

Volume 7

William Huntington (1745-1813)

A Divine Poem of the Shunamite.

ADDRESSED TO A FRIEND.

A Clownish Poem on the Shunamite,
A sinner call'd to be the Lord's delight;
By the despised William Huntington,
Both known and trusted now in Paddington.

PREFATORY ADDRESS.

DIRECTION.

To Mistress SANGSTER, now at *Number Eight*,
'Tis by the *New St. Luke's* that's built of late,
At *Old-street-end* you'll find the Dame's abode,
In *Winkworth's-buildings*, on the *City-road*.

APOLOGY.

I HOPE, dear Madam, you will not be vex'd,
Because you find your name to this affix'd;
'Tis sent by ay of grateful recompense,
But not design'd to give the least offence.

I trust your name is in the book of life;
Nor have I us'd it here to gender strife
Take not this freedom in the least unkind,
The poem's sent to entertain your mind.

The subject matter is a work of grace,
Which on a saint in days of old took place;
The sex - *a woman*, and her statute *great*;
And to her sex these lines I dedicate.

PREMISED INQUIRY, AND CAUTION.

But if you ask what I might have in view,
And why I send this poem first to you;
Or how I came to frame theso whims of mine,
And puzzle you, from first to last, with rhyme.

Some people's heads are like a hive of be 2000 es,
Whose brood sent forth, the women ring to please.
When Jesus shines, the heart with love gets warm,
'Tis then the head with thoughts begins to swarm.

Methinks, you prize an old prolific hive,
And wish their young may both increase and thrive;
You'd have the stocks be neither weak nor few,
But would not wish a swarm rung down to you.

A lion slain was once a hive for bees,
Against his ribs they built their cells with ease;
The mighty Saint, that slew the brute in ire,
Soon after found an entertainment there.

That beast proclaims my former state of mind,
In which I roar'd against an Arm Divine;
God slew the brute, and sent the honey too,
Or else this swarm had never fled to you.

'Tis by your means this work is brought about,
You shook the stand, and then the swarm went out;
At this my fault you must in love connive,
And mind in future how you move the hive.

INFORMATION.

'Twas On a certain day I went from home,
As hawking pedlars are so apt to roam;
When I return'd the time was rather late,
My wife inform'd me what I now repeat.

She said - Here's been a vehicle to day,
And close by us the driver made a stay:
A little cart, drove by a little lass,
Who at our house pull'd in, and stopp'd the ass.

She straightly ask'd - If HUNTINGTON liv'd here,
But would not tell from whence she came, nor where;
She fetch'd this weighty burden to my door,
And then return'd the way she came before"

We held a council, but could not devise
Who was the benefactor in disguise;
At last 'twas settl'd, if conjecture's true,
The lot we cast - the sentence fell to you.

The little equipage of cart and ass
Was something like what Shunem brought to pass
If wrong conjectur'd, take it not amiss;
To tell the truth - my poem sprung from this.

My frothy head has often fell to rhyme,
The work I stifl'd for the want of time -

Till Friday last appeared a leisure day,
In which I thought to send this swarm away.

I meant, at first, to send my thoughts to you,
And not expose the same to public view;
I only meant to send an homely fare,
And, with yourself, your other-self a share.

But so it fell, when I began to write,
That heart and head brought many things to light,
Much more than I at first purpos'd to send,
For I at night had thirty verses penn'd.

I found my mind entangl'd in a strait,
How I should send this burden'd vessel's freight.
And when constrain'd some other way to seek.
'Twas fix'd to write, and send it once a week.

Again, I thought a month might turn about
Before I got this springing matter out,
While you, from day to day, might long to see
The next epistle that might come from me.

At last, I thought I'd send it from the press,
But send my pious friend the first address;
And after that, expose the whole to view,
That others might be fed as well as you.

Thus I contriv'd, and fix'd the scheme at last,
And now present you with this strange repast
Accept my present, let it not displease;
Be thou enlarg'd, and hive this swarm of bees.

Methinks you aim'd to have your gift conceal'd
And not in public print to be reveal'd;
But women's pleas to men's replies give place -
A priest may speak where they must hold their peace,

Give my respects to your superior lord,
As you and him in things divine accord;
If entertain'd with what I send to thee,
I hope, in turn, you'll send a line to me.

Forget me not when both engag'd in pray'r,
A prodigal return'd should have a share
(God well approves of charity divine),
And you, in turn, shall have a share in mine.

A DIVINE POEM ON THE SHUNAMITE.

The chosen race, while in their native state,
And still preserv'd, in Christ, to life, by fate;
Jehovah's eye their various steps surveys,
And lends his sacred aid through all their ways.

The distant spot, the time, the means decreed,
When they shall hear, and choose the promis'd seed;
Their future husband's will shall be reveal'd,
And they to love shall sweet subjection yield.

A pious matrons o the days of old,
A sheep appointed for the Shepherd's fold,
A woman great, the chosen Shunamite,
Decreed, by fate, to be the Lord's delight.

A prophet grave, upon a certain day,
By God's appointment was to pass that way;
Her feet were guided with this saint to meet,
And she constrain'd *the man of God to eat*.

The rev'rend sire with her request complies:
When God inclines, what servant e'er denies?
She ey'd her guest - his conversation heard,
And, as she thought, some rays divine appear'd.

She heard the blessing crav'd upon his food:
Observ'd his grave deport and heavenly mood;
With jealous eye his blissful state admir'd;
To know his God her teeming thoughts aspir'd.

The time's arriv'd - the prophet must depart;
Her guest she loses, and she's lost her heart;
His bened'mtion fastens on her mind,
The man is gone, the master stays behind

His word she ponders, and his word construes,
And for a second visit often sues;
The great Jehovah hers her mental pray'r,
And moves his saint to pay His visits there.

Her teeming mind no longer holds its own,
She to her husband makes the matter known;
What she observ'd and heard she'll now declare,
That he, her other-self, might have a share.

Behold, says she, the things that I perceive,
And with compliance my advice receive;
Our transient guest, who Shunem's path has trod,
Is, I perceive, an holy man of God.

I find his stated circuit lies this road,
And I'm inclin'd to build him some abode;
Let us, I pray, a little chamber make,
Receive this servant for his Masters sake.

I've plann'd the building, *furniture*, and a11,
And think to fis it on that vacant wall;
I'll set a table, cadlestick, and bed,
That he may have whereon to lay his head.

And it shall be, whene'er he comes this way,
That I'll invite him oftentimes to stay;
In times of darkness, or inclement weather,
I'll importune, and make him turn in thither.

We'll entertain him, and we'll lodge him too,
For who can tell what God For us may do?
Observe his converse, and his words attend,
And we shall both be gainers in the end.

My mind's impress'd to make this preparation,
And I predict he'll use the habitation

Grant my request - I'll own the impulse vain,
If his kind Master sends him not again.

The scheme's approv'd; the chamber's quickly rear'd,
And when 'twas furnish'd then the sire appear'd;
Or, so it fell, that on a certain day,
The Lord directed him once more that was.

The pious dame beholds the prophet come,
And with entreaties kindly ask'd him home;
She treats the man - he entertains her mind,
She sows her carnal things, and reaps divine.

They spend their eve, and then conclude with pray'r,
The prophet sues to leave a blessing there;
The 2000 time arrives that nature calls for rest,
And to the room prepar'd she leads her guest.

The saint he follow'd where the matron led,
Survey'd the chamber, furniture, and bed,
Admir'd her quick dispatch and tender care,
And wonders much why she should want him there.

The prophet ponders on the mystic scene,
And wants to know what she by this can mean,
And why her lib'ral heart should freely teem
So many favours, unimplor'd by him.

My Master's hand is in this woman's scheme,
For pious acts like these must flow from him;
Shall then Jehovah's saint find food and bed,
While such a lib'ral host goes unrepay'd?

Shall servants travel at their Master's charge?
And will not God reward where he enlarge?
I'm entertain'd for my great Master's sake,
And 'tis more bless'd to give than 'tis to take.

I'll have her brought, to see what views she hath,
For I suspect this chamber's built in faith;
I'll find the bottom ere I sleep to night -
Gehazi, go, and call this Shunamite;

And when she's come do thou accost her thus
What shall reward thy tender care for us?
I do approve thy kindness done to me,
And now demand what shall be done for thee.

I wish to know from whence thy motives spring,
Wilt thou that I commend thee to the king?
Or halt thou friends that would desire a post,
To act beneath the *captain of the host?*

I wish no friend of mine with blood to sport,
Nor do I crave the pleasures of a court;
In earthly pomp let those that choose excel,
With *my own people I'm content to dwell.*

She gave her answer, and she then withdrew,
And left the prophet, that he might construe
Her pious meaning, and her good intent,
That no sinister ends were ever meant.

The prophet wonders at her strange reply,
But can't as yet unfold the mystery;
He eyes the room, he turns his thoughts about,
And is resolv'd to find this riddle out.

He says - *Gehazi, see this woman's care,*
And tell me now what I shall do for her;
I do suspect a work of grace begun,
What's done to me, is to my Master done.

Gehazi answer'd - she's a barren styl'd,
For I have heard she never bore a child;
Her other-self to nature's charms is cold,
She can't expect a seed, her husband's old.

A barren womb! - her soul is barren too,
No fruit divine, unless Jehovah woo:
Sarah and Hannah - both their wombs were dead
And yet by faith they both conceiv'd and bred.

I much suspect a work of faith begun,
To strengthen which, I will predict a son;

The word may serve her feeble faith to lead
To Isra'l's hope the promis'd woman's seed.

The pregnant promise, God to Sarah gave,
Stands good to all who in the Lord believe;
Upon this word a thousand hopes have stood,
Which I'll repeat, and God shall make it good.

'The Word and Spirit God reveals to men,
Is that by which the saints are born again;
God now shall speak his own immortal word,
And she by mystic birth shall know the Lord.

The prophet now construes the matter plain,
And bids his servant call her up again;
Her reputation she shall now redeem,
And nourish faith her barren womb shall teem.

The servant calls her to the prophet's door,
Or somewhat closer than she stood before,
And said - *next season*, by the rules of life.
Thou shalt appear the *mother* and the wife.

She answer'd - Nay, my lord, thou man of God,
If barrens bear, the world will think it odd;
Soothe not thins handmaid in a false disguise,
Nor dare deceive, *thou man of God, with lies*.

Thus unbelief appears with brazen brow,
And contradicts the rev'rend prophet's vow;
The sire's amaz'd, no promise he'll renew,
But goes to bed - the Shunamite withdrew.

Shall unbelief thus triumph over faith,
And give the lie to what Jehovah saith?
Shall bold corruption spew her harden'd face
And counterveil the promises of grace?

Shall carnal reason mount the judgment seat,
Her husband's *age* with various pleas repeat?
Nay, give assent, believe the rev'rend sire,
Let God be true, but every man a liar.

The prophet left her in her unbelief,
Nor was the matron plunder'd by the thief;
The word took hold, the barren shall conceive,
God will be faithful, though we don't believe.

The prophet knew the promise would prevail,
What God himself declares can never fail;
But views her bold reply with such disdain,
She must invite him ere he comes again.

Her womb prolific, proves her undeceiv'd;
Her time's appointed, and she then conceiv'd;
Her faith shall triumph in her pregnant womb,
And in her heart she finds a Saviour come.

She sets her seal, and owns Jehovah true,
His mystic work to wondrous ends construe;
God's banner now to faith appears unfurl'd,
And faith itself to overcome the world.

She ponder'd o'er how all was brought about,
And bless'd the day she found the prophet out.
Her former thoughts appear with marks divine,
And like a prophecy fulfill'd in fine.

With joys divine she wants the hour to come,
For sure her mind's as pregnant as her womb;
The time's arriv'd, her nine months' race is run,
The contradicting handmaid bears a son.

Her soul is now inflam'd with love divine,
Bold unbelief is banish'd from her mind;
She eyes the distant Saviour long decreed,
And in the *type* beholds *the woman's seed*.

The son from day to day in stature grows,
So her affections to her Saviour flows;
In days like these we too securely stand,
And seldom dream of troubles hard at hand.

No pleasing frames like these unmix'd abide,
Her thriving faith must now again be try'd;

Or it shall fall, that on a certain day,
The Lord that gave will surely take away.

For so it fell, that when the child was grown,
He'll see *them reap the crop* his sire had sown;
God smites the child, the child is seiz'd with dread,
And to *his father cries, My head, my head.*

The father bids a *lad*, his *servant*, come,
And orders him to take the darling home
Convey him safe, of falt'ring steps beware,
Commit the infant to *his mother's care.*

The tender mother plac'd him on her knees,
With tears bewails his violent disease;
Requests the infant's life, but that's deny'd;
She *holds him up till noon, and there he dy'd.*

Is this the blessing unimplor'd bestow'd?
Is this the great reward the saint avow'd?
Shall all my kindness be rewarded so?
And am I doom'd to weep a mother's woe?

Did I this infant of the prophet crave?
Nay - I deny'd when he so freely gave;
I bid the prophet not deceive with guile,
I did not ask, nor yet expect a child.

And has the man of God his room forsook.
And on my grief does he disdain to look?
Since he the chamber has forsook and fled.
I'll lay the corpse where he himself has laid.

Had I implor'd this son, I'd been content;
On anxious cares the rod is ofen 2000 sent;
But I refus'd the offer when'twas made,
Yet I'm entangl'd, and the prophet's fled.

But who can tell what God may farther do?
His hand's divine, his promises are true;
Why should a resurrection strangely seem?
The word that bid me bear may quicken him.

It was a promise quicken'd first my womb,
And by a promise shall my Saviour come;
And I conceive, as far as faith can pry,
That in this child I've seen my Saviour die.

Die Jesus must! or else my hope is vain,
Nor can he save unless he rise again;
Cheer up, my soul! expect this strange surprise,
For in my son I'll see my Saviour rise.

My faith in this is far from void of doubt,
The prophet knows, and I will find him out;
I'll make him come where he has lodg'd before
She puts the corpse to bed, and shuts the door.

Thus big with hopes of what shall come to pass,
She bids her *husband send the man and ass*;
I'll ride to Carmel, it shall not be vain,
I'll see *the man of God, and come again*.

The steady husband disapproves her haste
(Time spent in harvest must be spent in waste);
He bids his dame her nasty tour delay
Till the *new moon, or else thee Sabbath-day*.

In faith she's mounted, and in faith she'll ride,
When dame's in haste she scorns to be deny'd;
Her present thoughts she now delays to tell,
Send *me the man and ass, it shall be well*.

The yielding husband urges no reply,
Obeys her voice without a reason why;
'Tis vain to parley if her mind is bent,
She gave command - the retinue is sent.

She brings the *saddle*, and equips the *ass*.
And bids her servant ride the swiftest pace;
Go forward, drive, nor dare to slack thy hand,
Nor slack thy pace, except I give command.

The trusty man obeys the matron's will.
And ends his stage on Carmel's sacred hill;

God sent the prophet, to behold afar
The weeping mother in the hasty car.

The *man of God* appears in some affright,
And says - *Gehazi, see that Shunamite;*
Go now, I pray, and search her welfare out,
Her hasty visit fills my mind with doubt.

Say now unto her - Is it well with thee?
Thy husband also, tell me, how is he?
And if she answers, as I hope she will,
Then kindly ask her *if the child is well.*

Her errand to the man she'll not declare,
As she could never see God's image there;
She answers well, and to the prophet ran,
She wants the master's aid, but not the man.

The pious prophet and the mother meet,
While she arrests, and holds him by the feet;
The servant comes to thrust the dame away,
The prophet awes his violence to stay.

The surly servant lets the dame alone,
And she's too full of grief to make it known;
He says - she's vex'd, this I plainly see,
But God has hid her grievous case from me.

The troubled mother breathes her honest plea -
Did I, my lord, intreat a son of thee?
Yea, I deny'd when thou the promise gave,
I bid thee *then beware and not deceive.*

The prophet's mind is now reliev'd from doubt,
By this he finds the matron's trouble out:
No wonder sorrow bows her drooping head,
When God has struck the promis'd infant dead.

The man of God admires her faith divine,
Nor dares to raise a doubt upon her mind;
As she believ'd the child should rise again,
He takes the work in hand - and not in vain.

Thrice happy soul! that's bless'd with such a grace,
A pow'r that death itself can ne'er outface;
Saint Paul observes, this woman conquer'd death,
'Tis left recorded in the acts of faith.

Elisha bids *Gehazi come* in haste,
Gird up thy loins, and run the swiftest pace;
Prepare to go, and *take my staff in hand*,
Nor dare *salute the complimenting man*.

When servants go with messages divine,
They claim the whole attention of the mind;
If any force their salutations vain,
Obey my voice, *salute them not again*.

Make haste to Shunem, enter there my room,
Behold the dead, the fallen mortal's doom
Behold the corpse is lying in my place,
Lay thou my staff upon the infant's face.

In heart she vow'd he should not serve her so,
'Twas thou at first occasion'd all my woe,
Thou shalt not thus deceive the Shunamite,
Nor send me off with such an hypocrite.

Deceive me not, for I am fully bent,
Thyself shall go, the sender, not the sent;
By God that lives I'll make thee walk with me,
And as thy spirit lives I'll not leave thee.

The woman urges, and the prophet yields,
No *ifs* nor *buts*, in positives she deals;
The prophet rose, the woman leads the van,
And both pursue the path the servant ran.

Gehazi steps with hasty strides before,
To gain applause, he aims at nothing more;
His vain attempts may make the woman laugh,
She knew his faith was in his master's staff.

He lays the stick upon the baby's face,
And hopes to fix it on the proper place;

His slight of hand proclaims his sad mistake,
He comes, and cries, *the child is not awake.*

This cry confirm'd the troubled Shunamite,
She saw her judgment of the man was right;
And wonders much how he could try the scheme,
And why the prophet should be plagu'd with him,

Thus hypocrites appear in false disguise,
And think they veil the wisdom of the wise;
He fawns and feigns, but still engenders doubt;
The babe in grace will feel the serpent out.

They learn the actions of the righteous saint,
And wear the garb as harlots wear their paint;
But if they preach, or if they join in pray'r,
Do what they will, the serpent will appear.

So he attempts to raise the infant dead,
But looks no higher than the staff he laid;
The mother hates the mimic's vain appearing,
And he cries out, *there's neither voice nor hearing.*

The rev'rend sire attains his journey's end,
Where to the room she built she leads her friend;
The prophet sees his long deserted bed,
And in his place he finds the infant dead.

He's mov'd to feel the weeping mother's grief,
His soul's engag'd to bring her some relief;
He seems confirm'd the child shall rise again,
The *door he closes* on the praying *twain.*

The fervent prophet *calls upon the Lord,*
And begs the soul he took might be *restor'd;*
Then he returns, and travels *to and fro,*
To watch if God would send it back or no.

He goes again, and *lays upon the child,*
His mind is agitated all the while;
He grasps his *hands,* he *meets his mouth and eyes,*
While faith commands, and bids the *dead arise.*

What faith demands Jehovah will perform,
The prophet feels the corpse is getting warm;
He then return'd, and to the house he went,
The pensive mother waits the strange event.

Again the prophet to the chamber goes,
And on the corpse himself again he throws;
He still expects to bring the dead to life,
But finds a cope with death a stubborn strife.

At last the infant *seven times it sneez'd*,
T 2000 he prophet heard it, and his mind was eas'd;
He looks again, and sees the dead arise,
The sleeping corpse had open'd both his eyes.

The man of God beholds it with delight,
And bids his servant call the Shunamite;
With pregnant hope she to the chamber run,
The prophet points, and bids her take her son.

She sees the babe, and on the ground she fell
(The triumphs gain'd by grace are hard to tell)
Her unbelief must now again retreat;
Her soul's surrender'd at the prophet's feet.

She rises up, and to the infant goes,
Whose sad departure caused all her woes;
With joy and grief her tender bowels yearn,
While love to God begins afresh to barn.

Like one bewilder'd, or in pensive thought,
She takes the infant back the prophet brought;
With warm affections, and with thoughts devout,
She hugs the darling, and conveys him out.

Such souls as these the great Jehovah law'd,
By such he spreads his wondrous fame abroad;
While future saints, who in such paths have trod,
Admire the mystic ways that lead to God.

In this we see how each event agreed,
To lead the matron to the promis'd seed;

Both *centric* and *eccentric wheels* conspire,
And each in motion rais'd her faith the higher.

First God directs the prophet's wand'ring feet,
And she with him promiscuously shall meet;
Her mind's impell'd to entertain the man,
And this shall bring to tight the mystic plan.

She must attend the prophet's words divine,
While God impress'd them on the woman's mind;
The prophet goes at his appointed hour,
But not the word, nor the impulsive pow'r.

She meditates to find his meaning out,
And wish'd a second visit brought about;
The ear of God attends to her complaint,
To strengthen faith, again he sends the saint.

By this encouragement she's led to pray,
And now believes he'll often come that way;
She builds a room to entertain the sire,
And arms to catch the prophet's glowing fire.

Like pious Jacob, with his *peeled rod*,
Stuck in the gutters where the flocks had trod,
While in a dream he sees the horned sire
Beget the spotted and the spangled hire;

So she contrives to fix this little trap,
And caught the lot of wisdom in her lap;
The prophet comes, approves her tender care,
Predicts and promises a blessing there.

