In the other world the people of God will be perfect in every sense. There is no complete perfection in this world; here is no complete freedom from sin, nor uninterrupted enjoyment of God; but in heaven the spirits are said to be perfect, *Heb. xii. 13.*

A LETTER

*A LETTER from a pious Lady to two Ladies her Children.**Dear Children,*

**I** REJOICED to hear that you were under any concern about your precious souls, and inclined to seek JESUS. An interest in CHRIST is the one thing needful. If we have this we shall be eternally happy; if we have it not eternally miserable. "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of GOD is eternal life, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD." GOD hath given, and will give to poor sinners eternal life: And this life is in his son. He that findeth CHRIST, findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD. O my dear children, we are all of us, born into this world, most miserable sinners. We are quite undone; we have destroyed ourselves by sin. But for ever adored be GOD's free grace! In CHRIST the Saviour, is our help. It hath pleased the LORD, to lay help, the help of sinners, upon one that is mighty. Upon the mighty Saviour, who is able and willing to save to the uttermost, even all that come unto GOD by him. There is all fulness in CHRIST, to answer your every want. All the infinite treasures, the inexhaustible stores of grace and life, are laid up in CHRIST; on purpose for the most poor and miserable, blind and naked, and law-condemned sinners that come unto him. Do you see your misery? Do you want mercy? Is GOD's free mercy in CHRIST, desirable to you? Then are you, you as it were by name, called by JESUS, to come unto him, and drink: To take freely of all the grace you want, to save you from all misery, unto all glory. He will not send you empty away. His love, his mercy, his power, his faithfulness, are all engaged to save you. He will not, he cannot deny himself. He will in no wise cast out, any poor soul that comes unto him for life. And do you begin to see any beauty in CHRIST? Any preciousness in his blood? Any glory in his righteousness? Any excellency in his

his fulness? Then remember what he says for your encouragement: "I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me, *Prov. viii. 17.*" CHRIST first loved you; or you had not been drawn by a sight of his beauty, to love him.

He first desired to save you; or you had not been desirous to be saved by him. CHRIST was first willing to be married unto you; or you had not been made willing to have him, the LORD of hosts, your Maker, your Redeemer, for your Husband. And if CHRIST is willing to embrace you as his own, in the arms of his infinite love; and you are willing to be folded up for ever in his sweet embraces: what can hinder? O give up yourselves to JESUS, to be entirely his; and he will be entirely yours. And the day of your espousals unto him, will be the day of the gladness of his heart. O did you see but a thousandth part of his infinite worth, did you taste but a thousandth part of his infinite sweetness, your souls would be sick of love for him, the chiefest among ten thousand! For him, that fair, that incomparably fair, and altogether lovely One! O dear children, CHRIST is a well of life, a sea of bliss, a mass of treasure that is bottomless, boundless, endless! In him, all beauties and glories, all delights and perfections, both created and uncreated, do jointly and for ever meet! Neither the tongues of men, nor of angels, were they employed to an eternal space, could tell you the one half, no nor the ten thousandth part of his infinite glory! O seek an intimate acquaintance with JESUS! Nothing like this to tell you what JESUS is. CHRIST is best known, by a real enjoyment, a feeling possession, and humble adoration, of his great, his glorious, his blissful self! Hereby your souls will be filled with all the fulness of GOD; changed into the same image, from glory to glory, in this world; until you see CHRIST as he is, are made perfectly like him, and appear with him in the glory of the world to come.—*Grace be with you.* I remain

*Yours most affectionately.*

## P O E T R Y.

*Fools make a mock at sin, Prov. xiv. 9.*

1.  
**B**EHOOLD the poor deluded wit,  
Caught in the devil's gin :  
By him hell-hardened, and made fit  
To make a mock at sin.

2.  
He thinks himself exceeding wise,  
But blind with nat'ral pride,  
Wisdom is folly in his eyes,  
And truth he can't abide.

3.  
The wise, the holy, and the just  
With scorn he ridicules ;  
And who'se reprimands his lusts,  
He counts the greatest fools.

4.  
How satan sneers while he beguiles  
The wretch with hellish skill !  
Makes him a dupe to all his wiles,  
A slave to do his will.

5.  
Pleas'd with the music of his chains  
The thoughtless mortal runs :  
All friendly warning he disdain's,  
And wholsom counsel shuns.

6.  
Anon in hell's infernal lake  
He ope's his sottish eyes ;  
Beholds (too late) his mad mistake  
With horror and surprize.

7.  
And there his master will reward  
His hearty service here ;  
For fire and brimstone well prepared  
Must be his endless cheer.

8.  
Thus may each scoffing sinner see  
Whose service they are in,  
And what their certain pay must be  
Who make a mock at sin.

*A caution to youth. From Eccl. xi. 9.*

1.  
**R**EJOICE, ye young voluptuous tribe,  
Taste ev'ry vain delight ;  
And all your fancies can describe,  
Pursue with all your might.