He speaks the word - 'tis God's immortal seed,
To help her faith, her barren womb shall breed;
The time arrives - she brings the infant forth,
By which she sees her Saviour's future birth.

In time she's led to see redemption's plan,
The way in which the Lord would ransom man;
God smites the child, her growing faith to try,
While in the type faith sees her Saviour die.

In deep distress to Carmel she'll repair;
The wand'ring prophet is directed there;
His sympathetic soul must feel her grief,
While faith shall prompt to seek divine relief.

Upon his knees he heav'n itself assails,
That she might see how faith with God prevails;
He then parades, and eyes Jehovah's hand,
To *watch and pray* is a divine command.

God never bade his servants seek in vain,
He craves a soul departed back again;
God hears his cry, the soul returns to prison,
The joyful mother sees a Saviour risen.

She now believes what Sadducees deny'd,
The glorious truth which Deists now deride;
She's well confirm'd that God can raise the dead,
He's rais'd her son, and rais'd her drooping head.

Her hope prolific teems with joys to come,
She sends her thoughts to meet the genial doom;
In hope divine my flesh to dust shall go,
God rais'd my son - he'll raise the mother too.

A Letter To Mr. Sangster,

No. 8, Winkworth's-buildings, Old-street, City-road.

Dear Sir,

If my heart was as steady in its motions as the husband of the Shunamite, who could trust every event till the new moon or Sabbath day, I had deferred sending this present till the beginning of months, or New-year's-day, at which season presents and compliments are much in fashion; then it might have served for a New-year's gift; but our blessed Apostle lays no stone on a springing well, nor fetters the tongue that is seasoned with

grace, though it be as full of motion as the hand of a ready writer. He tells us to be always abounding in the work of the Lord, and to be instant in season and out of season; and I believe entertaining the minds of God's people, and keeping their thoughts employed about heavenly things, is a work of the Lord.

If the Paschal lamb was too big for an Israelitish family, the master was to invite his neighbour, as there were to be no fragments left for the next day; the morrow was to take thought for the things of itself. Job seems to observe the former rule; he ate not his morsel alone. If I find a cluster with a blessing in it, or get among the pleasant fruits that our beloved has laid up at our gates. I cannot sleep till I have imprisoned them on a bit of paper, nor rest satisfied till they are packed up and sent off to somebody, though I know I shall shortly be obliged to beg for more. Whatever be found under the priest's hand, of sacred things, it is lawful to give it to those of the household, even to the *shew-bread*; for if the shew-bread prefigured the Saviour, we are to hold him forth in the word of life. If it prefigured the believer, we are to hold him up to God in prayer. A Christian can never be too busy. He that is sluggish in his profession, is sent to the ant to learn her ways, and be wise; whose wisdom lies in providing her food in the summer. I will not say that by instinct she is instructed to know there is a winter, but it is clear that the beams of the sun draw her forth to labour; and her industry is equal to that of the husbandman, who makes hay while the sun shines. Nor is she a whit behind him, seeing she provideth her "meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest," Prov. vi. 6.

God has furnished his children with a multitude of teachers, if we could but observe them. A gospel is our summer and harvest, in which the Sun of Righteousness shines in our horizon; "life and immortality is brought to light by the gospel;" which, if cordially received, is *meat indeed*. This wonderful lesson is taught us by the instinct of the *ant*.

The saving knowledge of God, and the invaluable worth of the gospel, is taught us by the instinct of the ox and the ass; "the ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel loth not know (either his God or his word), my people doth not consider," Isa. i. 3.

The visitations of God in a preached gospel, and the certainty of that gospel being removed from us, or were moved from that to judgment by death, is taught us by the instinct of the stork, the turtle, the crane, and the swallow; "yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and

the turtle, and the crane, and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of the Lord," Jer. viii. 7.

The danger that a soul is exposed to while out of Christ, the only rock of help - the necessity of flying from the wrath to come - and the safety of those that fly for shelter to "the cleft of that rock," Song ii. 14, is taught us by the instinct of the coney, "the conies are but a feeble folk, yet make 12dc they their houses in the rocks," Prov. xxx. 26.

The nauseous pharisaical hypocrite, that creeps into the church of God, and yet dares to hatch the cockatrice egg of free-will, and weave the spider's web of self righteousness, while he sits under the gospel, Isa. lix. 5; Job, viii, 14; is pointed out by the bold and subtle instinct of the spider - "the spider taketh hold with her hands, and is in kings' palaces," Prov. xxx. 28.

To be *short*. The Christian is taught to be *bold* by the *Lion*, Prov. xxx. 30. To be *swift* by the *greyhound*, Prov. xxx. 31. To be *comely* in his walk by the *he-goat*, Prov. xxx. 31. To be *wise* by the *serpent*. To be *industrious* by the *ant*. To *cleave* to the *Rock of Salvation* by the *coney*. To be *heavenly-minded* and *quick sighted* by the *eagle*. To be *harmless* by the *dove*. To *know* his Lord by the *ox*. To cleave to the Lord's *word* by the *ass*. To follow the *light* and *heat* of the gospel by the *swallow*. And to shun every *rock of error* by the skilful *mariner*, lest he make *shipwreck* of *faith*.

I am, dear Sir, your, &c.

William Huntington.

Postscripts

Bless'd are the loving twain that walk the road
That leads at last to Zion's blesa'd abode;
The hallow'd path is like the shining light,
By which they shun the glootns of endless night.

The heedful traveller observes his path,
And seeks direction of his Lord by faith;

His mind compos'd upon his master's staid,
He feels him out, and finds his heav'nly aid.

This mystic path he walks in filial fear,
And finds no brute, no rav'nous monster there;
None but the saint can walk this milky way,
The child of darkness shuns the heavenly ray.

At each by - path he'll stop, he'll pray, and wait,
Till Christ appears, and *makes the crooked straight*,
Lest the *wayfaring* soul should trip or stray,
He bids us take the *stumbling blocks away*.

If God deserts him, he bemoans his loss,
Till he erects the standard of the cross;
Again he travels, void of doubt or fear,
While he discerns Jehovah's banner there.

Upon this path *no fool shall ever err*,
Because Jehovah is his guide and cure;
All roughs and mounts that Satan dares to throw,
God *smooths* the one, and *brings the other low*.

The word's a map, by which he learns the way,
And while he walks by that, he cannot stray;
He follows those whose souls are now with God,
And marks the steps that ancient saints have trod.

Jehovah says that such shall dwell aloft,
And see the promis'd land, though distant off;
The King immortal he by faith shall spy,
And see his beauty with a longing eve.

The host of heaven guard him on the way,
Nor leave their charge till he's in endless day;
His bless'd Redeemer travels by his side,
Nor is his wanted presence long deny'd.

At length he finds he's ne'er to end his race,
And eyes the great reward that comes by grace;
His shatter'd frame is bow'd upon the bed,
While arms divine support the drooping head.

His busy faith maintains her mighty hold,
While hope expects the vision to unfold;
The snares of death invade the heav'nly mind,
But through the gloom faith sees a beam divine.

The flesh unpanoply'd will fear the stroke,
The soul to lend it help will God invoke;
The blessed Saviour own'd, when low and meek,
The *spirit's willing*, but *the, flesh is weak*.

If heart and flesh through fear of death should fail;
The Spirit breathes a strong and heav'nly gale
To answer pray'r the Lord appears at length,
He feeds the mind, and props the heart with strength.

If sunk with grief, or rack'd with mortal pain,
To make his bed the Lord will not disdain:
His tender aid shall bear his spirit up,
His end is peace, his flesh shall rest in hope.

At last he breathes the ripen'd spirit forth,
God takes the soul who gave it first its birth
To heav'n it flies, the angels bear it in,
And thus he ends his journey and his sin.

The Music and Odours of Saints

William Huntington (1745-1813)

A SERMON, PREACHED AT PROVIDENCE CHAPEL,
SEPTEMBER 2, 1787.

"And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every

one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints." Rev. v. 8.

THIS chapter begins thus, "And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within, and on the back side sealed with seven seals." The glorious person here represented on the throne is, in my humble opinion, God the Father. The throne is not the throne of judgment; for although he has "prepared his throne for judgment," Psalm ix. 7, yet he is not seated upon that as yet, for the judgment day is not arrived; besides, the throne of judgment is given up to our blessed Immanuel; "for the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son," John, v. 22. Nor is a throne of grace here intended; for Christ himself is the throne of grace: "grace is poured into his lips, and God hath blessed him for ever," Psalm xlv. 2. "It hath pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell," Col. i. 19, that we might "receive out of his fullness grace for grace," John, i. 16. God has treasured up all grace in him, and nowhere else, for there is "salvation in no other name."

In the ark of Christ's body is every spiritual blessing deposited, as the hidden manna was laid up in the ark of the covenant; he is our sanctuary, our glorious throne, and our propitiation. As the law, and the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, were laid up in the ark under the mercies seat, so in Christ is the magnified law laid up - "thy law is within my heart." Aaron's blooming rod, which prefigured the church in gospel times, which is called a "royal priesthood," I Peter, ii. 9; and the "rod of an almond tree," Jer. i. 11; together with the golden pot of manna, which prefigured the comfortable grace of life, are all in their spiritual signification to be found and enjoyed in Christ Jesus. The ark of the testament is now opened in heaven; and to "him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone," Rev. ii. 17, which is the witness of God's spirit.

Thus the ark, with all its mysterious treasures, is now to be found in heaven; and blessed be God it is opened in the church, and poor sinners are led to see that the ark with all its contents, and the mercies seat thereon, prefigured the Lord Jesus Christ, who is our throne of grace, our propitiation, and our only mercies seat. It was on him that the sentence of the law was executed; it was of him that Justice got an infinite satisfaction; "justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne, mercy and truth shall go before thy face," Psalm lxxxix. 14.

The Saviour, as a throne of grace, was shewed in an obscure manner by the prophet Isaiah, where he is represented under the name Eliakim: "It shall come to pass in that day, that I will call my servant Eliakim, the son of Hilkiah, and I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle, and I will commit thy government into his hand, and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah. And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder: so he shall open and none shall shut, and he shall shut and none shall open. And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father's house," Isa. xxii. 21-24. In the above text you have Christ represented as the everlasting father of his people, he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem; secondly, as a glorious throne to the household of faith; thirdly, as a nail fastened in a sure place, that every vessel of mercy may have their hopes and expectations on him for time and eternity; and fourthly, you have him held forth as a sovereign, having the keys of David; which are now found, not in the hand of Eliakim, but in the hand of Christ: "Write these things saith he [Christ] that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David; he that openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth," Rev. iii. 7. Thus it appears, that not a throne of judgment, nor a throne of grace is intended here, but rather a throne of glory, upon which God the Father sat.

Of the book that he had in his right hand, which is said to be written within, and on the back side sealed with seven seals, I shall treat from the words of my text, where the Saviour is said to take the book.

In the second verse, "a strong angel with a loud voice is making proclamation - Who is worthy to open the book and to loose the seals thereof." Whosoever he be that can take this book had need of infinite wisdom to open the seals and disclose the divine mysteries; he had need be a friend to sinners, to dispense the blessings of it to them; he had need of an omnipotent power, to execute the vengeance it contains; for he that opens it must reward the just, judge the wicked, and destroy the world; and he had need of omniscience, to search the hearts and try the reins of men, to know how and where to apply them. For this wonderful book contains all things that shall come to pass in the world and church, till the "mystery of God be finished," and "time be no more."

"And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon," verse 3. No man in heaven (not Christ himself if he is no more than man), neither the spirits of just men made perfect, nor any of the saints in a militant state, was able to open the book; "nor no man on earth;" either saint or sinner, wise or unwise, noble

or ignoble, learned or illiterate "neither was any under the earth" ñ either damned souls, or damned devils, able to open this book, loose its seals, or look into its contents.

"And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon," verse 4. John saw the need of a mediator, a prophet, and an advocate; one to undertake as a mediator, make known the mysteries as a prophet, and plead the cause of the just as an advocate; and he saw no man in heaven, earth, or hell, that was worthy of either of these offices, or able for such an undertaking. He must be equal to God that does it, or he cannot transact with God for us; and he must be man also, or he cannot undertake for man. In short, he must be "God's equal" and "man's fellow," that takes the book. Christ can do it, for he thought it no robbery to be equal with God," Phil. ii. 6. therefore he can transact with God; and as he is "man's fellow," he can transact for man, and sympathize with him, especially as he is "anointed with the oil of gladness above all his fellows," Psalm xlv. 7, who were to have "fellowship with him," I John, i. 3, by being "joined to him," and made of "one spirit with him," I Cor. vi. 17.

"And one of the elders said unto me, weep not; behold, the lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof," verse 5. Here you have the terrible and powerful majesty of the Saviour set forth by a lion, called the "lion of the tribe of Judah," because 'tis evident that Christ sprang from that tribe, Heb. vii. 14, as touching his manhood; and yet this lion is the everlasting father of Judah with respect to his Godhead; hence Judah is called "a lion's whelp, that went up from the prey," Gen. xlix. 9, from being a prey to the lion of the bottomless pit, by faith in the lion of heaven, which is God: "The lion hath roared, who will not fear? The Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy?" Amos, iii. 8. Christ is here called the "root of David; because David derived his being from him as the God of nature and the creator of the world, "all things were made by Christ," Col. i. 16. David derived his spiritual life from him as the God of grace, "Christ is the resurrection and the life;" and David expected to be glorified by him as the King of glory; "thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and receive me into glory," Psalm lxxiii. 24. Hence the Psalmist so often calls him his Lord, his King, his Redeemer, his Saviour, and the King of Glory; "Lift up your heads ye gates, and be ye lifted up ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall enter in," Psalm xxiv. 9. Thus Jesus as God is David's root, and as man he is David's offspring; "I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright and morning star," Revelations, xxii. 16.

"The lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed to open the book." This lion hath prevailed over the lion of the bottomless pit; over sin, the devil's essence; and over death, sin's "first born;" and over "destruction, the first-born of death," Job, xviii. 13. He hath prevailed, and led captivity captive; spoiled principalities and powers, and made a shew of them openly. This is the all-conquering lion that made the devil feel the rod of his strength when he dethroned him, and cast him out of sinners' hearts, destroyed his works, and marred his kingdom; and will at last destroy him with a dreadful destruction, an 2000 d crush him beneath the feet of all his saints; as sure as Moses' rod, when turned into a serpent, devoured all the serpent, produced by magic or infernal art.

This lion hath prevailed, not only over the world and the devil, but he hath prevailed with God also in behalf of his people. By his obedience, he prevailed to disarm the law of its curse; by prayer, he prevailed with his father for us; by death, he prevailed with justice; by his resurrection, he prevailed over death; and as a mediator, high priest, and advocate, he must ever prevail in heaven; for all power, and all judgment, are committed to him he is ascended far above all heavens, enthroned, glorified, and set down at the right hand of the majesty on high," Heb. i. 3.

The "diadem of David is removed," and the crown put on the Saviour; all other crowns must submit to his, for all must be abased before him, and be obedient to him. He that humbled himself-he that was meek and lowly, must now be exalted, and "wear both the crown and diadem," Ezek. xxi. 26. And he proclaimed, through heaven and earth, the "King of kings and Lord of lords." Is this the case? Then oh, my soul, submit thou to his sceptre; take the oath of allegiance, and kiss the hands of this wonderful, all-conquering, and terrible majestic sovereign, as thou art commanded to do, "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry," Psalm ii. 12. and say, with a loyal and loving heart, "O king, live for ever;" and this of him will be neither falsehood nor flattery.

"And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a lamb, as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth," verse 6. I shall not mention the lamb here, the beasts, nor the elders, as they are included in my text, but drop a few words upon the horns and eyes. By the horns you are to understand the majestic or kingly power of Christ; David was "anointed with oil out of an horn," I Sam. xvi. 1; hence he often speaks of "his horn," Ps. xcii. 10; and of "his horn being exalted with honour," Ps. cxii. 9; which horn signified the kingly power and authority that God had given him; and as the Saviour was to

spring, from David, he is called a "bud" from his horn, who was to govern Zion for ever: "God hath chosen Zion, he has desired it for his habitation; there will I make the horn of David to bud. I have ordained a lamp for mine anointed; his enemies will I clothe with shame, but upon himself shall his crown flourish," Psalm cxxxii. 16, 17. This was fulfilled at the appearance of Christ; "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his people, and hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; as he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets which have been since the world began," Luke, i. 68-70. Blessed be his name this is fulfilled; our mighty horn of salvation is exalted, and he makes all his people "kings and priests;" he "anoints us with his spirit," 2 Cor. i. 21; "crowns us with knowledge," Prov. xiv. 18; and "with loving-kindness and tender mercy" Ps. ciii. 4; "and we shall reign on the earth," Rev. v. 10; because we are upheld by his hand; "he has horns coming out of his hand, and there is the hiding of his power Hab. iii. 4.

But you will say, why is he represented as having seven horns? Every horn has its signification; ten horns are called "ten kings," Rev. xvii. 12. And Jesus Christ is a king in a seven-fold sense, represented by seven horns; he is anointed with the seven-fold gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost, and on his head are many crowns, as well as many horns: First he is "King of Glory," Psalm xxiv. 7. Secondly, King of Zion - "I have set my King upon my holy hill of Zion," Psalm ii. 6. Thirdly, He is, as Tidal was, King of Nations - "Who would not fear thee, O King of Nations," Jer. x. 7; he has power over all flesh, "that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him," John, xvii. 2. Fourthly, He is King of kings - "by him kings reign, and princes decree justice," Prov. viii. 15. Fifthly, He is King over sin; sin is said to "reign unto death," Rom. v. 21; but Christ hath destroyed that monster - "he was manifest that he might destroy the works of the devil," 1 John, iii. 8, and grace by him reigns over sin. Sin shall not have dominion over the saints, for they are under grace; and "grace shall reign through righteousness to life eternal," Rom. v. 21.

Sixthly, Christ is King, over Death-which is called the "king of terrors," Job, xviii. 14. "Death reigned from Adam to Moses, over all them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression," Rom. v. 14; but Christ ransomed his people from the power of the grave, and redeemed them from death; he was the plague of death, and the destruction of the grave, Hosea, xiii. 14, and "must reign till he hath put down all rule, all authority, and all power; the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death," 1 Cor. 15, 25, 26. Seventhly, Christ is King over devils, though against their will; he demolishes the kingdom of Satan, and translates sinners out of his dark dominions into his own kingdom, and into marvellous light, having

destroyed him that had the power of death, that is the devil, Heb. ii. 14, and "led him captive," and will bruise him under our feet shortly.

Thus Christ is King of Glory, and the head of all principalities and powers; the King of Zion - King of nations - King of kings - King over sin, and sin's dominion - King over death - and King over devils; "and of his kingdom there shall be no end," Isa. ix. 7.

This wonderful lamb with seven horns is said to have seven eyes, which are the "seven spirits of God sent forth into an the earth." These seven spirits are not seven angels; for though the church be called "the apple of the Lord's eye," Zech. ii. 8, yet angels are never so called, that I remember; nor is the number of angels that attend the church of God confined to seven. Elisha had the whole "mountains round about covered with them at Dothan," 2 Kings. vi. 17; and Jacob saw such a number of them on the plains of Mabanaim, that he calls them "an host," Gen. xxxii. 2. They all minister to the children of God in turn; not a small number only - as it is written, "are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" Heb. i. 14; and if all are ministering spirits, and all sent forth to minister, they cannot be so small a number as seven, seeing we read of "twenty thousand" at one place, Psalm lxxviii. 17, and "twelve legions" at another, Matt. xxvi. 53.

But rather the Holy Ghost is intended; the number seven implying the perfection of Deity, he being a person in the Godhead, and equal to the Father and the Son; from whom, in conjunction with the Father and the Son, this revelation is sent to the churches, Grace be unto you, and peace from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven spirits which are before his throne; and from Jesus Christ, who is the "faithful and true witness," Rev. i. 4, 5. Or the Spirit's seven-fold gifts may be intended by the number "seven agreeable to ancient prophecy," "And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, and the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord," Isa. xi. 2.

These seven eyes are quoted from ancient prophecy, which came to Joshua when the corner-stone of the second temple was aid; which was to point Joshua to Christ the chief corner-stone, that is set at nought of so many builders. "Behold the stone tha 2000 t I have laid before Joshua: upon one stone shall be several eyes. Behold, I will engrave the gravings thereof, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day," Zech. iii. 9. This text I have often heard handled, and the seven

eyes have been held forth as all sorts of eyes looking to Christ, some for help, and some out of envy. However, they are the eyes of the Lamb, and the eyes of him who is the stone of Israel. "For who hath despised the day of small things? For they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven: "They are the eyes of the Lord [not men nor devils' eyes], which run to and fro through the whole earth," Zech. iv. 10. seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God, are said to be "sent forth into all the earth," Rev. v. 6; agreeable to the Saviour's promise, "It is expedient for you that I go away for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart I will send him unto you," John, xvi. 7; which, blessed be his precious name, he has. He has sent forth this "sevenfold unction" or "eye-salve," which is to "anoint our eyes that we may see," Rev. iii. 18. These seven eyes of the Lord are sent forth into all the earth, "that we who were once darkness might be made light in the Lord," Eph. v. 8. Upon the church of God there hath been, and still is, a large measure of the Spirit of God; and though not in all his fullness, yet in all his seven-fold operations, and to each living member of the mystical body of Christ, "a measure to profit withal." Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man, to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the "word of wisdom," which makes a man wise in the mysteries of God, and wise to salvation through faith; "to another, the word of knowledge by the same Spirit," that he may take Christ for himself, whom to know is eternal life, and know how to speak a word in season to others; "to another, faith by the same Spirit," that he may believe to the justification of his soul, and strengthen the faith of others; "to another, the gifts of hearing by the same Spirit," for the good of the church, "that bodily and spiritual diseases may be healed by the great Physician to another, the working of miracles," that the apostles might by them confirm their mission and commission; "to another, prophecy," that a minister may forewarn the churches of evil to come, and strengthen them against them, and foretell them of good to come, and encourage their hope to expect it; "to another, discerning of spirits," that a minister may try those upstarts that say they are apostles or evangelists, and "prove them liars, if they are not," Rev. ii. 2; "to another, divers kinds of tongues," that ministers may overthrow the false constructions that erroneous men, or carnal scholars, have put upon the word of God; "and to another, the interpretation of tongues," that the pure, uncorrupted sense of scripture, may be handed down to us, instead of old wives' fables and country tales, that turn from the truth, and that hard or difficult parts of scripture might be made plain to our shallow comprehensions. "But all these worketh that one

and the self same spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will," I Cor. xii. 4-11.

These are the seven eyes and the seven spirits of God, or the Holy Ghost, who is perfect God, in his seven-fold gifts and graces, who will never leave the earth, till the last elected soul that ever shall be called by grace or born again of the Spirit: for thus runs the covenant; "The word that I have put in thy mouth, and the spirit that I have put upon thee, shall never depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, from henceforth and for ever," Isa. lix. 21. Hence we may conclude, that the Spirit of God will never leave the earth, till the mystery of iniquity be revealed by his light; Antichrist consumed by him, as the breath of Christ's mouth; and "the mystery of God be finished, as he hath declared by his servants the prophets," Rev. x. 7.

"And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne," v. 7. Christ having come forth from the Father, and completed the work he gave him to do, he now was ascended to the Father, and drew nigh unto him. According to Daniel's vision, "he came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed," Dan. vii. 13, 14; which is a prophecy of the Saviour's coronation in heaven, which prophecy is fulfilled in this chapter, and confirmed in the next. "And there was a crown given unto him, and he went forth conquering and to conquer," Rev vi. 2. And we find that the coronation-anthem is sung in this chapter upon the reception of this book, "saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing," Rev. v. 12. It is "a copy of his kingdom" that he is here going, to receive, "in which he will meditate day and night," Deut. xvii. 18, 19; and order his throne, and manage his government with wisdom infinite, and rectitude divine, till his kingdom of grace shall be consummated in everlasting glory, and Zion's king be acknowledged the "king eternal, immortal, and invisible, the only wise God, worthy of all honour and glory for ever. Amen." 1 Tim. i. 17: "all authority and all power beside being put down," I Cor. xv. 24. This will then be acknowledged, and then we shall "speak of the glory of this kingdom, and talk of the power. His mighty acts shall be made known," when we are made "perfect in knowledge, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom," Psal. cxlv. 11, 12, shall be displayed in the eternal blessedness of his subjects.

I come now to the words of my text - "And when he had taken the book [sealed with seven seals], the four beasts, and four-and twenty elders, fell down before the Lamb, having, every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints." I will offer my thoughts under the following heads.

1st, What this "sealed book" is, which is here received by the Lamb.

2dly, What these "four beasts" are who appear in company with the elders.

3dly, Who these "four and twenty elders" are, that "fall down" with "the beasts."

4thly, The object of their adoration, "the Lamb," and why so called. it.

5thly, The music or melody of their "harps," and the cause of it.

6thly, What "their golden vials" are, and why called so.

7thly, and lastly, Describe their "odours," said to be "the prayers of all saints," and what a saint is.

First, What book is this which God the Father held forth and which none but the preveiling Lion of the tribe of Judah could receive and open. I answer, it is not the "book of the law." That the Mediator received, with all its commands, conditions, contents, and curses, before he entered upon his public ministry. "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me: I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is wit 2000 in my heart. I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips; O Lord, thou knowest." Psal. xl. 6-9. This ancient prophecy had been fulfilled before this "sealed book" was delivered to him, which was not done till the Saviour had finished the work of redemption. "He is the Lamb slain" that receives this book; which shews that he had been crucified under the curse of the law, and entered the Holy of Holies with his own blood, before the delivery of this sealed book. In short, the Saviour had magnified the law, and made it honourable, by a life of perfect conformity thereto; he had preached it in all its spiritual meaning, as no other ever did, or ever will do; and by his making his soul an offering for sin, he had endured the curse of it, and thus delivered his own elect from the command of it [to do for life], and redeemed them from the curse of it

[which condemns to hell]; and as a law magnified, and disarmed of its killing power, he keeps it in his own hand, that we may find access to God by a new and living way, "through the veil of his flesh" - without being arrested, captured, or cursed, by that fiery dispensation.

The law being thus magnified, and the righteousness of it "preached in the great congregation," the law in its spiritual meaning had been published by the Saviour, and made known in the world to thousands. Therefore this sealed book cannot be that; for this had not been revealed to the sons of men when John saw it delivered, as appears plain by the "seals being closed," which were afterwards opened in their order.

Nor is this book the "book of God's remembrance," which he keeps in behalf of them that fear the Lord, and speak often one to another, to whom God hearkens, and whose conversation the Lord bears; "and a book of remembrance is written before him, for them that fear him, and think on his name," Mal. iii. 1.6.

Nor is the black catalogue of sinners' ungodly deeds intended by this book, which is a book of remembrance also, which God swears he will never forget; "The Lord hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob" (that is, by himself), "surely I will never forget any of their works," Amos, viii. 7. Sin makes an awful impression on this book, as well as on the book of conscience. "The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond; it is graven upon the table of their heart," Jer. xvii. 1. The point of this diamond will cut deep, when the dreadful eye of Justice makes the sinner's heart transparent, and the awakening flames of wrath make conscience susceptible of feeling. But all these books will be opened at the great decisive day, to the astonishment and eternal triumph of the just, and to the endless shame, confusion, and contempt of the wicked, Daniel, xii. 2; vii. 10.

Nor is the "book of life" meant by this book, in which the names and number of all the elect are enrolled, who are said to have "their names written in the book of life," Phil. iv. 3; "and written among the living, in Jerusalem, who are to be called holy," Isa. iv. 3; and all "whose name was not found written in this book, were cast into the lake of fire," Rev. xx. 15. But this book of life had been made known more or less by the ancient prophets, in a mysterious way; "and afterwards was spoken by the Lord, and confirmed to others by them that heard him," Heb. ii. 3. The book of life was published before the reception of this book in my text; and many had received the blessings of it, and cried out under the quickening

influence, as Peter did, "To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life," John, vi. 68. The Saviour owned himself that he had delivered this book: "I have given them the words that thou gavest me, and they have received them," John, xvii. 8. Yea, he had sent the Spirit to make it known, and apply the benefits of it: and he had commanded them "to preach all the words of this life; and life and immortality had been brought to light," in the minds and hearts of thousands, through the gospel; yea, all "that believed had passed from death unto life, and had everlasting life in them," which is the blessed contents of the book of life, and the reason why it is so called; many that "were dead in trespasses and sins had been quickened together with Christ, God having forgiven them all trespasses;" and John himself had been long a preacher of the word of life, and was at this time banished to the Isle of Patmos for it.

Seeing, this book is not the book of the law, nor the book of life, nor the book of God's remembrance, although there may be some of all these things in it; yet the above books of law and gospel cannot be said to be sealed, as this book is; for, as was before observed, they had been made known to thousands, both Jews and Gentiles. To be short, Christ had preached the law and obeyed both precept and penalty as a priest. He had preached the gospel of eternal life as a prophet, and was now going to ascend his throne as a king; and it is the book of his kingdom that he here receives, in which lies the whole of his government both of church and world; and hence he is represented as king, and conqueror, governing his subjects, and subduing his enemies throughout this book, until his kingdom be settled in heaven, and his vanquished enemies imprisoned in hell.

This book has an allusion to what Samuel did when Saul was anointed; "And Samuel said to all the people, See ye him whom the Lord hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people? And all the people shouted, and said, God save the king. Then Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom, and wrote it in a book, and laid it up before the Lord," I Sam. x. 24, 25. This sealed book of the Saviour's kingdom was laid up before the Lord; that is, in his secret purpose; and is now given to our elder brother, who is to reign over us: "When thou art come unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like as all the nations that are about me. Thou shalt in any wise set him king over thee whom the Lord thy God shall choose; one from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee; thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother. And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book, out of that

which is before the priests and Levites," Deut. xvii. 14-19. In this passage we have an account of a brother that is to reign over us; which blessed character Christ bears - "he is a brother born for adversity." He is to have a copy out of the law, and out of that which is before the priests and Levites; and it may be observed, that almost if not the whole of this sealed book is extracted from Moses and the prophets.

This book or copy of the kingdom, which is sealed with seven seals is the very book out of which my text is taken, called the Book of the Revelation, as appears from the first chapter, where it is styled, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John. Blessed is he that readeth, and they that bear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein; for the time is at hand," Rev. i. 1-3.

It is true, a great part of this book was seen by Daniel in a vision; yet he has a command: "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end," Dan. xii. 4. and although Daniel's vision was recorded, yet that part which concerns anti-christ, and the suffering church of the Gentiles under that monster of iniquity, lay hid as close as this with its seven seals, until the Lord revealed this; a great part of which is a key to that, and a certain prediction of all revolutions, vicissitudes, and events, that shall take place in the church, in antichrist, and in all kingdoms and dominions of the world; until the angel of the everlasting covenant, the God of heaven, earth, and sea, is revealed as the accomplisher of all the prophecies of this book, which he will hold in his hand when he closes the scene.

And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud, and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire. And he had in his hand a little book open, and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot upon the earth, and swore by him that liveth for ever and ever, that there should be time no longer; but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, the mystery of God should be finished," Rev. chap. 10.

2dly. This book is said to be "sealed on the back side with seven seals." The seals denote the secret mysteries and mysterious depths of its contents; it contains the secret mysteries of God's will; the Holy Ghost is both the seals and the sealer. What is written with the "finger of God," Dan. v. 5, and sealed by the Holy Ghost, can never be made known by any but

him who is Lord and Keeper of the privy-seal of heaven; Christ "has the seal of the living God," Rev. vii. 2. He was "in the bosom of the Father," and hath revealed the Father, and his mind and will also; for "all things," saith the Saviour, "that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you," John, xv. 15; and as he hath the seal, "he can open and none can shut, and shut, and none can open," Rev. iii. 7: for all power is given unto him both in heaven and earth, and he hath committed all judgment unto the Son, John, v. 22; and caused all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge to be hid in him; therefore he makes known the mysteries to his servants the prophets, and feeds his people "with the bread of eternal life, for him hath God the Father sealed," John. vi. 27.

The seals may serve to shew us that none but those who are sealed by the Spirit to the day of redemption, can ever understand this book; and indeed it is dedicated and directed to the seven churches, and to none else. The seals may represent the certain accomplishment of the prophecies of this book, as sealing, shews a thing to be ratified and confirmed; which shews that the devil and anti-christ shall continue no longer than the time appointed, nor prevail any further than the limited power permitted and made known in this book: "What is written by God's finger, and sealed by God's sevenfold seal, may no man reverse," Est. viii. 8. Hence we may conclude, that this "revelation of things is certain, and the accomplishment will be sure," Dan. ii. 45.

3dly. As seals make a deep impression, it shews that the deep things contained under these seals will sink deep, and leave a lasting impression wherever or upon whomsoever they may fall, whether in a way of mercy or of judgment; so that they will acknowledge it to come from the court of heaven; as appears from the strange effects that the opening of each seal produced in the world and church, which have, and will leave a stamp of infinite divinity behind; so that all shall acknowledge, as the magicians did, "that this is the finger of God."

4thly. A seal is a kind of security. A thing, written and sealed is secured to the proper owner; closed and shut up from all others. Hence the saints are called "living epistles known and read of all men," because the "law is written on the fleshly tables of their hearts by the Spirit of the living God," 2 Cor. iii. 3; by which they are sealed also; "and grieve not the holy Spirit of God, by which you are sealed to the day of redemption," Eph. iv. 30. This is the saints' security and foundation of comfort, and is effectually known to none but God and themselves; "nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure; having this seal, God knoweth them that are his," 2 Tim. ii. 19. This seal then secures the contents of this book, whether it be "the

portion of that wicked man of sin "from God," Job, xx. 29; or whether it be the cup of Zion's afflictions, that her adversaries have filled or shall fill to her, which they shall receive in their turn double. "it shall be measured unto them double," Rev. xviii. 6. The number seven shews the perfection of the seals, the sealer, and of all things that are sealed; to the Spirit they are all known, for he searches the deep things of God. The Saviour, who is God, and has all the fullness of the Spirit on him, knows them all, "and reveals them to us by the Spirit," I Cor. ii. 10; hence those that have "ears to hear" are exhorted in this book "to hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches," Rev. ii. 7. Which leads me to my second general head.

"And when he had taken the book" - or received it in order to loose the seals, unfold the mysteries, and send the contents of it by his angel unto his servant John, who was to see these things in the visions of God, understand them by the Spirit upon him, and to write them as he was moved by the Holy Ghost, and to send them for instruction and direction, as a caution and a cordial to the seven churches that were in Asia, and by and from them to be handed down to the church of God in all succeeding ages as a revelation from heaven, with this liberty granted, "he that hath an ear let him hear, what the Spirit saith unto the churches," which is a grant to all to whom these presents shall come greeting, or to all those whom it may concern, or have any concern about the salvation of their souls by faith in Christ Jesus. "Blessed are they that are called to the marriage-supper of the Lamb." It contains an awful warning also, and an irrevocable denunciation of vengeance on all that die in the bosom of the whore of Babylon, or are converted to Popery - "I will kill her children with death," Rev. ii. 23. But I proceed to the substance of my second head.

"And when he had taken the book, the four beasts" - Whatever these four beasts are, it is clear that all through this book they are honoured with the first view of all that is disclosed by the opening of the seals, and were employed in inviting others to behold the wonders revealed and made known by the opener of the seals - "And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, 'Come and see,'" Rev. vi. 1. And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, "Come and see," Rev. i. 3. "And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see," Rev. vi. 5. " And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, "Come and see," Rev. vi. 7. The indulgence granted to these beasts serves to give us an insight into what they are. First, they are allowed to look on while the Lamb opens the seals, "as Manoah and his wife did, when the angel did wondrously before them," Judges, xiii. 19. 2dky, They are discovered in a measure by their

thundering voice; "And I heard as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, 'Come and see,'" Rev. i. 1. And 3dly, By their inviting others to approach, and behold what themselves saw.

Now who can these four beasts be to whom these things can agree, but to gospel-ministers? First, By their standing, nearest to Christ, "as his ambassadors, or good stewards of his manifold grace and mysteries;" 2dly, Their having the first sight of the mysteries couched under the seals - "Unto you (who were apostles) it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God," Matt. xiii. 11, that they might "teach others, observing all things that Christ had commanded them," Matt. xx 2000 viii. 19, 20. 3dly, By their thundering voice - "And he surnamed them Boanerges, which is the sons of thunder," Mark, iii. 17. 4thly, By their being, made use of to invite others, "And at suppertime he sent out his servants (or ministers), to invite them that were bidden;" and, 5thly, By their message, "Come and see." Come, and see for yourselves; take not our word upon trust, but see and judge for yourselves; as Andrew and Philip said to Nathaniel, "We have found him of whom Moses and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth. And he answered, Can any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip said unto him (in the language of the four beasts), 'Come and see,'" John, i. 45, 46. And he went and saw, "and said, Rabbi, thou art the son of God, thou art the King, of Israel," John, i. 49; and if so, he certainly was a good thing, and a holy thing, whether he came out of Galilee, out of Nazareth, or out of Heaven. And I think if our modern Atheists, Deists, Socinians, Ariatis, and Arminians, had but a divine power on their wills, and the unction of the Holy One upon their understanding, they would not be so easily led blindfold by the god of this world as they are, nor would so many heedless souls be led by them; but in obedience to the invitation of "these beasts, they would 'come and see'" for themselves.

By the above observations, they seem to be ministers of the gospel; and 'tis clear that they were sinners redeemed by the blood of Christ, by the celestial anthem that they bear a chorus in; which shews that they cannot be good angels, for they need no redemption; nor devils, for they are excluded from it; "Jesus took not on him the nature of angels," Heb. ii. 16: nor can they be reprobate sinners, for Christ "laid down his life for his sheep;" but reprobates are not of his sheep, "ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you," John, x. 26. Therefore these beasts must be chosen sinners of the human race, whether they were preachers or private saints, according to the following, part they bear in the coronation-anthem. "The four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb; and they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God

by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation: and hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth," Rev. viii. 9, 10.

If these beasts were redeemed by Christ's blood, they must be human, not angelic saints; if redeemed out of every nation, people, and tongue, they must be redeemed from among the children of men; and if out of every nation, it is most likely they were Gentiles, rather than Jews, though the Jews will by and by be gathered in again, out of the various nations where they are now scattered.

As these beasts are privileged with standing nearest the Lord, and indulged with the first view of things, it is plain that they are ministers of Christ, who are stewards of the mysteries they saw; and as they are redeemed from among men, and say "Thou hast made us kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth," they were redeemed by Christ's blood, crowned with knowledge and loving-kindness as kings, and reigned as kings, though on the earth, under the dominion of grace, and as priests "they offered spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ;" which is confirmed in my text; for 'tis said "the four beasts," as well as "the elders," had "golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints."

It may be inquired why they are called beasts. Perhaps it is intended to exhibit them as brutal sinners by nature, before they were redeemed from among the nations, tongues, and people they lay among. "Every man is brutish in his knowledge," Jer. x. 14. "Surely I am more brutish than any man," saith Acur, Prov. xxx. 2. "That God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts," Eccl. iii. 18.

We have a further description of these beasts. The first beast was "like a lion" the second beast "like a calf," the third beast had a face "as a man," and the fourth beast was "like a flying eagle," Rev. iv. 7.

The terrible majesty and undaunted courage of the lion represents them as whelps of the Lion of the tribe of Judah, as Judah is called a lion's whelp," Gen. xlix. 9; and denotes the fortitude and boldness of a gospel minister, when strengthened with spiritual might. "The wicked flee when none pursueth, but the righteous are bold as a lion," Prov. xxviii. 1. "The second beast being like a calf," may denote the value of a gospel minister, and his quick growth in grace and knowledge. "Ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall," Mal. iv. 2. Calf is often mentioned by Isaiah as "lying down with the Lamb of God, or with the lambs of his fold." "The wolf also

shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together," Isa. xi. 6. Gospel ministers are compared to oxen in scripture; and a lively emblem they are, when they have got the Saviour's yoke on their neck, feed themselves on the green pastures of God's word, abide by their Master's crib, and tread out the corn for others. "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen? or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes no doubt this is written," says Paul, I Cor. ix. 9. "The third beast had a face as a man." This shews what they really are by nature, namely, men, fallen men, but now redeemed from among men; and they were men in a militant state, or representatives of them, and not the spirits of just men made perfect; for if they were, they must look more like angels than men, nor could they be said to reign on the earth. "And the fourth beast was like a flying eagle;" which may represent their heavenly-mindedness, the eagle being a very towering flyer, to which saints are often compared. "They shall mount up as on eagle's wings; they shall run, and not weary; walk, and not faint," Isa. xl. 31. This bird may denote their spiritual knowledge and penetration, the eagle being famous for strong, and quick sight. "Her eyes are said to behold afar off" Job, xxxix. 29. She is said to be very sagacious, and can scent her prey at a distance. "Her eyes behold afar off: from thence she seeketh her prey; and where the slain are, there is she," Job, xxxix. 29, 30, which may prefigure ministers, whose souls feed on Christ's flesh and blood, in a spiritual sense, by faith, and find it the only food that can entertain the troubled mind, or satisfy a wounded conscience. "My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed; and unless you eat my flesh, and drink my blood, you have no life in you," John, vi. 53.

These beasts are further described, by having "six wings;" perhaps in allusion to the seraphim in Isaiah, "each having six wings; with twain he covered his face, with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly," Isa. vi. 2. The covering their faces may shew their bashfulness and modesty in the presence of God, "as virgin souls." Their covering their feet betokens their unworthiness and unprofitableness to God. "When ye have done all these things, say ye, We are unprofitable servants," Luke xvii. 10. Their flying, denotes their delight and alacrity in the work of the Lord, in spreading his gospel, as an angel is represented as "flying through the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach upon earth," Rev. xiv. 6; which angel is a minister of the gospel; a man by nature, only an angel by office. Angels are not proper creatures to preach the gospel to us. 2000 They have not our infirmities about them: nor could we sit under them with any comfort. Their celestial language would be as much above the language of Canaan, as ours is above the language of Egypt. We must

"have our treasure out of earthen vessels," 2 Cor. iv. 7; or else we should be ready to cry out, under angelic teaching, as Daniel did, "All my comeliness is turned into corruption, and I retain no strength," Dan. x. 8.