2.  
But while you walk this pleasing path,  
Consider as you go,  
This is the road that leads to death,  
And everlasting woe.

3.  
Remember tho' in youthful blood,  
You're now expos'd to death,  
And to the dreadful wrath of God  
When e'er you lose your breath.

4.  
O then, before it be too late  
My friendly counsel hear !  
For soon before the judgment-seat  
Of CHRIST you must appear

5.  
There ev'ry sinful word and thought,  
And action you have done,  
However secret, must be brought  
Before the mid-day sun.

6.  
O then for that tremendous day,  
In earnest now prepare !  
That CHRIST may take your guilt away  
Be much in fervent pray'r.

7.  
This is the way ; and now's the time  
T' ensure the heavenly rest ;  
Now seek to have each darling crime  
Excluded from your breast.

*Sinners excited to repentance by the long-suffering patience of God : From Rom. ii. 4.*

1.  
**O**HARDEN'D sinner, hear and fear  
The danger thou art in ;  
Tho' yet thy Maker doth forbear  
To recompense thy sin.

2.  
He calls thee now to turn and live,  
For all thy follies past,  
He'll yet the prodigal receive,  
And save thee now at last.

3.  
And think how justly long ere now  
Thou might'st have been in hell,  
So long, so obstinately thou  
Against him didst rebel.

4.  
Yet still the goodness of the LORD  
Intreats thee to repent,  
And turn obedient at his word  
Thy ruin to prevent.

5.  
But know if still thy harden'd heart  
Continue to rebel,  
Thou shortly must receive thy part  
Where thy first leader fell.

O then

6.  
 O then no more provoke the LORD,  
 But hearken to his voice !  
 Bow to the sceptre of his word,  
 So shall thy soul rejoice.

*The All-seeing God: From Psalm  
 cxxxix. 1—12.*

1.  
 O SINNERS, whither will you flee  
 To escape the wrath of God ?  
 What can a screen or coving be  
 From his avenging rod ?

2.  
 Could you to heav'n direct your flight,  
 And think to rest on high ;  
 His beams insufferably bright  
 Would dash you from the sky,

3.  
 Or if in hell you hope to rest,  
 How foolish and how vain !  
 'Tis there his foes with vengeance prest  
 Gone with immortal pain.

4.  
 Or could you mount a morning ray,  
 And far out-fly the wind ;  
 His hand that must support your way,  
 Would soon his pris'ner find.

5.  
 Or could you hope some secret cave  
 Would hide you from his eye ;  
 Lo, hell, death, darkness and the grave  
 Before him naked lie.

6.  
 Where then must guilty sinners hide  
 At that tremendous day,  
 When heaven and earth in one great tide  
 Of wrath shall swim away !

*The Emptiness of the World.*

By a YOUNG LADY.

SURE thinking mortals ease can never find,  
 Unless a Saviour dwells upon their mind ;  
 An interest in him casts out ev'ry fear ;  
 For who's unhappy if a Saviour's near ?  
 O ! may his presence all my soul possess ;  
 His love demands it, dare I give him less ?  
 What rude intruder in my heart can share ?  
 Since earth's too mean to count a moment's care ?

Its trifles now can me no longer please,  
 O ! may I wisely live to JESUS' praise ;  
 And much lament that I so long have  
 been

A stranger to my LORD, so fond of sin.  
 Alas ! what toys did my poor heart detain  
 From early seeking bliss and endless gain ?  
 With *Mary* now I'll fix my heart  
 Upon my CHRIST, that betwixt part,  
 Nor to this world be more inclined,  
 And *Martha's* troubles leave behind.  
 This wise resolve (I hope sincere)  
 Shall keep my JESUS ever near :  
 Sweet Prince of peace, thou sinner's  
 friend,

Thy love into my bosom send,  
 Bid ever ruder passions cease,  
 And calm my soul with heav'nly peace ;  
 A peace thus built on JESUS' love,  
 Shall firmly stand when rocks remove.

C. Y.

*Pardon by the Redeemer's Blood.*

1.  
 O DEAR Redeemer, who alone  
 Canst give me ease in pain ;  
 Whose blood did once for sin atone,  
 And pardon for me gain.

2.  
 I once was wholly dead in sin,  
 And ignorant of thee ;  
 And walk'd contentedly therein,  
 Nor knew thy love to me.

3.  
 But thine all-seeing eye then view'd,  
 And mark'd my ev'ry way ;  
 And still in tender love pursu'd  
 Me, who from thee did stray.

4.  
 Thy name is now thro' grace become  
 More precious to my soul,  
 Than sweetest smell of rich perfume,  
 Or Aaron's precious oil.

5.  
 Without thy favour, tho' I live,  
 Life but a burden is ;  
 Nought else can satisfaction give,  
 Experience shews me this.

6.  
 My faithless heart, O Saviour dear,  
 Correct with gentle hand,  
 In ev'ry danger be thou near,  
 Alone I cannot stand.