These beasts are said to be "full of eyes within," chap. iv. 8, which may denote the divine light that shines within them. "God, who caused the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts," says Paul, 2 Cor. iv. 6. This makes a man appear full of eyes, and a world of corruptions are discovered, both in himself and others. It is in God's light we see light; and whatsoever maketh manifest is light." They had need be full of eyes within and without; for they have enemies on every side, besides taking an "oversight of the flock, and watching for their souls as them that must give an account." There must be also a watching the hand of Providence, and the hand of God in the fulfilment of the prophecies, which are daily unfolding, more or less; and as watchmen they must give warning of approaching dangers, and observe the rising and declining of the gospel sun, which seems daily going down over many prophets; besides their watchfulness as shepherds, to observe and detect foxes and ravenous wolves, "who will not spare the flock;" nor even the chief shepherd himself, if they had but power equal to their will, and could get at him.

"When these beasts give glory, and honour, and thanks, to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever; then the four and twenty elders, fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne," Rev. iv. 9, 10. Another proof, and I think a sufficient one, that these beasts are ministers of the gospel; because here they are represented as beginning the worship of God, and leading it on. "Under the old dispensation the ministering servant blessed the sacrifice, and then those eat that were bidden," 1 Sam. ix. 13; under the gospel, first of all "supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving, of thanks, are to be made," 1 Tim. ii. 1. Thus preachers lead the worship, and the people follow after; as it is represented here: the four beasts begin, and the elders fell down and worshipped.

John is shewn in this vision how ministers look in God's eyes, however they may appear in their own, called "beasts;" for such the most humble and most enlightened have often called themselves; and such the children of this world have often thought them, or Paul would never have complained, "We are as sheep accounted for the slaughter." By their having the "face of a lion, and the face of a calf," it shews there is something of the "Lion of the tribe of Judah," and something of Christ the "fatted calf" about them; and by the face of the "eagle" and the "man," it

insinuates that there is something of the "voracious nature" of the former belonging to the latter. This daring face of the man shews how self will at times make a discovery that the best of men "have like passions with the worst," James, v. 17; or else one of the best of men would never have complained of a "body of death," nor commanded the putting "off the old man with his deeds;" which leads me to my third head; which was to shew, who these four and twenty elders are "that fall down and worship with the beasts."

In the days of Moses the tribe of Levi was chosen out of all the rest of the tribes of Israel, to minister before the Lord, wait at the altar, and do the service of the sanctuary. This election was of God, and made manifest by a miracle; namely, by Aaron's rod budding, and bearing almonds, while the other, eleven rods had nothing about them but a name, Num. xvii. 8. This ministerial tribe, being, chosen of God, called to the office, and confirmed in it by a miracle, most beautifully prefigured the elected church of God in gospel times, when every believer should know his election, and see his calling clear; officiate in a better tabernacle, for the Lord is his sanctuary; offer more acceptable sacrifices in the Spirit, and wait at a better altar: "we have an altar," whereof they have no right to eat, which serve the tabernacle, Heb. xiii. 10. Hence God promised to take some from the Gentile nations, and indulge them with the glorious privileges of this tribe: "And they shall declare my glory among, the Gentiles. And I will also take of them for priests and for Levites, saith the Lord," Isa. lxvi. 19, 21.

Thus we see the election, calling, and miraculous confirmation of this tribe, is now to be found in its gospel signification among, common believers of the Gentiles; who are exhorted to make their calling, and election sure - to worship God in spirit and in truth - to draw near in the "ephod and teraphim" of imputed righteousness and true holiness, with the holy crown of "lovingkindness and tender mercies" - to attend on Christ the "golden altar" - and to minister about holy things - and offer the pleasing and acceptable sacrifices of hearty praises, humble petitions, and a "broken and contrite heart, which God will not despise," Psalm li. 17.

Our glorious privileges are so great that babes in grace, as soon as Wisdom, their mother, has brought them "a little coat of needle-work wrought about with divers colours, they may gird on the linen ephod" of sanctification, "go to Shiloh," and talk to God the Saviour for themselves. Thus the covenant of an everlasting priesthood is confirmed to the church at large; nay, I add, that as "Christ was a priest after the order of Melchisedec, and not after the order of Aaron, which order interweaving two offices together, namely, that of a king and a priest, it opens a way for

this wonderful dignity to fall upon the church of Christ, which the Levitical tribe could never boast of, for God never spoke such thing, of that: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light; which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God," I Peter, ii. 9, 10. Thus the royal and priestly order of Melchisedee is found in all their glorious meaning in the glorious King of Zion, and "high priest of our profession;" and the dignity and honour of both offices is reflected from the Saviour on the church: "He hath made us kings and priests unto God, and we shall reign on the earth," Rev. i. 6. Aaron's miraculous rod that confirmed his election and calling, is now found, with its blossoms and almonds, in the church at large. I said, I see the rod of an almond tree, Jer. i. 11, "which shall flourish," Eccl. xii. 5. "It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon: they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God," Isa. xxxv. 2, whose leaf shall never wither, but they shall blossom as the rose, and fill the world with fruit.

The family of Aaron, who were priests, were divided into twenty-four courses," 1 Chron. xxiv. 1-19; and these twenty-four courses all waited or attended on their ministry in turn. And all those four and twenty courses of ministers, with their election, call, and privileges, are now found in the church in a gospel sense, and are confirmed with many additional blessings and privileges which they never had; and which will end in the eternal salvation and glorification of every spiritual priest, which theirs did not. These four and twenty elders represent the churches of God at large, which were prefigured under the old testament by twenty-four courses of ministers or priests. This appears plain, as the scriptures call every saint a priest, a Levite; yea, kings and priests, or a royal priesthood: and in these four and twenty courses young "learners" were numbered as well as the "preachers" that "taught;" to shew that the babe in grace should be included in the gospel signification of their order as well as the strong man in Christ: "And they cast lots, ward against ward, as well the small as the great, the teacher as the scholar," were numbered, 1 Chron. xxv. 8. Blessed for ever be that spiritual priest, into whose lap the lot of eternal life falls. "The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposal thereof is or the lord," Prov. xvi. 33. This lot "causes contention to cease," Prov. xviii. 18. And indeed there is no stopping, the clamorous mouth of Satan, conscience, and unbelief, till we are persuaded that "we shall rest, and stand in God's lot at the end of the days," Dan. xii. 13. Thus it appears, that these "four and twenty elders" who fall down and worship, are representatives of the church of Christ at large, prefigured by the twenty-

four courses of priests, which represented the church as a royal priesthood.

The name elder is often applied to the first-born son - "Shem the brother of Japheth the elder," and represents the children of God as the elder or first-born by election; and no wonder, when they "were predestinated to the adoption of sons," before any man-child was born into the world. Abel was Adam's younger son, Isaac, was the younger of Abraham, Jacob of Isaac, and Ephraim of Joseph: but in God's decree they were not so. They were first-born sons by promise, as Isaac was, that they might inherit the home-stall, agreeable, both to the law, Deut xxi. 15, 10, and the promise, "And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac," Gen. xxv. 5. Esau was before Jacob; yet the Israelites, not the Edomites, are called God's first-born. "Israel is my son (says God) even my first-born. And I say unto thee, Let my son go [Pharaoh], that he may serve me: and if thou refuse to let him go, I will slay thy son, even thy first-born" Exod. iv. 22, 23.

Elders are magistrates that used to sit on seats' at the city gates, to hear debates, try causes, settle disputes, and bear witness to contracts; hence you so frequently read of the "gates of the elders," Prov. xxx. 23, and of the elders at the gates bearing "witness to Boaz's redeeming Naomi's inheritance, and betrothing, Ruth," Ruth, iv. 11.

And if you read the description of the wonderful city called the Heavenly Jerusalem, you will see elders there. "And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, having the glory of God; and her light was like a stone most precious; and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels; and names written therein, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel which shews that the twelve patriarchs, fathers of the twelve tribes, whose names the tribes bore, who all sprung, from Jacob, and were called Israelites, a name which is now entailed on every believer, who "may call himself by the name of Jacob, or surname himself by the name of Israel," Isa. xlv. 5, being a son of peace, and "of the Israel of God," Gal. vi. 16. I say, these elders having their names at the twelve gates of this city, inclines me to think, that in the gospel-signification of their names, they are one half of these four and twenty elders who represent the whole Israel of God in the various gospel-characters that their names signify.

The twelve gates, "three east, three west, three north, and three south," Rev. xxi. 13, is to shew, that "many shall come from the east, west, north,

and south, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God," Luke., xiii. 29. If these twelve names, at the twelve gates of this city, are twelve of the elders as representatives of the church, in the gospel-signification of their names, it is to shew that none can pass these elders, or enter into the gates of the city, by themselves, unless they are "Israelites indeed," as Nathaniel was, John, i. 47, or a part of God's Israel, "which is a name and an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off," Isa. lv. 13.

The name of this city is Jerusalem, "righteousness and peace," to shew that none but justified souls, in a state of peace and reconciliation with God, can enter therein. It is the royal city of the Great King, in which he resides. "And the name of the city from that day shall be, The Lord is there," Ezek. xlvi. 35. If so, a dead sinner cannot enter there, nor live in the presence of God; for "in his favour is life, and in his presence fullness of joy," Psal. xxx. 5, which shews that they must be (Quickened by the Holy Ghost, and find favour with God, that enter these gates. And if these twelve patriarchs whose names the twelve tribes bore, being written on these gates, are twelve of the elders of this city, as I really believe they are, they do represent the church of God in her twelve different states and conditions, signified by the gospel sense of their names; and they appear to be elders by their names at the gates of this city. "Three gates north; one gate of Reuben, one gate of Judah, one gate of Levi; on the east side, one gate of Joseph, one gate of Benjamin, one gate of Dan; on the South side, one gate of Simeon, one gate of Issachar, one gate of Zebulon; on the west side, one gate of God, one gate of Asher, one gate of Naphtali," Ezek. xlvi. 31-34.

I now come to the signification of these names, by which these twelve patriarchs represent the whole Israel or church of God.

1st, Reuben, by his name, represents the family of God as children of light. "The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light" Reuben represents, by name, the fraternity of God as children of light. "And when the Lord saw that Leah was hated, he opened her womb; and she bare a son, and called his name Reuben; for she said, Surely the Lord hath looked upon my affliction," Gen. xxix. 31, 32.

2dly, Judah represents the church of God as God's own workmanship, "created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them," Eph ii. 10. "This people have I formed for myself, they shall shew forth my praise," Isa. xliii. 21. Judah signifies

Praise God. "And she conceived again, and bare a son; and she said, Now will I praise Jehovah; therefore she called his name Judah Gen. xxix. 35.

Levi, by name, represents the church of God in the character of "the Lamb's wife," who is made one with Christ; for they that are "joined to the Lord are of one spirit," I Cor. vi. 17. We are of the Saviour's "flesh and of his bones." This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning "Christ and his church," Eph. v. 32. Levi signifies joined, united, or in union. "And she conceived again, and bare a son; and said, Now this time will my husband be joined to me: therefore was his name called Levi."

Joseph was a type of the church, as a fruitful mother, or an increasing kingdom. His name signifies addition, or increase as the kingdom of Christ must increase. "And she conceived and bare a son; and said, God hath taken away my reproach: and she called his name Joseph; and said, The Lord shall add to me another son," Gen. xxx. 23, 24. Zion shall be prolific. "Shall I bring, to the birth, and not give strength to bring forth? Before she travailed, she was delivered of a manchild. Shall a nation be born at once? Before Zion travailed, she brought forth her children 2000," Isa. lxvi. 7, 8. Nor shall she ever be barren. God shall add to her "many sons," and daughters too. She shall have "five wise virgins marriageable," that shall be taken into the "marriage chamber, when the Bridegroom cometh to judgment."

Benjamin, by his name, represents the safety of the church in the hand of God the Father, and God the Son; out of which hands Christ says they shall never be plucked. "None shall Pluck them out of my hands. My Father is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hands. I and my Father are one." They are right-hand sons; and at the right hand of the Judge they shall appear at the great day, when the goats "shall stand on the left." Benjamin signifies the son of the right hand. And he is called "the beloved of the Lord, who shall dwell in safety by him; the Lord shall cover him all the day long; and he shall dwell between his shoulders," Deut. xxxiii. 12. And Rachel travailed, and she had hard labour. And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing (for she died), that she called his name Ben-oni (the son of my sorrow), but his father called him "Benjamin" (the son of my right hand), Gen. xxxv. 16-18.

Dan, by his name, represents the church of God in a justified state, whose judgment is already passed; and they are a righteous nation, who have taken their trial, been judged at the bar of the law, brought in guilty by it, condemned and silenced, and justified by an act of grace which passed

upon them, through faith in Christ Jesus; and they "are justified from all things from which they never could be justified by the law of Moses." "Dan signifies judgment, and may represent the church of Christ upon the seat of judgment with the Judge, seeing they have been his witnesses in the world, and will be the same at the great day. "And Rachel said, God hath Judged me, and hath also heard my voice, and hath given me a son: therefore she called his name Dan," Gen. xxx. 6.

Simeon, by name, represents the church of God as true Israelites, who are prevalent with God in prayer, whose prayers God hears, "for his eyes are over the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayers." And they are an obedient people to the Saviour's voice, whom they hear and obey. "My sheep hear my voice, and follow me." Simeon signifies, that hears, obeys, or is heard. "And she conceived again, and bare a son; and said, Because the Lord hath heard that I was hated, he hath therefore given me this son also: and she called his name Simeon," Gen. xxix. 33.

Issachar, by his name, represents the church of God as the Saviour's hire, or reward. He had the elect for redeeming them. "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and I lay down my life for the sheep." They are the reward of the Saviour's labour, as the spangled sheep was the hire of Jacob, as well as his wife. "And Jacob fled into the country of Syria, and Israel served for a wife; and for a wife he kept sheep," Hos. xii. 12. And so did our blessed Saviour. He assumed our nature, was among us as him that served, paid the debts of his spouse, quickened her dead soul, and espoused her to himself, as the purchase of his blood, and the reward of his labour. Jacob's "time seemed but a day for the love he had for Rachel," who was the object of his reward; for a wife he kept sheep. And "for the joy that was set before Christ, he endured the cross, and despised the shame," Heb. xii. 2; which joy consisted "in glorifying his Father," in his being, glorified in his human nature, and in "the marriage of his wife," and eternal glorification of her. Issachar signifies hire or reward. "And God hearkened unto Leah, and she conceived, and bare Jacob the fifth son. And Leah said, God hath given me mine hire, because I have given my maiden to mine husband: and she called his name Issachar," Gen. xxx. 17, 18.

Zebulon, by name, represents the church of God as residing in "the cleft of the rock" Christ, Song, ii. 14; of whom Zion says, "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations," Psal. xc. 1; in whom they "live, move, and have their being" and in whom they are commanded to stand fast. "Stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved." Zebulon signifies dwelling. " And Leah said, God hath endowed me with a good dowry: now will my

husband dwell with me, because I have borne him six sons; and she called his name Zebulon."

Gad, by name, represents the church as the Lord's host, or "an army with banners," Song, vi. 10, called the host of the Lord, a good company of soldiers; the "camp of saints," Rev. xx'. 9, engaged in the "fight of faith," I Tim. vi. 12; a troop of "good soldiers of Jesus Christ, who are to endure hardness," 2 Tim. ii. 3, to "put on the whole armour of God," Eph. vi. 11, and overcome the world," I John, v. 4. Gad signifies a troop. And Zilpah, Leah's maid, bare Jacob a son. And Leah said, A troop cometh; and she called his name Gad," Gen. xxx. 10, 11.

Asher, by his name, represents the church in her covenant state, being blessed of God, and under the blessing of Abraham. "As many as are of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham," Gal. iii. 9, which Zion certainly is; for it is on "the mountain of Zion that the Lord hath commanded the blessing, even life for evermore," Psal. cxxxiii. 3. And this shall be proclaimed aloud in the great day, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom." Asher signifies blessedness, or being made happy under a blessing, which all God's people are, more or less. "And Zilpah, Leah's maid, bare Jacob a second son. And Leah said, Happy am I, for the daughters will call me blessed: and she called his name Asher," Gen. xxx. 12, 13.

Naphtali, by his name, represents the church of God as mighty prevailers, struggling hard both with heaven and earth; like Jacob, they must "wrestle hard with God for a blessing," Gen. xxxii. 24; or they will never take the kingdom of God by force, which is said to suffer violence, Matt. xi. 12. And they are obliged to "wrestle with principalities and powers, and with spiritual wickedness in high places," Eph. vi. 12, in order to overcome the world. Naphtali signifies a mighty or prevalent wrestler. "And Bilhah, Rachel's maid, conceived again, and bare Jacob a second son. And Rachel said, With great wrestlings have I wrestled with my sister, and I have prevailed; and she called his name Naphtali," Gen. iii. 7,8.

These particulars highly induce me to think, that these twelve patriarchs, in the signification of their names, are twelve of these elders mentioned in my text. First, they all sprung from Jacob, whose name Christ assumed, Psa. xxiv. 6; and which name every saint of God may assume, Isa. xlv. 5. Secondly, they were the fathers of all the Israelites; and they are all Israelites that believe in Christ for salvation, called the "Israel of God." These patriarchs all sprung, from Abraham, "who is the father of us all,"

Rom. iv. 16; and from Sarah, who in the allegory is "the free woman, and the mother of us all," Gal. iv. 26. Hence we are commanded to "look to Abraham our father, and to Sarah that bare us." Thirdly, these patriarchs were the fathers from whence the twenty-four courses of priests sprung; and by their names being at the gates of this city, they appear to be the elders of this city; and the gates of these elders; and unless we are Israelites by grace, as these patriarchs were by nature, and interested in those things signified by their names, we never can enter the gates of this city. We must produce our register, as they could, and our genealogy both, "as written among the living in Jerusalem," Isa. iv. 3; else we shall find no admittance into this city, much less into the sanctuary; we shall be stopped in the "outer court," which the reed of God's word is not "to measure, because 'tis to be trodden under foot," as every outercourt worshipper will be, Rev. xi. 2. God will "trample" hypocrites "in his fury," Isa. lxiii. 3, and expose them to as much contempt as "the children of Habaiah, the children of Coz, and the children of Barzillai, who could not prove their descent from Israel by register or Genealogy, and therefore were they, as polluted, put from the priesthood," Nehem, vii. 63, 64.

The other twelve elders mentioned in my text, I believe to be the twelve apostles of the Lord. They in scripture are styled elders: Peter says, "The elders I exhort, who am also an elder." John styles himself "the elder unto the elect Lady and her children." The twelve apostles are said to have their names in the foundations of this city of the living God: "And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb," Rev. xxi. 14. As the apostles are called elders, and are said to have their names in the foundations of this city, it shews that they were doctrinally or ministerially the founders of it. We all know that 'twas "God that founded Zion, and the poor of his people shall trust in it," Isa. xiv. 32; and that "he that built all things is God," Heb. iii. 4; yet he used wise master-builders to lay the foundation doctrinally: "I, as a wise master-builder (says Paul), have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon; but let him take heed how, he buildeth thereupon," I Cor. iii. 10. God the Father laid Christ in his own decree and purpose; hence he is called "an elect stone, which God laid," I Pet. ii. 6; and revealed him to the prophets, who laid him in their ministry. The apostles succeeding, the prophets laid him more clearly and extensively, even in the Gentile world; and every child of God "is built on the Foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord. In whom ye also are builded, for an habitation of God through the Spirit," Eph. ii. 20-22.

To the apostles were "committed the keys of the kingdom of heaven," all that they loosed on earth were loosed in heaven, and all that they bound on earth were, bound in heaven, Matt. xvi. 19. Now as the church of God is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, for an habitation of God through the Spirit, it appears that this habitation of God is this city that I am speaking of; for this city is said to have "the glory of God in it, and her light was like a stone most precious," Rev. xxi. 11. This city is likewise called "the bride, the Lamb's wife," Rev. xxi. 9, 10; if so, this city must consist of such souls as the apostles espoused to a good husband, and presented as chaste virgins to Christ," 2 Cor. xi. 2. This whole city consisteth of souls that were not defiled with the errors of "mystical Jezebel," Rev. ii. 20; or the "mystical whore of Babylon," Rev. xvii. 1, 5. This city consists of such "as were not defiled with these women for they are virgins," Rev. xiv. 4.

Thus it appears that the twelve patriarchs, in the gospel signification of their names, are twelve of these elders that represent the church of God in my text; and their having their names at the gates, seems to shew that they are the elders of this city; and unless we are Israelites, or "inwardly jews, circumcised in heart, and worshippers of God in the Spirit," Phil. iii. 3, we shall not be able to find our "names on the book of life," Phil. iv. 3, or "written among the living, in this new Jerusalem."

You may object and say, the new Jerusalem signifies the triumphant church, which is "let down from heaven;" or the "spirits of just men made perfect," coming with Christ in the clouds of heaven to receive their dead bodies raised again and to be united to them, being those "blessed ones that have a part in the first resurrection." Be that as it may, let us look nearer home; - matters will go well with us in that day, if we are found to be true citizens. Paul says, We are come to mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels; to the general assembly and church of the first born, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling which speaketh better things than that of Abel, Heb. xii. 22-24. "Happy are such souls; they are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone," Eph. ii. 19, 20: all this is true of you, if you are upon the rock Christ.

The apostles laid the foundation of this city, and have their names engraved thereon; and had formerly the keys of it, to let all in that were

"loosed on earth" by their ministry; and we must be partakers of the same spirit, and receive the same truth in the love of it which they delivered; for 'tis the spirit and the word of truth which are the keys, and it is the word and spirit that make us free; "where the spirit is, there is liberty," 2. Cor. 17. Ye shall know the truth, "and the truth shall make you free," John, viii.32. Thus you find the spirit and the word lets us into liberty; when this is the happy and blessed case with us, we are free men of this city. "Isaac was by the free woman; Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all; so then we are not children of the bond-woman, but of the free," Gal. iv. 31; if so, we are free-born sons of this mother, and have a right to the inheritance given of God by promise to every heir of promise, and shall never be shut out of this city, as the bond-woman and her children will be.

As free men we may trade in this city all the elders will encourage us in it; and, as the Lord says, "we may go in and out and find pasture." Thus these four and twenty elders, consisting of the offspring of Abraham, the twelve literal builders of the house of Israel, and the twelve spiritual builders of the church of God, have their names on the gates and foundations of this city; and as a complete senate or parliament they represent the children of God in all their privileges as Israelites, and as followers of the blessed Redeemer in the regeneration till the world ends. Which leads me to my next general head, which is to consider,

Fourthly, The object of their adoration, the Lamb; and why so called.

If Jesus Christ be not really, essentially, and eternally God; if he be not the self-existent and independent JEHOVAH, they are every one idolaters; "I am the Lord thy God, thou shalt have no other Gods before me," Exod. xx. 1-3. "For thou shalt worship no other God; for the Lord, whose name is jealous, is a jealous God." But the testimony this faithful and true witness bears to his own proper deity is sufficient; "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty," Rev. i. 8; and again, "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last," verse 11. If so, there is none before him, nor shall be after him, which is proof of his eternity; and though this be denied by many, yet he will let all his enemies know that he is the all-seeing and heart-searching God; "I will kill [Jezebel's children] with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts; and I will give to every one of you according to your works," Rev. ii. 23. Strange la 2000 nguage this for a creature.

The essential deity of this blessed object of faith, seems to be the main stone of stumbling, and rock of offence, that the unbeliever is to stumble at; "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder and perish; for I work a work in your days that ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you," Acts, xiii. 41. But those that are led by the Spirit to see and believe this essential article of our faith, namely, the personal divinity of the Saviour, they will see the privilege, and soon feel the blessed effects of calling upon him as the object of worship; "It shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved: But how shall they call on him in whom they have not believed?" Rom. x. 14. 'Tis in vain to call on his name as an object of prayer, if thou dost not believe his deity; "call him not good" unless thou believe his Godhead; "there is none good but one, that is God." But if thou believe him to be "both Lord and master," thou doest well, for he is so.

Blessed be God, he does not leave his own elect to stumble at this "rock of offence;" He sends the comforter, the spirit of truth, from the Father, to "testify of him," John, xv. 26, and to convince us of our need of him as one mighty to save. To talk of an eternal salvation from sin and Satan, death and hell, by a creature, is mere nonsense - "Vain is the salvation of man," Psa. lx. 11. "He that is our God is the God of salvation, and unto God the Lord belong the issues from death," Psa. lxxviii. 20. And this God of salvation is Jesus for there is salvation in no other name," Acts, iv. 10-12. These elders know what they are about; all the hosts of heaven pay divine worship to him, though there are so many in this world that withhold it, "being wiser in their generation than the children of light," Luke, xvi. 8. When he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, "And let all the angels of God worship him," Heb. i. 6; and the command is the same to Zion, "He is thy Jehovah, and worship thou him." Psalm xlv. 11.

I will never believe that there ever was an Arian that could give any true account of a work of regeneration on his soul, or of his being, born again of the Holy Ghost; and as they are sensual men, having not the Spirit, nothing can be expected from them but lies and confusion; "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned," Rom. ii. 14. The Saviour will ever be glorified by the Holy Ghost wherever that Spirit comes; and he will be glorified as God and Saviour by no other spirit, nor by any but those that have the Spirit: "When the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth: For he shall not speak of himself, he shall glorify me," John, xvi. 13. 14.

The first powerful command that was attended with a divine ray to my soul was this, "Go and pray to Jesus Christ." I went in obedience to the heavenly vision, and in answer to the first extempore prayer put up to the name of the Lord Jesus, I came out of as much real and imaginary horror as any mere mortal could bear up under. I would bear this testimony, and swear to it with my dying breath. He that denies the Saviour's being the self-existent and independent Jehovah, is in his natural state, in a state of unbelief, and in a fair way for a share in the damnation of hell: "If ye believe not that I am ye shall die in your sins," John, viii. 24; and if "they die in their sins, where Christ is they cannot come," verse 21. This I see, that the saints of God are every way instructed, and the word of God is every way fulfilled; "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived," 2 Tim. iii. 13.

It is clear, from the chapter out of which my text is taken, that these spiritual worshippers worship the Lamb with equal adoration to that of the Father; "And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I, saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four beasts said Amen," Rev. vi. 13, 14. "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son: That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent him," John, v. 22, 23.

Having treated briefly of the object of their worship, "the Lamb," I come now to shew why he is so called.

First, Because of his innocency; he having done no sin, "neither was guile found in his month," 1 Pet. ii. 22; "yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief," Isa. liiii. 10.

Secondly, Because of his meekness and gentleness in the hands of his enemies, and submission to their cruelty and rage. A lamb makes little resistance in the hands of a butcher, and less in the hand of its shearer; no animal of its size so passive and meek. There is nothing about it but is useful; nor anything in its nature that is voracious, cunning, sly, or savage; to which the Saviour is compared in his meek and gentle deportment. "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth. He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who shall declare his generation? For he was cut off out of

the land of the living; for the transgression of my people was he stricken," Isaiah, liii. 7, 8.

Thirdly, He is compared to a lamb on account of his usefulness. There is nothing about a lamb but is useful. It is excellent food, if not the very best of animal food; hence the Saviour says, "My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed," John, vi. 55. "Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day," verse 54. This spiritual eating and drinking shews the mysterious union there is between Christ and the believer; for as food received, digested, and concocted, nourishes every part of the body, and increases it, so the soul who receives the Saviour by faith into his heart, as crucified for him, finds the sentence of death, his soul-deadness removed, and life divine communicated; "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me and I in him," verse 56. All other food perishes; but this food is spiritual and divine; and is no less than an eternal "feast of fat things," intended to entertain a troubled mind, quicken and nourish a perishing soul, and satisfy the boundless desires of it with the love of God. Such souls should live above the fear, as they shall surely live above the power, of all that is called death - "He that eateth of this bread shall live for ever," John, vi. 58.

The wool of the lamb is excellent for clothing, as well as the skin for other uses. "The lambs are for thy clothing, and the goats are the price of the field," Prov. xxvii. 26. And I believe there is some sweet meaning, in this text: "I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live," Ezek. xxxvii. 6. However, the Saviour is not only the food of our souls, but our clothing, also. "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ," Rom. xiii. 14, "and walk in him," Col. ii. 6. He is our covering. "Blessed is the man whose sin is covered," Psalm xxxii. 1. "The Lord hath covered me with the robe of his righteousness," Isa. lxi. 10; and unless he does we shall be "found naked," Rev. xvi. 15. In short, we must "feed" on him, or die; we must be found in his "righteousness," or be damned, and that is the truth of it.

Fourthly, There is no other fountain opened for sin but the Lamb's blood. All that are in heaven "washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb," Rev. vii. 14; and if he "wash us not, we have no part in him," John, xiii. 8. No cleansing but this can purge the conscience from the sting of guilt, the curse and wrath of the law, or from dead works, "that we may serve the living God," Heb. ix. 14. He that is a stranger to the blood of the Lamb, is pursued and haunted by the wrath of God, the sentence of death, and a guilty conscience; no fountain but the blood of the Lamb of God can "sprinkle the heart from an evil conscience," Heb. x. 22. No

peace, no reconciliation or friendship, with a sin-avenging God, but by an application of this atoning blood; this is the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel," Heb. xii. 24. Under this atonement of the Lamb, the Israelites escaped the destroying angel's sword in Egypt: "By faith Moses kept the passover and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the first-born should touch them," Heb. xi. 28. And you pharisaical advocates for a form of Godliness, who have so often said, "O Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world, grant us thy peace," see that you reject not this fountain; if you do, you reject all peace and reconciliation with God; and the consequence will be, that an awful separation and an infinite distance will take place between you and the "fountain of life," and an eternal war will commence where the loss will be all your own; "He will draw his sword, and come down on the people of his curse to judgment," Isa. xxxiv "by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh, and the slain of the Lord shall be many," Isa. lxvi. 16. "You that despise this fountain of the Lamb's blood shall feel his wrath; and though you never asked for an interest in him, yet you shall pray to be hid from him: The kings of the earth and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bond man, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens, rocks, and mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, fall on us and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb," Rev. xvi. 15, 16.

To whom this Lamb is no Saviour, he will be an inexorable judge. They that never sued for his grace shall feel wrath he will curse his enemies once for all - "Depart from me ye cursed," Matt. xxv. 41; and they will curse him - "they shall fret themselves, and curse their king and their God," Isa. viii. 21, and pierce their own souls by it, and that to all eternity. Happy, and eternally blessed, is that soul that can say from his own experience, "the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin." The saint's best performances stand in need of washing; and our vile and corruptible bodies, which are to be changed, and divested of all corruption, and raised in incorruption, with which we are to be clothed when mortality is swallowed up of life, must have a washing, in this fountain of the Lamb's blood: "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple," Rev. vii. 14, 15.

He is called "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," Rev. xiii. 8. Indeed he was slain in the purpose of God from all eternity; and in God's secret counsel and fore-knowledge his death was decreed, purposed, appointed, and determined from all eternity. Jesus, speaking, of his death, saith, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world,"

John, xviii. 37. He was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, though it was by the instrumentality of ungodly men that he was taken, "and by wicked hands he was crucified and slain," Acts.. ii. 23

He is called "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," being, typified by the offerings that Abel brought, called the "firstlings of his flock," Gen. iv. 4; which were "lambs;" and through them, by faith, Abel looked to the "Lamb of God," the woman's seed promised, who was to come, "and by faith he offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain," Heb. xi. 4; and on this account "God had respect to Abel and to his offering," but to "Cain and to his offering he had not respect," Gen. iv. 4, 5; which Cain could discern, and therefore he was "wrath, and his countenance fell." God had respect to Abel in Christ Jesus; and Abel's faith was looking through the type to the anti-type; on which account God had respect to his offering, Had the act or faith and the object of faith been out of the question, the offering, had been no better than a vain oblation; and the declaration and question would have been, "I delight not in the blood of bullocks, lambs, or he-goats: Who hath required this at your hands?" Isa. i. 12. But "faith Abel offered, and obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts, and by it he being dead yet speaketh," Heb. xi. 4.

In both these senses he is "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," decretively and typically, and was slain in the evening, of the world in reality. This decretive and typical slaying of the Lamb from the foundation of the world, and his being slain in reality in the "evening" or "supper time," of it, Luke, xiv. 17; or, as Paul says, in the end of the world "hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself," Heb. ix. 26; this was prefigured under the law every day; that the Israelites might look back and see how every saint had been saved; and that they might look forward, in hope and expectation of a Saviour to come, called the "hope and strength of the children of Israel," Joel, 'ii. 16; and to them he was hope to come;" for which "hope's sake" Paul was accused, Acts, xxvi. 7. "Now this is that which thou shalt offer upon the altar; two lambs of the first year, day by day continually. The one lamb thou shalt offer in the morning, and the other lamb thou shalt offer in the evening: This shall be a continual burnt-offering throughout your generation, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, before the Lord; where I will meet you, to speak there unto thee," Exod, xxix. 38, 39, 42. Thus was the Lamb of God set before Israel every morning and evening; until that abominable monster, that enemy to God, Antiochus, commanded sacrifice to idols, which many Israelites followed. He forbid burnt-offerings, sacrifices, and drink-offerings in the temple, and polluted the sanctuary, 1 Mac. i. 41-46. "Yea, he

magnified himself even to the prince of the host; and by him the daily sacrifice" of the morning and evening, lamb "was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down," Dan. viii. 11.

The Saviour was typified by the "paschal lamb," that was to be slain once a year, called the "Passover," in commemoration of Israel's deliverance out of Egypt, and escaping the destroying angel's sword, under the atoning blood of the paschal lamb upon their door posts. This deliverance out of Egypt, and escape from divine wrath, was to lead their faith to their great deliverer, who would deliver them from their spiritual enemies-much worse than Pharaoh; and from the yoke and curse of the law-far worse than the yoke of servitude in Egypt. This yearly sacrifice was to teach them that Christ would die once for all: Once in the world he should offer himself; and by his one offering for ever perfect all that are chosen out of the world, or sanctified; that is, set apart in the decree of God to be redeemed, saved, and glorified by Christ Jesus; which leads me to my next general head, which is to shew,

Fifthly, The music and melody of their harps, and the cause of it.

Harps were appointed for the Levites by David. Instrumental and vocal music were to go together in the worship of God: "And David spake to the chief of the Levites to appoint their brethren to be the singers with instruments of music, psalteries and harps, and cymbals, sounding, by lifting up the voice with joy," 1 Chron. xv. 16. Though harps were in vogue long before the days of David; Jubal, in the days of Adam, had "children that could handle the harp and organ," Gen. iv. 21. Laban talked to Jacob of sending him away with "mirth, and with songs, with tabret and with harp," Gen. xxxi. 27. And we read of a "company of prophets in the days of Saul, coming down from the high place, with psaltery, and a tabret, and a pipe, and an harp before them," 1 Sam. x. 5. These harps were used in the worship of God, and were typical of the heavenly music of believing hearts in gospel times: "When the church of God should be as Eden - as the very garden of the Lord; joy and gladness being found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody," Isa. li. 8.

The melody or music mentioned in my text, seems to be used on three occasions: 1st. At the coronation of the King of kings and the conquests he was sure to gain over his own and his church's enemies: "And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts, saying, 'Come and see.' And I saw, and behold a white horse, and he that sat on him had a bow, and a crown was

given unto him, and he went forth conquering, and to conquer," Rev. vi. 1, 2. Here we have the Saviour as the Lord of hosts, or God of armies, mounted. The colour and undaunted courage of the horse represents the purity, the swiftness, and the irresistible force of the gospel of salvation in its rapid progress; a mighty salvation is compared to the swiftness and undaunted courage of this warlike animal: "Was the Lord displeased with the rivers? [of Nilus or Jordan.] Was thine anger against the rivers? Was thy wrath against the [red] sea, that thou didst ride upon thine horses, and thy chariots of salvation?" Hab. iii. 8.

2dly. The Lord is represented as having a bow in his hand, which is his word: "Thy bow was made quite naked, according to the oaths of the tribes, even thy word," Hab. iii. 9. This bow, being the word of Christ, is to shew the convincing and convicting power that goes to sinners' hearts by the Spirit from the Publication of it. This piercing and penetrating force is often compared to arrows sent from this bow: "The arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit: the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me," says Job, vi. 4.

3dly. The Saviour is represented as having "a crown given unto him;" which shews his coronation in heaven, and is a fulfilment of this prophecy: And thou, profane, wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end; thus saith the Lord God, remove the diadem, and take off the crown: This shall not be the same; exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it; and it shall be no more, until he comes whose right it is; and I will give it him," Ezek. xxi. 25, 26, 27. And who can this be, that has a right to David's crown and diadem, but Christ, who was the fruit of loins, according to the flesh, raised up to sit on his throne?" Acts, ii. 30. "As a mighty horn of salvation in the house of God's servant David," Luke, i. 69. "Who, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it and to establish it with judgment and justice for ever, the zeal of the Lord of hosts," having not only promised, but "performed this," Isa. ix. 7. Thus the cause of this music in my text is, the coronation of Christ in heaven, he is "King of kings and Lord of lords." And secondly, on account of the wonderful conquests he should achieve in behalf of his church, as appears by the following account; which serves to shew us, that those reprobates who resist the "bow of God," and oppose the "sword of the Spirit," are numbered to the sword of war, and "fall under the slain;" which appears from the "troop horse" and his "war colour," that goes forth after the "stately White one." "And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, 'Come, and see.' And there went out another horse that was red; and power was given to him that he should take peace from the earth, and that they should

kill one another; and there was given unto him a great sword," Rev. vi. 3, 4.

The next horse represents famine, a natural consequent of war. Before an army, a "fruitful land is represented as the garden of Eden, but behind it, a desolate wilderness," Joel, ii. 3. An army is like the Egyptian "locust, it leaves nothing green," Exod. x. 15; which is represented by the black colour of this horse, and by the "balances" of his rider. "And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo, a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, a measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny," Rev. vi. 5, 6.

The next vision shews the dreadful effects of war and famine, and the certain destruction that sinners bring on their souls, as well and famine on their bodies, by their rebellion against Christ Jesus. This horse is Destruction, with Death on his back, and hell at his heels: "And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the fourth beast say, 'Come and see'. And I looked, and behold a pale horse; and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him," Rev. vi. 7, 8. Thus the beasts and elders seeing the coronation of Christ, and having obtained salvation by him; and seeing the wars, famine, destruction, and damnation that attended their rebellious persecutors and opposers, sing this glorious anthem, and make this wonderful melody with their harps.

These harps are used again, at a complete victory obtained over the Pope, and the "whore of Babylon" (called Jezebel), by faith in the blood of the Lamb; both over their malice, and over their errors, on which account they are called virgins, "said to be not defiled with women," Rev. xiv. 4; that is, "they had not been corrupted, nor defiled, by committing fornication with Jezebel, nor taken with her painted face," 2 Kings, ix. 30; Rev. ii. 20; nor with the "whore of Babylon, with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication," Rev. xvii. 2.

These harps are used by those that "stand on the sea of glass" which is the gospel dispensation, in allusion to the "glass sea made by Moses" for the priests to wash in; which, on the account of the pureness, clearness, and heart-warming comforts of the gospel dispensation, is compared "to a sea of glass mingled with fire," Rev. v. 2; the gospel being compared to a glass, through which the believer looks till "he is changed into the image of Christ from glory to glory," 2 Cor. iii. 18.

The saints of God are represented as standing here: Christ the sum and substance of the gospel, is our sea, layer, "or fountain open for sin and uncleanness," by whom we are cleansed and renewed; and standing on this sea of glass, represents the saints as having got the victory over the pope, or antichrist; over his image, or ecclesiastical power; over his mark in the forehead or hand, which many receive to save their lives. This double mark in the hand and forehead, represents first, the oath of allegiance to him, to defend him in his villainy; or in the 2000 forehead, is openly to espouse his cursed cause; but those that stand on this sea had overcome both the beast and the whore; they had not been conquered by the one, nor defiled by committing fornication with the others and therefore "they stand on the sea of glass, with the harps of God in their hands," Rev. xv. 2.

In short, the Saviour, as the only mediator between God and man, had took the book of the law, and preached it, fulfilled it, magnified it, and redeemed his people from the curse of it. As a prophet he had taken the book of life and published it, and both were gone forth: "The law was gone forth out of Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." It was on the coronation of Christ, his ascension to his throne, and the reception of this book of the Revelation, or the copy of his kingdom, that the beasts, elders, and angels, sing, their anthems, and sound these harps which leads me to my sixth general head, which is a description of "Their golden vials," and why so called.

1st. Let it be observed, that under the old law there was a golden table, and many more sacred things, which are mentioned in this admirable book of the Revelation: "For there was a tabernacle made, the first wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shew-bread; which is called the sanctuary," Heb. ix. 2. This court prefigured Christ in his state of humiliation, and the church in its militant state; where the candlestick represented the church, Rev. i. 20. The golden table, typified "the fleshly tables of the believers' hearts, where the law is written by the Spirit of the living God," 2 Cor. iii. 3; and in which " Christ dwells by faith," Eph. iii. 17. The shew-bread represented Christ "the bread of life, that a man may eat thereof and never die," John, vi. 50: this shew-bread is called the "bread of faces," which likewise prefigures the saints of God, "who being many are one bread," 1 Cor. x. 17 and, by feeding on Christ by faith, they shall appear at last in the true tabernacle, or heaven itself, and in the presence of God, or before his face; blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God," Matt. v. 8.

On this "golden table" on which was set the golden candlestick," representing the church of God with its six branches," or the seven churches of Asia," Rev. i. 4, were set some "golden vials, or "bottles," filled with "incense;" as are mentioned by Josephus in his histories of the Jews, and in the second chapter of Esdras; which golden vials full of incense prefigured the hearts of believers, who are blessed with "the spirit of grace and supplication." "And this was the number of them, a thousand golden cups, and a thousand of silver; censers of silver, twenty nine; vials of gold, thirty," I Esdras, ii. 13. Mention is made again of this mysterious article: "And the table of shew-bread, and the pouring vessels, and the vials, and the censers of gold, and the veil; all which be [Antiochus] pulled off," Macc. i. 22. This was to fulfil an ancient prophecy concerning, Antiochus, who was to "magnify himself even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily sacrifice was to be taken away, and the place of God's sanctuary to be cast down," Dan. viii. 11. Thus it appears that the golden vials in my text are mentioned in allusion to the vials that were placed in the sanctuary of the Lord, which were made of gold, and filled with incense. These golden vials of sweet incense, being placed on the golden table in the sanctuary, served to typify the spiritual prayers that should go up from the fleshly tables of believing hearts in gospel times, when the divine fire of love from Christ the altar, should make prayer a rich perfume; when the church should become the true tabernacle that God himself pitched, and in which the Spirit of grace and supplication would reside, as in his own sanctum.

Sometimes in scripture a believing heart, blessed with the unction of the Holy Ghost, is called the vessel of a "lamp with oil, but the wise took oil in their vessels;" which divine unction, feeding, the believer's profession, "makes him a burning and a shining light in the world;" yea it causes his light to shine before men," and his good works to appear in the sight of them.

Sometimes a believing heart filled with the comforts of the Spirit is compared to "new wine in new bottles," Matt. ix. 17; and that on the account of the unutterable joy and delight which the believer feels and experiences in communion with the Saviour, which makes religion the delight of his soul, and the joy of his heart.

But in the words of my text, a tried, believing, inspired heart, is called a "golden vial," &c. which I will attempt to explain to you in the following manner.

1 St. Why called a vial.

2dly. Why a golden one, and

3dly. What the odours are.

First, A believing or faithful heart filled with odours, which are said to be the "prayers of saints," is called "a golden vial" of prayers, to distinguish a believer's prayers from the petitions of a mere formalist, whose prayers are in his book, in his pocket, or else carried after him under the arm of his footman, that every body may see that the master is come, to work, or to perform his irksome task. There is a difference between a praying heart and a "prayer book;" a "vial of odours," and a pocket of papers are two things; for want of these "vials of odours" the Lord complains; "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart (there is the vial) is far from me. But in vain they do worship me," Matt. xv. 8, 9.

The golden vials full of odours, called the prayers of saints, are intended to distinguish them from the hasty and violent devotions of an alarmed hypocrite, who moves by fits and starts, just as the fears of death or gripes of conscience rouse him. God ever hears from him unless he is convulsed: "Will God hear his cry when trouble cometh upon him? Will he delight himself in the Almighty? Will he always call upon God?" Job. xxvii. 9, 10. No, "in their affliction they will seek God early," Hosea, v. 15; and say, "arise and save us," Jer. ii. 27. Many vows and prayers are put up, "which is compassing, their maker about with lies," or flattering with their lips, or speaking "with a double heart," Psalm xii. 2. But when his deliverance is obtained, they say, we are lords, we will come no more nigh thee, Jer. ii. 32. We may say of such violent devotions, as we say of some people's love, it is too hot to hold. "O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee? For your goodness is as the morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away," Hosea, vi. 4.

All these prayers spring from the fear of damnation; not from any hatred to sin, love to God, or desire after holiness. "The sinners in Zion are afraid, fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites, who among us shall dwell with devouring fire, who shall dwell with everlasting burnings," Isa. xxxii. 14.

The golden vials of odours distinguish the spiritual worship of saints from the pompous shew of devotion, which is carried on by thousands only for the sake of applause, a livelihood, or a benefice. The wolf is obliged to put on the sheep's skin, before he can shear the sheep or get at the fleece: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing," Matt.

vii. 15. "Woe unto you scribes and pharisees, hypocrites, for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers; therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation," Matt. xxiii. 14. But the believer has got the spirit of prayer in his heart; it lies not in his book only, as the formalist's; nor in a storm, as the convulsed hypocrite; nor in his mouth only, as the scribe; but all his devotions spring from the spirit, out of a tried, purified, and believing heart; prayers bottled up in his golden vial will keep as long as the believer lives, and will be acceptable to God, through Christ Jesus, as long as there is a believer in the world "Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer," Psalm xix. 14.

2dly. A believing heart is called a "golden vial," because of the many fiery trials that he feels: God has chosen his people in the furnace of affliction, Isa. xlvi. 10; and has promised "to purify them as silver is purified, and to try them as gold is tried," Zech. xiii. 9; and to "make a man," by this means, "more precious than the golden wedge of Ophir," Isaiah, xlii. 12. It is common in scripture to call faith, faithfulness, or the trial of faith, by this name gold, which is the most weighty and most valuable of all metals, and requires the greatest heat to purify it: Hence you read of "the gold becoming dim, and of the most fine gold being changed," Lam. iv. 1; and of "the faithful city becoming an harlot" Isa. i. 21. You read of the Saviour's being "girt about the paps with a golden girdle," Rev. i. 13. "faithfulness is the girdle of his reins," Isa. xi. 5. You read of the trial of our "faith being, much more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire," I Pet. i. 7. And of the Saviour's counselling, the Laodiceans "to buy of him gold tried, that they might be rich," Rev. iii. 18; it means, "tried faith," God having "chosen the poor of this world rich in faith," James, ii. 5. To be short, a man whose, "heart is searched and tried," Rev. ii. 23; a heart "purified by faith," Acts, xv. 9, and fixed in humble confidence on the Lord (for "it is with the heart that man believeth unto righteousness"), is this "golden vial" in my text; 'tis an honest, sound, tried heart, purified by faith, and influenced by the Holy Ghost, and prayers springing from such an heart, are compared to "sweet incense," in "golden vials:" "Let my prayer be set before thee as incense," saith the Psalmist, Psalm cxli. 2; and such prayers are as "sweet incense," and the Lord delights in them; "Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice, sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely," Song ii. 14. These spiritual prayers in the heart being, compared to "vials of odours," is to teach us - that both the vial and the odours will keep - gold will not rust - odours will not stink - they are like a mixture of various perfumes corked up in a bottle, and we may say of this "vial of perfumes," as the Saviour does in the parable of the bottle of

wine. "But new wine must be put into new bottles, and both are preserved," Matt. ix. 17.

3dly. Saints' prayers may be compared to odours, in allusion to the ointment made for the consecration of Aaron and his sons; "Take thou also unto thee principal spices, of pure myrrh, five hundred shekels; and of sweet cinnamon half as much, even two hundred and fifty shekels; and of sweet calamus, two hundred and fifty shekels; and of cassia, five hundred shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary; and of oil-olive, an hin; and thou shalt make it an oil of holy ointment," Exod. xxx. 23. 24. This olive oil, and the various spices, most sweetly prefigured the blessed unction of the Spirit of all grace. That as Aaron and his sons, and the tabernacle, were anointed therewith, so the blessed Saviour, who was anointed with the fullness of the Spirit, shed abroad a little of this perfumed unction on his church and people, which is no small pleasure to them, for it is this "ointment and perfume that rejoices the heart," Prov. xxvii. 9. And of this the Saviour takes particular notice: "Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant?" Song iii. 6.

Saints' prayers may be called odours, from the various graces that attend real prayer. The saint of God is commanded to "come with boldness to the throne of grace." He prays to a God that he knows, and therefore "worships him (accordingly) in the beauty of holiness:" He comes with reverence, with filial fear, life and fervour; he "prays in the Spirit, and with the understanding also." He asks in faith - pleads the promises - importunes and wrestles hard; he prays in hope, and in expectation of being heard and answered; concludes with submission to the will of his God, and adds watching and waiting to his petitions. He prays for himself and for others, confesses his sins, craves what he needs, and blesses God for what he has got; and "with such sacrifices God is well pleased." There is the flame of divine love in his heart, fervent desires rise high towards heaven, and the approbation of God to such prayers is as conspicuous as it was to the "wise men's offering," which consisted of "gold, frankincense, and myrrh," which was approved by a vision from heaven, telling them "not to return to Herod, but to go into their own country another way," Matt. i. 12.

These "vials of odours" are called "the prayers of saints;" which differ much from an insensible sinner "saying his prayers," or what is commonly called "reading of prayers." The golden vial is a "new heart," a "tried heart," and a "believing heart," all which are God's gifts. The spirit of grace and of supplication is a blessing promised in the covenant of grace,

therefore both the vials and the odours are the gifts of God, and the saints receive them. All human compositions are intended by the subtlety of the Devil to set the sinner up in business for himself, that he may not be beholden to his God for the "preparations of his heart and the answer of his tongue," Prov. xvi. 1; and as long as he can trade with human wares there is no fear of his going to God for assistance, for he is sure to be the sinner's last shift; nor will he ever go there till his stock in trade is exhausted. The fool that begun the tower at his own expense without counting the cost, went on till all his stock was expended, himself ruined and others mocking at his vain attempt, before he left off. And it is much to be feared, and this I will be bold to affirm, that God has awfully deceived me in the matter of prayer, if many thousands that are now swaddled up in a form of prayer without the spirit, will not in the great day be found calling in vain for this "oil in their lamps," or these "odours" in the "vials;" without which the lamp will go out in a snuff, and instead of a "sweet smell [of odours] behold a stink." The "vain repetitions" of the heathens are forbidden. Seek the blessed Spirit of God to help your infirmities in prayer: God loves the simple prayers of his saints; they are melody in his ears, and an odour of a sweet smell: "Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; sweet is thy voice, and the countenance is comely," Song, ii. 14. I come now to describe a saint.

A saint is a person chosen in Christ Jesus, and in due time Gathered unto him, and made partaker of his Spirit; hence, You read of their being "sanctified in Christ Jesus, and called to be saints," 1 Cor. i. 2; that is, by virtue of their union with him they have sanctification in him, and are sanctified by him, and by his Spirit "called to be saints." They are made willing, by his power, persuaded by the spirit of faith, and secretly moved by the love of God to approach and close in with Christ for life and salvation. Every real believer is a saint; for he is purified by his faith, and by faith he li 38d ves: hence you read of Saul's persecuting the believers, which is called "doing much evil to the saints," Acts, ix. 13. In short, a saint is a believer in Christ, who is a partaker of his Spirit, maintains a close walk and keeps up a communion and fellowship with his Lord, lives in the fear of him and in good conscience toward him; he is chosen out of the world, and separated from it; though in it, he is not of it; he is warmly attached to his Lord's cause, is diligent in the means of his appointment, orders his steps by God's word, and follows his Lord in the regeneration. Such souls the Lord hath sanctified, and such souls will ever sanctify him. May God make and keep you all of this happy number for the sake of him that came into this world to seek and to save that which was lost. Amen and Amen.

The Servant of the Lord Described and Vindicated.

William Huntington (1745-1813)

"And the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves."- 2 Tim 2:24, 25.

THE apostle dedicates this and the former epistle to Timothy, of whom in the bowels of Christ he seems remarkably fond. He styles him his own son in the faith; not only because he had begotten him in the bonds of the gospel, for in this sense he had many sons, but because there seemed so much of the spiritual image and heavenly likeness of the father about him."ñ "I trust to send Timotheus; for I have no man like-minded, who will naturally care for your state," Phil. ii. 20, and because of his dutiful deportment and diligent attendance and readiness to assist his venerable father in the word and work of the Lord", But you know the proof of Timothy, that as a son with the father he hath served with me in the gospel," verse 22. And because there seemed so strong an affection in Timothy to his aged sire in the faith, with whom he could seldom part dry eyed, "I thank my God (says Paul the aged), whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day; greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy," 2 Tim. i. 1, 2.

When the apostle wrote this epistle he was about taking his leave of the world, and of his dearly beloved son. It was written just before Paul: as 2000 brought before Nero the emperor the second time, where he received sentence and lost his head, but not his covenant head. Paul was aware that his departure would greatly affect Timothy; and the removal of him who had been so long set for the defence of the gospel, would open a way for the second in command to appear at the front, and in the hottest of the battle; he therefore labours hard to comfort him, counsel him, and

caution him; he advertises him and advises him, instructs and encourages him.

He comforts him by telling him of the unfeigned faith that was in him, which dwelt first in his grandmother and in his mother, and Paul was persuaded that it dwelt in him also. He informs him that God had not given him the spirit of fear, but of power, to support and fortify; of love, to enlarge, attract, and embolden; and of a sound mind, to keep him heavenly, steadfast in the truth, and valiant for it. He counsels him not to be ashamed of the testimony of the Lord, or of the gospel which the Lord himself had testified; nor to be ashamed of Paul the Lord's prisoner, who was then imprisoned for the sake of his Lord and his word, and to keep a good conscience toward him.

He counsels him to be a partaker of the afflictions of the gospel, or of the cruelties that men or devils might be permitted to inflict on the adherents to it, knowing that if he suffered with Christ he should reign with him.

He cautions him to beware of Alexander the coppersmith, who had done him much evil, and greatly withstood Paul and his gospel, which I suppose was done before the tribunal of Nero. He cautions him against tickling itching ears, that will be calling for candour, who will require heaps of teachers to scratch them, none being able long to please.

He advertises him that the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; that many will be lovers of themselves, and envy ever faithful servant that the Lord owns as rivals of their own honour; covetous, aiming more at the fleece than the flock; at a stock in hand, independent of Providence, instead of the good of souls; boasters of their own merit and carnal learning; proud, wearing long robes, despising the poor and illiterate, attempting to affect the passions of depraved nature by cunning artifice and the empty sound of eloquent oratory; unthankful for the spoils their profession brings in; and unholy in heart and life; without natural affection for them that eclipse their glory; truce-breakers, who swear and vow to preach the doctrines of the Lord, and then turn arminians; false accusers, calling other antinomians when themselves are nothing else; incontinent, aiming more at old widows and their pockets than at espousing souls to Christ or making them rich in faith; fierce opposers of the illiterate ones that God sends out; despisers of those that ago made good by the Holy Ghost; traitors, who will betray half the truths of the Bible to swim in the stream of applause; pawn conscience, and expose it to damnation, for the empty titles of candid men. or men of moderate

principles; heady or headstrong, not against errors, nor in defence of truth, but against others in behalf of their own honour; how can they believe that receive honour one of another, and not that honour that cometh from God only? high minded, not in heavenly things, but aiming at high and lofty phrases, to please the worldly wise, embalm the pharisee, charm the hypocrite, and deceive the simple with swelling words of vanity; making a pompous appearance, climbing in dress to the height of the session, to live in a lofty stile, associating with those of the highest rank, and disdain to condescend to men of low degree; lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; men that can set and play glees upon a harpsichord for two hours together, and Men get into a pulpit and preach against party spirit, and prove all that he says by the chords of his instrument; having a form o godliness, desiring to mimic the learned and dignified priest, using service-hooks for the want of spiritual matter to serve with; denying the power of godliness in others, calling it enthusiasm and antinomianism, in order to bring the grace of God, the servants of God, and divine inspiration, into contempt; from such Paul bids his son turn away, lest they should corrupt him. They creep into houses, to prejudice the minds of people against the servants of the Lord, as they of the circumcision used to do, who subverted whole houses; ever learning scraps of Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus.

Paul advises his son to flee youthful lusts, to follow righteousness in heart and life; faith also, the object of it, the doctrines of it, the grave of it, the exercise of it, and the life of it. Charity, or love to God as the supreme object; and to the saints, the objects of God's love, or to all that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth; and to follow peace with all that call on the a Lord out of a pure heart; but not with them that call on the Lord to bless their slander, ridicule, or villainy.

He instructs him, telling him that in a great house, as God"; church is, there are not only vessels of gold-that is, there are not only vessels of mercy, with precious and tried faith in them, and vessels of silver, purified and made white; but there are vessels of wood, barren trees, dry sticks, fruitless professors, and withered branches, fit for nothing but fuel; and vessels of earth, without any divine treasure in them, vessels of dishonour; "If a man purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour," sanctified and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work.

Paul encourages his son to shew himself approved unto God, that men might see that he was one whom God approved, a workman that needeth

not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth, describing the law and the gospel, the saint and the sinner; giving a portion to seven, and also to eight, Eccl. xi. 2, a portion to the church of God, and to the synagogue of Satan, feeding the family of heaven with milk and meat, and the hardened hypocrite with judgment, Ezek. xxxiv. 16. Thus much by way of introduction to my text. I shall now consider the words in order as they lay before me, which are introduced thus: but foolish or unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. "And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient; in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves:" which for method's sake, I will endeavour to do in the following manner.

1st. Describe the servant of the Lord in contradistinction from those who call themselves so, or are by others falsely so called.

2dly. Shew you, first in the negative, and then in the positive, what is not, and what is meant by the word strive, in the text; or describe lawful and unlawful strife.

3rdly. Shew you his gentleness, and how all sorts of men will try it more or less.

4thly. Describe his aptness, or aptitude to teach, and the unaptness of pretenders to that work, with the reasons for it.

5thly. Treat of his patience, and describe those who are said to wear it out.

6thly. Define the spiritual meekness in my text, and wherein it differs from the candour of hypocrites, and

7thly, and lastly. The persons with whom this meekness is to be used, namely, those that oppose themselves.

1st I am to describe the Lord's servant in contradiction from those who call themselves so, or are by others falsely so called. All are not the Lord's servants who call him master; Judas called him so, and yet was a devil, and at last the devil his master entered into him, and let all men see whose servant he was; he was not without candour to himself, not the appearance of good works; he reprov'd the Saviour, and poor Mary also, the first for permitting, and the latter for making waste of the funeral ointment; pretending great love to the poor, but he aimed at nothing but money, therefore the searcher of all he 2000 arts gratified him with

bearing the bag, or keeping the common stock; which he did not as the Lord's servant, to relieve the poor followers, and defray the travelling expenses of the Lord's retinue, but to act the part of a thief, make a private purse for himself, starve the family of God, and sell the master of the household for thirty pieces of silver, in order to get a stock in hand, independent of Providence, and to prevent the perilous adventure of going out to preach without purse or scrip.

2dly. They are not all the Lord's servants who call him by that name. Many will say unto him in the great day, Lord, Lord! Who will never be admitted into the family. It is true no man can call Jesus Lord, or his Lord, that is, with the testimony of a good conscience, but by the Holy Ghost: yet the root of all evil, the love of money, has led the devil's servants to call him so, while scripture and conscience have given them the lie to their face. Balaam said unto Balak's servant, "If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord my God to do more or less," Numb. xxii. 18. Yet his will and inclination lead him to tempt the Almighty with a seven times sevenfold sacrifice; and it is well known, that he would have sold himself to the devil, and the heritage of heaven also, for an independence; or else, why did he so often go to seek for enchantments, if he did not approve of the devil's service, seek the devil's aid, and depend on his arm for wisdom, for support, and direction? It was with a shew of much candour for Balak and the incestuous offspring of Lot, that he was brought to acknowledge that "God was not man that he should lie" as himself could, "nor the son of man that he should repent of blessing Israel," as himself could heartily repent for labouring so long for so little profit.

It is true, he knew something of the holy law of God, and of God's hatred to sin, by the advice that he gave to Balak, in order to set a trap for Israel, to entangle them in sin, and awake the wrath of God against them, as it is written, "Behold these caused the children of Israel through the council of Balaam to commit trespass against the Lord in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation," Numb. xxxi. 16. Nor was Balaam without some glimpse of the Saviour; the poor ass upon which he rode had seen the angel of the covenant, and the flaming sword of justice drawn against her rider, which is more than one half of our present evangelists (falsely so called) have seen; who, like the foolish prophets, follow their own spirit and have seen nothing," Ezek. xiii. 3. Balaam had perceived his eyes to be opened; he had seen the sword of justice in the visions of God; fell into a trance at the sight of it; saw the star of Jacob; the destruction of Moab; the damnation of Amalek; the victory of Israel; the glorious death of the righteous, and desired that his last end might be like

theirs. But his candour for. Moab, and his love for independency swallowed up all; he counselled Balak to cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel, and in his heart, he loved the wages of unrighteousness; which ended his candour and love to independency by the sword of Israel, and brought him to the company of those enchanters, whose enchantments he had so often sought, both by prayer and sacrifice.

3dly. A man may have a ministerial gift, which may be much admired, and much followed, and whatever use it may be of to the church, in order to purge the flour, and blow away the chaff from the wheat, or draw away the hypocrites from the upright, yet we know, those that run before they are sent shall not profit the people at all, Jer. xxiii. 32, they are called wells, but there is no drawing water out of them, for they are called wells without water; they are called clouds, on the account of their pompous and popular appearance, but there is no water for them that are thirsty, nor floods for the dry ground, for they are clouds without rain: they are called musical instruments, none give more sound than they do, but no quickening power attends their noise, for they are said to be instruments without life-giving sound, so that no spiritual soldier knows what is piped or harped, and as the sound is uncertain, who can prepare for the battle? they are called stars, as the seven angels of the seven churches are, but no vessel of mercy can steer his course by them; they know nothing of the day star, or of the morning star, nor of him that maketh the seven stars and Orion, and turns the shadow of death into the morning; but they are called wandering stars, compared to glutinous vapours, exhaled from the bogs of the earth by the rays of the sun, and cast down with their false rays, by the nightly damps of the atmosphere.

They are called lamps, which serve to light others, but always go out themselves about mid-night, or before the morning appears, which will be the midnight cry of all hypocrites, and no wonder, when there is no oil in their vessels; and if they have no oil for themselves, there is no likelihood of poor men, who fall among the thieves, namely, Satan, sin, and death; there is no oil in these vessels to pour into the wounds of a bleeding conscience, no new wine in these old bottles for those that are of an heavy heart; their own lamps are gone out, nor is there any of the oil of joy, which is to be given in exchange for mourning, much less can the garments of praise be brought forth in exchange for the spirit of heaviness.

Whatever use these gifts may be of to alarm insensible consciences, or purge the church of God from light, vain, and trifling hypocrites, it is plain there is nothing but damnation for them in the end, whether they make use of their talent or pound, or whether they lay it up in a napkin. If the prince

give a gift to one of his servants, it shall (without fail) go out, or return to the prince at the year of jubilee, Ezek. xlvi. 17. The servant abideth not in the house ever, but his son's inheritance shall be his son's for them, Ezek. xlvi. 16, the son abideth in the house ever.

And it is clear that some of these servants will accuse the master himself of the want of candour in the great day: here, says one, is thy pound which I have kept laid up in a napkin. This man seems to be one that had waited on ladies or attended a sideboard, yet he falls to accusing the master; "I knew that thou wast an austere man," one of a bad spirit destitute of candour; "reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strewed." You see this man contended for candour, though he owned the Lord had never sowed or strewed any thing in his heart; which serves to show, that those who make the greatest stir about universal charity, or candour, are the most destitute of grace. The Saviour answers him on the ground of his own argument; "Thou knewest that I was an austere man, reaping where I had not sowed, and gathering where I had not strewed," thou oughtest therefore to have been the more careful, as thou hadst such a severe master to deal with; "thou oughtest to have put my money into the bank;" yet sticks to the old prophecy as the Prince of Peace, who was to receive his gift again at the Year of liberty, Ezek. xlvi. 17, and therefore adds, "that I might have received mine own gift with usury," Matt. xxv. 27, Luke, xix. 23; but never says a word about receiving the servant who had received the gift, pound, or talent. These are called servants, but neither of these are the servants intended in my text; these are legal servants, servants of sin, and servants of Mammon, though they daringly call the Lord Jesus their Master, their Lord, and their God.

There are others who attend the word of God on purpose to learn to tally about religion; and having no inward Heart-work to attend to, they make great proficiency in the head and tongue, and will learn to prate publicly in prayer; prate I say, because Wisdom calls them prating fools, that shall fall. They will attempt to 2000 call upon God in public prayer in behalf of others before a poor buffeted and tempted soul can beg for himself, or dares to adopt the language of the publican, and say, "God be merciful to me a sinner." This is one of the children that we say are too witty to live; simple souls that have no eyes, and hypocrites that have no feeling, stand astonished at the clapper of his mouth, at his furious zeal, his undaunted courage, and the progress he makes with the unruly member of his head; and no wonder, for there is no strife between the devil and he; Satan knows the kingdom of God is not in word as well as we do, nor is he afraid of the speech of them that are puffed up; if he was, he would be afraid of his own work. Now the common labours of the day begin to be

burthensome to him, and idleness to gain ground; his call to the ministry seems clear; his abilities are sufficient for the pulpit, with a little human scouring, and a few gestures of the body, and some of master Merryman's antic motions with the hand, which may be learnt at certain places of exhibition, at a mountebank stage, or at a play-house, and these are all the qualifications he expects; and it is too often seen that such are admitted into churches by the most wealthy and most graceless of the people. Some of the poor may complain of the want of experience and power, but their attempts are often too feeble; the main supporters approve, and that is enough; and the preacher has nothing to do to endear himself to his friends but to accommodate himself to their humour, rub off the edge of God's sword with a little candour; connive at the sins of his patrons, pay his frequent visits and partake of their innocent amusements, and by these means he picks up a tolerable livelihood; then it is like people like priests; and if any complain of the want of power, they are enthusiasts; if they run away and get their food elsewhere, they are of a party spirit, and want to make divisions; if they mourn after the old deceased pastor who formerly fed them, they are 'bigots; and if they complain of too many hypocrites being taken into the church, their narrow spirit is condemned and candour enforced: and if God takes such a preacher off and sends one that is faithful, he lives as it were in a hornet's nest, unless he can burn these venomous insects out of the hole, or thrash off this chaff.

This man is called a servant in scripture, but not the Lord's servant: he is said to serve not our Lord Jesus Christ but his own belly. Such are like the papist fisherman, who took to study, and made some progress in the languages, on the account of which he was made a monk, and after that a priest of an higher order, and after that a bishop; but through all these scenes of prosperity he would have a net spread upon his table-cloth, to remind him of his mean origin; this mark of his unparalleled humility carried him higher, he commenced cardinal, but still used the net; at last he got into the scorner's chair, and then the net disappeared; and being asked the reason, he replied, "There is no call for the net now, for the fish is caught;" he fished for the popedom, and he knew it was vain to cast the net again. If Demas cannot get a present portion in the church, it is ten to one but he goes into this present evil world again.

There is another sort of servants, who may properly be called time-servers; their service being according to the times in which they live. If they are likely to get into a church that is tolerably sound in the faith, they will act accordingly, preach against their own sentiments, condemn the very doctrines of their own heart, and advance the truths their souls abhor. The first step such a man takes is, to wriggle into the affections of his

people; and when he has gained ground there, then to bring forth a little of the old store of arminianism; but if the brat is too bare, then he covers the nakedness of it by the word grace, or some plain truth; and if this goes clown, then he increases the baneful ingredients according as he perceives the mixture to operate, and by degrees the minds of the people get blinded, the keenness of their appetite abated, their judgment confused, and the great things of God are obscured and hid from their eyes; then he leads them any where; and if any smell him out, and begin to complain, his zeal will be fired, and sharpness must be used; this makes him the object of their fear; and being awed by his sacerdotal countenance, and confounded by his sophistic logic, they are obliged to throw open both heart and conscience to him, while he enshrines himself in the holy place where he ought not; and thug the free and self-will of lordly man becomes the rule of a poor oppressed people, instead of the revealed will of God; the confused judgment of such people is like a weather-cock, and is turned with every wind of doctrine. This man is fit for any company, society, or pulpit. He is a calvinist by turns; an arminian in heart; a baxtarian by fits. and a churchman if occasion requires. His gift is a precious jewel in his own eyes, and whichever way it turns, it prospers, or he prospers by it. He becomes all things to all men indeed, that he may gain the more, not for God, but for himself: This man is called a servant in scripture, but not the servant that is mentioned in my text, for he is said to be a servant of the Lord. But they that preach to please men cannot be the servants of Christ:

Which leads me to consider the second branch of this general head, which is to describe this servant of the Lord, in contradistinction from all others.

1st. He is one that is represented as standing idle in the market-place; perhaps it may mean, that law and conscience were at work within him, and therefore he could not engage in the devil's service as usual; for it is a rare thing to find a sinner idle in this sense. His standing idle, may serve to skew, that the Lord's elect do not set themselves to work or attempt to go into the vineyard, until the master hires them; and they are in general such as no carnal man cares to hire. "Why stand ye here all the day idle?" they reply, "because no man hath hired us: Go ye into the vineyard, and that which is right, that shall ye receive." Here is their command, and the promise both; "go ye, and that which is right shall ye receive." These do not run before they are sent; they take not this office upon themselves until they are called of God as was Aaron; nor are they sent of men; it is the Lord that hires and sends his own servants.

It is true, Satan sends a great many preachers into the world and church both, but it is done to oppose the truth, and the advocates for it, and that in behalf of Satan's interest, on which account they bear their master's name, and are called, "ministers of Satan, whose end is to be according to their works." There are men that make preachers and send them, whom God never sent, nor will ever own; but this is no wonder, for they used to make kings and princes in the same way: "They have made kings," saith God, "but I knew it not, and princes but not by me;" and if they can make kings, why not doctors? But the Lord's servants are called, furnished, and sent by himself. "I am," says Paul, "an apostle, not of man, nor by man, but by Jesus Christ."

The apostle, in the chapter out of which our text is taken, represents the servants of the Lord in a two-fold character; first, the labourer in the vineyard, and, secondly, a good soldier of Jesus Christ. The husbandman that laboureth must be first partaker of the fruits, 2 Tim. ii. 5. The labourer must know the divine husbandman and the principal vine, before he can know any thing of the vineyard, or the branches of it, or be able to work in it. God the father is the chief husbandman, Christ the principal vine, every believer a branch, and the whole church a vineyard. And these things must be known by every labourer, or inferior husbandman, who is called the Lord's servant in my text. "This is life eternal to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." If an experimental knowledge of these things is life eternal, then these things must be known by the Lord's servant before he can labour: who can work that is dead? He that laboureth, says Paul, must first be partaker of the fruits. No preaching Christ crucified, till we know that our old man is crucified with him: a knowledge of this, crucifies us to the world, and the world to us. We must be planted together in the likeness of his death, before we shall know the value of it, and in the likeness of his resurrection also, and be begotten again to a lively hope by it, before we can preach Christ as the "first fruits of them that slept."

He must be partaker of the fruits, before he can labour. He cannot be a spiritual labourer, or a minister of the Spirit, till he is a partaker of the fruits of the Spirit. He must be a partaker of the Spirit of love, be brought to love God, Jesus Christ, his word, and all that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth, before he can be a minister of the Spirit. One glorious fruit of the Spirit is faith, and the Lord's labourers are called faithful servants; but graceless men cannot be called faithful. To hear unbelievers preach faith, seems as great a contradiction as for Python, the devil, to call Paul and Silas servants of the Most High God, which was true, but when he added, that spew unto us the way of salvation, it was a lie, for there is

no salvation for devils. Satan by this shew of candour, expected some lenity to be shewn by the apostle; but Paul was not ignorant of his devices, he paid no respect to his candour, but charged him to come out of the damsel, and then Satan let Paul feel the effects of his spleen and bitterness: he set off into the heart. of the damsel's master, stirred up a mob, and brought the servants of the most high God before the judgment-seat, with this heavy charge, "these men being Jews do exceedingly trouble our city," Acts, xvi. 19, 20.

The husbandman that labours must be a partaker of the fruits; he cannot bring forth good fruits, till his own heart be made good; no man can gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles; he cannot bring forth the fruits of the Spirit till the Spirit be in him, nor can the ministry of a barren soul be fruitful. What knows a carnal man of God's husbandry? Spiritual labourers have the fallow ground of the heart to plough up; thorns of carnal cares and covetousness to grub; clods to break; precious seed to bear; and incorruptible seed to sow; planting and watering to do. He is to enforce fruitfulness; describe sour grapes and wild figs; observe what clusters have a blessing in them and what clusters are bitter; which branch to encourage and which branch to cut at; for which business, none can furnish or qualify us but God himself, nor can there be either success or increase, without his direction and blessing.

Nor is it enough for a man to taste these fruits at his being first sent into the vineyard, he stands in need of them daily. The keepers of the vineyard have one hundred; an hundred fold in this life. It is poor work, keeping a flock and not tasting the milk of the flock. Sad work, to tread the wine-press and suffer thirst, which our Master did; it is dreadful work to keep a vineyard and not taste the fruit of the vineyard, both in a spiritual and temporal sense. In short, the labourer needs fruits and fortitude too, especially as there are so many little foxes that spoil the vines, and are so subtle and busy about them that have tender grapes.

The Lord's servant must serve his master with nothing but what is his master's own. He must plough with his master's heifer; bear his master's yoke; sow his master's seed; go by his master's direction, and aim at his master's honour. He must give no heed to old wives' fables, nor turn aside from the way or the vineyard, though Jezebel the prophetess should attempt to teach the servants of the Lord.

2dly. Paul calls this servant in my text, a good soldier of Jesus Christ. If he is a good soldier, he is enlisted, and, under a divine power on the will, he

becomes a willing volunteer; his encouragement and fortitude arise from the view that he has of the banner of divine and everlasting love being displayed over him, and from the good cheer of the banqueting house. He will make but a poor recruiting serjeant that never received the king's bounty, and unless he is in present pay and good quarters himself, in vain he beats up for volunteers. He that feeds upon Christ and his word, drinks the new wine of the kingdom, and makes God his dwelling-place, will make a good recruiting officer, because he can speak cheerfully, comfortably, feelingly, and knowingly, about the Captain of our salvation, and the glorious privileges of being quartered in the cleft of the rock, of the penny a day promised, and of the king's bounty that is given.

The apostle tells us that this servant of the Lord is a warrior; "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life." He that kneeled down to drink water at the river Jordan was sent back as not fit for the field, none but those that lapped like a dog were to engage in the Lord's battle, Judges, vii. 5. If bowing the knee to the world renders a man unfit for this military service, what shall we say of soldiers that aim at nothing else but the things of this life, savour not the things of God, but those of men, and load themselves with thick clay?

This servant or soldier is chosen by his Lord, and to please his Lord should be his chief aim. That he may please him who has chosen him to be a soldier, says Paul, he is to receive all his orders from the Captain of his salvation, do all in his name, depend on, his strength, go by his rules, and use his spiritual weapons. Our Captain has not made any old women commanders-in-chief of his forces, nor has he committed the word of command to them; this would look as if the God of armies had left the camp; he suffers not a woman to be heard in his household, much less in his wars. If Jezebel choose four hundred of Satan's soldiers, and keep them at her own table, and use them in her service, they will be expected to obey her orders, because she chooses, enlists, and feeds them. But this servant in my text belongs to another master, and another troop, the Lord chooses him, and he is to please him that hath chosen him to be a soldier.

This servant or soldier is commanded to endure hardness. There are at times bard labour and hard fare; soldiers are seldom much regarded, though they are, under God, the defence of a nation, and much looked to in public calamity. So a good soldier of Christ Jesus is often sought after and looked to, when conscience is besieged, diseases make inroads on a sinner's vitals, and the devil is discovered in full possession of the fort and palace, and when the midnight cry comes, these soldiers will appear to be as Elisha was to king Joash, "the chariot of Israel and the horsemen

thereof." The lamps and watchfulness of the Lord's servants have kept them in readiness, while the foolish virgins, who have contented themselves with the law as the light of their feet, and the only lamps of their path, will go out, they having paid no regard to the salvation of God, which is a lamp that burneth; no regard to the oil of gladness, nor the oil of joy, which alone can keep it burning; this light of the righteous rejoiceth, when the lamp of the wicked is put out."

A soldier of Christ has many hard speeches to bear, cruel mockings to endure, hard hearts to besiege, hardened rebels to engage, and unrelenting rebels to oppose and resist, who neither sweat nor tire. These, with their human allies, will continue to compass about the beloved city, nor will they ever raise the siege, till Zion is established in heaven, and they imprisoned in hell.

This servant of the Lord, in his military character, is commanded to be 2000 strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. If so, he must be one that is acquainted with the influence of grace, and is in union with Christ Jesus; no man can be strong in grace that hover felt it, nor in Christ Jesus that is not united to him. A speculative knowledge of Christ, and a barren notion of grace, will afford little support or comfort to those whose eyes never saw, whose ears never heard, and whose hands never handled the word of life. Grace must be upon him that is the Lord's servant; if sin be subdued in him, it is grace that subdues it, and grace shall reign through the righteousness of Christ to eternal life; sin will have dominion over those that are destitute of grace, and such are the servants of sin, not servants of the Lord. If they are strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, great grace must be unto them, and Christ must be formed in them, and be enjoyed by them as the hope of glory, or they cannot be strong either in grace or in him. The Lord is the strength of his people, and his strength is made perfect in their weakness; for he strengthens them with his Spirit's might in the inner man; such a one is strong in grace, and well he may, when the Lord is the strength of his heart and his portion for ever.

To be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, is to have the faith of God's elect, which is a faith produced by the operation of God, firmly fixed on Christ, and which worketh by a feeling sense of God's everlasting love, shed abroad in the heart such servants or soldiers will ascribe all their victories to this; saying, nay, "but in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that hath loved us"

The apostle advises this servant or soldier of the Lord, to "put on the whole armour of God that he may be able to stand." He allows a servant of the Lord to put no confidence in the flesh; no trust in old wives' fables; no confidence in human wisdom, nor in excellency of speech, or swelling words of vanity; to yield to nothing but a divine demonstration, nor to submit to any thing short of spiritual power; that our "faith may not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God:" and all this caution is, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect, and to exclude the glory of salvation from an arm of flesh; for a jealous God will never give his glory to another, nor his praise to popish images.

The apostle tells us that God's armour must be put on, that we may be able to stand and withstand. No helmet is to be wore by the Lord's servants, but Christ the hope of Israel, the hope of salvation, and the hope of glory. No breastplate but the righteousness of God by faith; the righteousness that God the Saviour wrought out, that God the Father accepts and imputes, and faith puts on, which is in Christ, whose name is Jehovah our Righteousness. No shield but that which Abraham and David took; "the Lord is my shield and the lifter up of my head." No sword but that of the Spirit, which is the word of God. No prayers but those indited by the spirit of supplication. No ammunition shoes, but the preparations of the gospel of peace, which assures the heart of an alliance with God though at war with the world; to engage without these, is to make a vain attempt upon this world, or the God of it. The man that engages in God's work while he is a stranger to the fruits of the Spirit, and to Christ the first fruit, is no minister of the New Testament, no evangelist, no minister of the Spirit. He may be an hireling, or a minister of the letter, but no man can partake of his grace, for he has none. He that is a stranger to grace, to Christ, and to his own personal election, is no soldier of Christ Jesus, nor is it likely he should ever please him, because he has not chosen him to be a soldier. Unbelievers cannot fight the good fight of faith, consequently cannot please God as soldiers, for without faith it is impossible to please him; for graceless, unrenewed, unpanoplied men to set themselves against the world, while they are of it, and against sin while in bondage to it, and against the devil while he reigns in their hearts and leads them captive at his will, is like Satan casting out Satan. Keep this servant of the Lord in your eye in this his twofold character, as a labourer in the vineyard, and a good soldier of Jesus Christ, while I dismiss this part of the subject, and pass on to my second general head, which is to shew you; first, in the negative; secondly, in the positive, what is not, and what is meant by the word "strive" in my text, or describe lawful and unlawful strife.

Graceless ministers and empty professors will never strive lawfully; all their strife is in behalf of themselves. Their striving is, either to get a name, get a livelihood, keep a restless conscience quiet, or else, they preach to oppose others and injure them in the work of the Lord, charging them in their sermons with being influenced with antinomianism, party zeal, and a bad spirit, which is in fact charging them with the spirit of the devil; but no wonder, they called the Master of the house Beelzebub, accused him of breaking the law, and profaning the sabbath, both which are antinomianism, and a bad spirit; if the master fared thus, what can the household expect? the servant is not above his Lord. Such indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife, and some also of good will. The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to another's bonds, Phil. i. 15, 16. These can never strive lawfully, because they are destitute of that power that maintains a lawful strife. A labourer in the Lord's vineyard will strive against the errors and desperate profanity of the wicked, notwithstanding the cruel usage, and strong opposition that may be made against him; and the Spirit of God will make them maintain this strife and stand their ground at it as long as he pleases. Noah was an husbandman, and a labourer agreeably to my text, in both senses of the word, for he was a preacher of righteousness, he strove with the antediluvians for upwards of an hundred years, till God put an end to the strife, and caused those that strove with him to perish, Isa. xli. 11, saying, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man, seeing he is flesh," Gen. vi. 3, this is lawful strife.

2dly. When graceless men get into pulpits, they set themselves against the faith of the gospel, being ignorant of it; and therefore in order to keep up their popularity they charge it with licentiousness, and to amuse and blind a simple people, they turn aside to vain jangling, being strangers to gospel consistency, they desire to be teachers of the law, knowing neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm. These set the law against the promises of God, and by their unbelief try to make the faith of God without effect. These are not to be admitted into the houses of the saints, nor are we to bid them God speed, lest we partake of their evil deeds: the saints of God are all to unite as the heart of one man to oppose such as these, and rescue the faith which they want to make void out of their hands, and not to flinch from this work, nor be afraid of the opponents. "Stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel, and in nothing terrified by your adversaries," which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you, of salvation, and that of God, Phil. i. 27, 28; this is lawful strife.

3idly. A labourer in the Lord's vineyard is to enlarge his work as much as possible, and to abide the longest where he sees he La most useful; and as the Lord's labourers have different gifts, one. after this manner and another after that, they are to visit the churches occasionally, and not to be discouraged though here and there a Diotrephes will shut them out, and prate against them with malicious words, in order to keep the pre-eminence, 3 John, 9, 10; and not only visit the churches, but break up fresh ground And endeavour to raise up new plantations, which the 2000 sluggard refuseth to do by reason of the cold. It is often seen that God keeps his servants labouring in dark and barren parts of the earth till they are stocked with large store of experience and knowledge, and then uses them at the opening of the gates and in the high places of the city: yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build on another man's foundation, Rom. xv. 20, but where he was nut named; this is lawful strife.

4thly. A labourer in the Lord's vineyard will often be troubled with the little foxes that spoil the vines; which foxes are false prophets; "thy prophets are like the foxes in the deserts," Ezek. xiii. 4, called foxes because of their cunning and subtlety, and the stink that they make in the nostrils of God. These bring in damnable heresies to oppose the truth, and try to undermine the walls of salvation, prate against divine inspiration, and cavil at faith and a good conscience; whilst separating the vile from the precious, is doing the work of a party spirit; declaring the whole counsel of God faithfully, is doing the work of a bad spirit; to hold the mystery of faith in a pure conscience, is to be an antinomian; to hold Christ as the end of the law for righteousness, and the end of the commandment, to be charity; and both these in the heart by the Spirit as the righteousness of the law fulfilled in them, is making void the law; enforcing a union with Christ, and a walk in the Spirit, is setting aside the rule of life; and preaching the grace of God, is called rocking the cradle of the devil; preaching one's own testimony is preaching self; refusing confederacy with the wicked is singularity; and he must be taken down in a public pulpit that magnifies his office: while preaching to please men is doing the work of an evangelist; preaching philosophy is doing the work of a learned divine; he that preaches the principles of flesh and blood is a man of moderation; and he that gives up the truth, gives into errors, connives at slander, and justifies the wicked, is a man of candour. I cannot think but that these things will go by other names in the great day of judgment; I think it will be called walking in craftiness, and handling the word of God deceitfully. These men take away the hedge of God's vineyard, and let the with boar out of the forest into it.

The Lord look down in pity and visit this vine, and enable his servants to stand in the gaps, and make up the breaches; for there are many who are trying to remove the bounds that God has set, and the fences that discriminating grace has made, and so to lay the in closures of God level with the common fields, barren heaths, and parched places of the wilderness, which shall never know when good cometh. To separate the vile from the precious is God's command; and to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, is the duty of every Christian, as well as the ministerial servants of the Lord; in this work they are to stand like an iron pillar or a brazen wall. Though we may have some cause to complain, as Jeremiah did, "Wo is me my mother that thou hast borne me a man of strife and contention," Jer. xv. 10; yet this is lawful strife.

5thly. It is usual for those who are called out of the common way, or raised up for any particular work, if they are useful, to meet with the strongest opposition, sometimes from God's own children, but especially from false brethren. Many opposers had Paul, who crept into houses, especially those of the circumcision, who made it their business to follow him from place to place in order to raise a storm against him. The Saviour's parable was verified when the steward, namely the priestly tribe, was put out of his stewardship; he then lessened the debts of sinners to God, in order to be received into their houses. The apostle complains of such, that they were enemies to the cross of Christ; that they subverted whole houses, teaching things that they ought not; and as they hypocritically laboured in a subterraneous way, the apostle adopted their diligence; he taught the people publicly. and from house to house, endeavouring to warn every man, and teach every man: whereunto "I also labour, striving according to his working which worketh in me mightily," Col. i. 28, 29. This is lawful strife.

6thly. This servant or soldier of the Lord is to endeavour to keep the field, and not like Ephraim, harnessed and carrying bows, turn back in the day of battle. The Lord's soldier must fight a good fight; he must be valiant for truth, and keep both his arms and armour; truth is his shield and buckler, and with this good thing he is never to part, on this he is never to biro his back; "he that is ashamed of me and my word, of hilts will I be ashamed." In defence of truth, and against the enemies of it, "he is to resist unto blood striving against sin," Heb. xii. 4.

7thly. This labourer or soldier is not to regard every outcry that is made against him. When the sword of the Spirit lays open a sinner's heart, or an hypocrite's empty profession, these are times that sinners in Zion are afraid, and fearfulness surprises the hypocrites: "Who among us shall

dwelt with everlasting burnings?" Such as these will cry out against a bad spirit; too much bitterness is complained of these will lay in wait for him that reproves in the gate, crying out, Prophecy smooth things prophesy deceits; cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us; give us a little candour; make us kerchiefs, sew a few pillows under our arm-holes, Ezek. xiii. 18. The servant of the Lord is not to spare the devil for his crying; now is the time for the good soldier to follow his blows, to speak like the piercing of a sword, for the tongue of the wise is health; now is the time to set fire to the hole of the asp, or lay the axe to the root; and if the iron be blunt, he must whet the edge (with prayer), or put forth more strength, and look up for wisdom, which is profitable to direct him where to cut. This is a work that the Lord's servant findeth to do, and he is to do it with all his might; which requires striving, and is lawful strife, because it is opposing them that strive against the Lord, Jer. 1. 24.

8thly. Not only are the servants of the Lord who labour in the word and doctrine commanded to strive, but every awakened sinner, who is compassed about with numberless sins, corruptions, and fears, which bring him into so many straits and difficulties; he is commanded to strive to enter in at the strait gate, notwithstanding the many that will strive to enter in and shall not be able. The people of God are to strive to assist their minister that the Lord sends them, when God has made it manifest in their consciences that he is sent by him; and not stand at the helm and watch to see which way the stream of public applause runs, but to watch the waters of life that make glad the city of God. Professors that aim at nothing but to take the strongest side, act like Alexander the coppersmith, and follow a multitude to do evil, in opposing the advocates for truth contrary to their own judgment and conscience: such thrive in their profession no better than Ahithophel, whose counsel was turned to foolishness, 2 Sam. xv. 31, nor do I see how they can, for they strive against their Maker Isa. xlv. 9, they strive against the priest, Hosea, iv. 4, and they strive against the verdict of their own conscience. The saints of God are to strive to assist the public servants of the Lord in their work: "Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me," Rom. xv. 30. This is lawful striving.

Having shewn you negatively what is not meant in my text, or is lawful striving, I come now to the second branch of this head, which is to shew you positively what is meant, or to describe unlawful strife. "And the servant of the Lord must not strive."

1st. Though it is lawful for every man of God to covet earnestly the best gifts, and to strive to excel for the edifying of the church; yet it is not lawful to slander and heap public reproach on others in order to keep up our own popularity, or to establish it, by belying those that God is pleased to send, much less are we to monopolize the churches of God into our hands, in order to keep others out, for fear of our own honour being eclipsed, much less are we to order churches that others have planted, to give the planter a final dismissal from his own work before they can receive any assistance, as some have done, at Woking in Surrey; this is lording it over our Lord's heritage, and aiming at the garland in an unlawful way. If a man strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned except he strive lawfully, 2 Tim. ii. 5, for men to combine and strive in this manner is altogether unbecoming. "Be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation;" this strife is unlawful, and in this sense, "the servant of the Lord must not strive."

2dly. We must not strive to oppose others in bearing their own testimony for God, nor be offended because they zealously defend the great truths that God has revealed to them, such as, the sovereignty of the Almighty, his personal election of his people, the proper deity of our Lord, particular redemption, and justification unto life by him; as some do who depart from the faith, turn their ears from the truth, and turn to fables, boasting of free-will while they are led captive by the devil at his will; talking of power, while they are servants of sin; and boasting of merit and self-righteousness, while the sentence of the law is in them, and they are accused and condemned by their own thoughts and conscience all the day long. This is opposing God, his witnesses, and the testimony of his word, and taking part with the world, and endeavouring to set the church of God on a level with the wicked. "Let the potsherd strive with the potsherd of this earth, but woe to him that strives with his Maker," Isa. xlv. 9. This striving is unlawful; in this sense, "the servant of the Lord must not strive."

3dly. Setting the law perpetually before the children of God, which has a tendency to terrify weak believers, and to take their mind from the Saviour, as too many do in our days, who make Moses's law to be the truth of Moses's rod, and set it to swallow up all the promises of the gospel, as if the law was against the promise of God, or the promise an enemy to the law. Surely the covenant of grace was in being before the law, and as it is a better covenant, and established upon better promises, one would think (of the two) the covenant of grace ought to have an equal footing, if not the pre-eminence. But we have too many who are alive without the law, the law has not killed them, and being ignorant of the sentence of it, they are not dead to it. The law is to be used lawfully, to awaken careless sinners,

and stop the mouths of proud boasters by bringing them in guilty by the law; whatsoever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped. We are to insist upon the saints ordering their steps in God's word, and on love to the law after the inner man, not to a part thereof, but to the whole will of God; "then shall I not be ashamed when I have respect unto all thy commandments;" but this love to the law after the inner man is nonsense to them who are not acquainted with the new man. Those that can act contrary to the commanding will of the Saviour in the new testament, while they are contending for one chapter in the old, are the worst of antinomians. "He that breaketh the least of these commandments, and teacheth men so," whether by word or example, shall be "accounted least in the kingdom of heaven:" but "whosoever shall do and teach" (do first, and teach afterwards) shall be accounted great. It is vain to enforce the law to others, unless they give us an account of its operation on their own hearts, and a copy of it in their own life. Those that tell us perpetually that the ten commandments are the believer's only and all-sufficient rule of life, seem to give us no account of themselves being quickened; they are for excluding the Saviour's commands, for not one of these has ever mentioned to me one word about the spiritual rule that Christ gave by Paul, which is easily to be accounted for; for spiritual circumcision, the new creature, and faith that worketh by love, are difficult points to handle, therefore it is better to waive the subject, and go to Sinai, for Ishmael has more friends than Isaac; more are the children of the desolate than those of the married wife, and by these means, simple souls are entertained with a vain jangle, which serves to make a stir, employ the minds of the people, give a job to the devil, and raise a multitude to ridicule the faith. We know the ten commandments are not of faith, nor do they give any direction about it; they say nothing about a Saviour, nor promise one, nor do they direct to his blood and righteousness; they know nothing about repentance, they do not point to it, nor give it, nor accept it; it is perfect doing and perfect love that they require. But we are under a better teacher, namely the Spirit of promise, who teaches us to profit, and guides us into all truth; we are taught of God to love one another. The law tells me to love my neighbour as myself, but not better, as the gospel does, which says, we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren; to be offered up upon the service of their faith; to spend and be spent for them. Nor does it tell me to deny myself daily, nor to take up my daily cross, nor to set my face against the world and oppose it, nor yet to follow another in the regeneration, nor yet be crying to God day and night in prayer, nor give any direction concerning the various branches of divine worship, not a word about baptism, nor of breaking bread. If the ten commandments are the only rule, I cannot find any of these things in it; and yet, many live in the practice of these things, which convinces me that believers have got

other rules of life beside the ten commandments, and a spiritual rule too, besides this narrow legal one which some contend for; they must take these things from some other part of the will of God. It must be confessed that unregenerate professors may have the form of knowledge and of the truth in the (letter) of the law, Rom. ii. 20, as well as the Jewish pharisees had, and these may make the law their rule of life as it certainly is, for they must gladden by the rule if they will live therein; and such may be alive to this form of knowledge, and alive to this rule, and be as Paul was alive without the law, Rom. vii. 9, for the sinner's form of knowledge, and the spiritual law of God widely differ. Nevertheless, according to this form of knowledge, which is their rule, they may perform a deal of service, which is called serving in the oldness of the letter," Rom. vii. 6; these are the people who sit in Moses's seat, and give rules to the believer, and whatever they bid him observe, he by the Spirit does; and if he does these things, having them in his heart, he will at last judge the others; but the main drift of Satan in this business is, to turn the eyes of weak believers from the Saviour and so bring them into bondage, as was the case with the Galatians. But the believer has more than a form of knowledge; God sends the law in its spiritual power to his heart, and by his Spirit he writes it there, which leaves so deep and lasting an impression as never to be blotted out. He is the man that "knows righteousness, a man in whose heart is God's law; he is not alive without the law, but through the law alive to God; he walks in newness of life; he serves God in the newness of the Spirit, not in the oldness of the letter. This man is sure to be right, he is in the covenant, and has the law of God in his heart, grace subdues his sin, God guides him with his eye, and he serves God in the Spirit; he is circumcised, and walks in love to God; he is a new creature and follows Christ in the regeneration; he has a faith that worketh by love, and he is not idle, but abounds in the work of the Lord; and as many as walk according to this rule, mercy on them and peace. If there is truth in the scriptures, this man shall be eternally saved; this doctrine will do to die by; the former may do to talk about or to trade with in order to gain a penny for a livelihood, but it will afford no comfort at death, nor is it attended with any power in life. God sets not his seal to that; this is visible enough, and will be more so daily. The believer is the man that will perform good works; these vain janglers about the law only strive in vain; they say and do not. This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God (for it is in vain that we expect them any where else) might be careful to maintain good works: these things are good and profitable unto men. But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain, Titus, iii. 9. This is the unlawful strife of

workmongers against the grace of God; but in this sense, the "servant of the Lord must not strive."

4thly. To lay in wait for him that reproves in the gate - to make a man an offender for a word - to ridicule a servant of God and his work, by falsehood, as the Rev. Mr. Belly at Gravesend did me, who ridiculed the providence of God in my Bank of Faith, declaring that I would spiritualize knives and forks. "I have got my sermon," says he, "in my pocket, and am going to London tomorrow, to preach against the spirit of that book;" and he had got the materials in his pocket, nay, his behaviour was such as I am ashamed to mention, and the gentleman was so hurt at it, that he had a good mind to have wrote to me, but when he came to town he took care to let me know the plot by a friend; he knows the man, he lives at Dartford in Kent, and will prove it to his head. I think he is one of a party spirit, for he brought strife and contention with him though he preached against contention. He proved the necessity of harmony by the cords of his instrument, why then did he breed a jargon with me? I had never seen him nor spoke to him. He enforced candour, and exclaimed against bloodthirsty rage, and fell foul of the text that I had handled, cavilling at the very words of God, which he was pleased to stile immodest texts, which texts may shortly appear in print, and my sermons on them, if God permit. Can such conduct as this be of any use to the church of God? Can there be any edification in this? Will this make a bad spirit better? Is this the way to reconcile parties, or to cure a bloodthirsty disposition? Can this create any love among brethren? Can playing with words, enforcing philosophy, treating of music, and cavilling at scripture, do any good? Is not this striving about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers, 2 Tim. ii. 11, 12, 13, 14. This is unlawful strife, and the servant of the Lord must not strive; which leads me to my third general head, which was to describe the gentleness of the Lord's servant, and how all sorts of men will try it more or less.

This gentleness in my text is not that tameness, laziness, or evenness of temper, which hypocrites so much admire, which is to be found in carnal men; this may be seen sometimes in deists, dead pharisees, reformed professors, or in a hypocrite when thunder-struck. Ahab seemed like a lion when the prophet met him; "Hast thou found me O mine enemy?" and he answered, "I have found thee, because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the Lord. I will make thine house like the house of Jeroboam, and the dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel. Him that dieth of Ahab in the city the dogs shall eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls eat. These things tamed Ahab, and made him gentle and tractable; for he rent his clothes, put sackcloth on his flesh, fasted and

went softly; Seest thou (saith God) how Ahab humbles himself? 1 Kings, xxi. from 22 to 29th verse. But this is not the gentleness meant in my text. Nicodemus was very gentle in the senate concerning the rigorous measures proposed to be used against Christ; does our law judge a man before it hear him? and he was the same when he came to Christ by night; but the Saviour gave him no thanks for it. The young man in the gospel, when he was commanded to sell all and follow Christ, was very tame and gentle, and went away sorrowful; but it was the sorrow of the world, that worketh death. The Laodiceans were gentle, tame, and tractable; they had no fire of love, nor fiery zeal, no rancour, spleen, nor bitterness; they needed nothing, nor did they strive for any thing, and this carnal ease and sloth is all the gentleness and candour that some call for. But it is not enough to be lukewarm, they must be either cold or hot, they must be with Christ or against him; they must either gather with him, or scatter abroad; serve God and hate mammon, or serve mammon and hate God. This gentleness springs from stupor, insensibility, carnal ease, and spiritual death; but the gentleness in my text is quite another thing; it is not forced by the withering vengeance of God, nor does it spring from an outward reformation, nor from an external perfuming or embalming of sinners by the word, which is sometimes the case where grace never reaches the heart or changes the soul.

2dly. There is a gentleness that at times influences even the servants of the Lord, which some of them are brought into by the fear of man, want of zeal, courage, and faithfulness; which they are brought into by associating with the unregenerate. The liberality of hypocrites, the feigned humility of legal workmongers, and the pretended candour of rotten fleshly professors, abates the edge of their zeal, betrays them to be partial in their trust, yield up half the good thing that is committed unto them to the children of lies; and, for the sake of unlawful peace, preach a universal gospel, and neglect the bounds that God has fixed, blunt the edge of God's sword, and pay no regard to the lines that he had drawn. This gentleness is not the gentleness that God commands in my text, for this is reprehensible. We find the angel or minister of the church in Thyatira had much of this sort of gentleness; he was not only gentle to all men, but to women also, for he suffered Jezebel to teach, for which he was reproved.

The apostle had some preachers in his days that were, gentle to these prophetesses; hence he writes, that women should adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety, which becometh women professing godliness, with good works, and that they should learn in silence with all subjection, but not to be suffered to teach nor to usurp authority over the man; for Adam was first formed, then Eve; and Adam

was not deceived but the woman being deceived was in the transgression, 1 Tim. chap. 2. The best account that Eve could give when the question was put home, "Woman what hast thou done?" was this, the serpent beguiled me; and those that are so fond of writing against the Lord's servant, in order to bring his ministry into contempt, and injure the word of God, can say no more in their defence than their mother did the serpent beguiled me.

Some in the apostle's days were not contented with carrying a private message by word of mouth, as Mary did to the apostles, nor with private converse, as Priscilla was, who were both converted women; one knew the pardon of her sins, and the other the way of the Lord; but Paul had some women that knew not the way of the Lord nor the pardon of sin, yet would be teachers; hence 'Timothy is commanded to avoid old wives' fables, though others might adhere to them. Paul had no small trials from this quarter.; hence he ordains that no widow shall be admitted to a proper relief under "threescore years 2000 of age having been the wife of one man, well reported of for good works; if she hath brought up children, if she hath lodged strangers, if she hath washed the saints' feet, if she hath diligently followed every good work," 1 Tim. v. 9, 10.

Paul had some honourable women, and these he greatly honoured. We read also of real prophetesses in the apostle's days, but we have no prophecies from them against the servant of the Lord, nor any account of their prophesying to teach men in public. Mary and Elizabeth prophesied to each other; and such are ordered to teach the younger women to be sober, guide the house, love their husbands and their children; to be discreet, chaste, and keepers at home, Titus, ii. 4. Paul had female servants that waited on him and the churches, but none of them pretended to teach him from the press; they did not tell him in print that he was too little because he was let out of a window in a basket, nor that Apollos was too big by one half. Paul's servants laboured with him, not against him; they succoured him, and did not add affliction to his bonds; they carried his epistles and his messages by word of mouth - they waited on him instead of slandering him; they were swift to hear him, but slow to teach him; they were helpers with him, not plagues to him.

But Paul had other sorts of women, who knew not the way of the Lord, nor the pardon of sin, like Mary; nor the Spirit's work on the soul, like those good prophetesses; but empty, insolent, tyrannical, bold, daring, and imperious; these are they that would teach and usurp authority over the men, like some in our days, whose writings bear just as much resemblance with Hannah's song, Elizabeth's prophecy, and Mary's

triumphs, as the history of Tom Thumb does with Milton's Paradise Lost; the glorious rays of the one, and the confused gloom of the other, make as great a contrast as the garden of Eden would with the regions of Lapland. With this sort of prophetesses the apostle had no little trouble; and it appears there were too many preachers that were gentle towards them, knowing their warm inclination to dictate to the second Adam, as their poor grandmother had done to the first: hence the apostle adds, "But younger widows refuse; for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry, having damnation because they have cast off their first faith," 1 Tim. v. 11, 12. He goes on and withal they learn to be idle they would sooner break through the positive commands of God, and reprobate the ministry of his servants, than work for their bread; wandering about from house to house, says Paul; that is, to mump a livelihood under a pretence of religion, rather than handle the spindle or the distaff, or look well to her own household, Prov. xxxi. 19. And not only idle, says Paul, but tattlers also; that is, they would sooner carry tales, either with their tongue or pen from the press, for twopence apiece, than buckle to the spinning wheel, or be confined to the intolerable employment of knitting or sewing: these things make women out no figure in life; Dorcas's making garments for the poor - Hannah's making little coats for Samuel - Rachael's keeping sheep - and Ruth's going to gleaning, skews the weakness of those honourable women. These sorts of prophetesses have no notion of being the daughters of Sarah, calling the master of the household, Lord. It is true, the real daughters of Sarah even in our day will not be ashamed of their mother's humble conduct but as for our prophetesses, falsely so called, they seem to be of the temper of Hagar; not contented with turning Sarah out of the chair, but they spit their venom at the Lord of the household, that he sends servants too dig into the vineyard; these women lay by their weakness, and let the world know that they can cope with men: their honour consists in taking a divine by the collar. These had rather be teachers than learners; choose to guide the officers of the household, rather than their own house; to handle the pen, rather than the spindle; to usurp authority over the man, rather than be in subjection; to break every positive command of God for a few pence, rather than work to earn it; and to be commanders in chief, rather than to be in silence. Hence the apostle calls them busy bodies: that is, they neglect all the business that God has set them at, and trouble themselves about the business of others; having discarded the distaff and the spindle, they take to the pen and tongue, and live by that, and all in absolute rebellion against God; hence it is called "speaking things which they ought not," 1 Tim. v. 12, 13. The apostle, being sick of these female teachers, concludes by ordaining them some employment, in order I suppose to keep them quiet; "I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none

occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully; for some [of these women] are already turned aside after Satan," 1 Tim. v. 14, 15. Hence we learn that some preachers used gentleness with these prophetesses, but this is not the gentleness in my text.

This gentleness mentioned in my text is not to be found in ministers of the letter, nor yet in hypocritical professors; it is a grace peculiar to the regenerate, and is a gift from above, and God will give it to whom he pleases; but the wisdom that is from above is first pure - it purifies the heart and judgment, and leads the mind into a pure love of the truth; then peaceable it reveals the way of peace, it proclaims peace to the heart, and makes men earnest in preaching peace, and at keeping the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. It is gentle toward the weaklings of the flock; gentle toward the backslider, or those that turn aside; gentle in persecution toward those that oppose themselves, or set themselves to oppose the truth; and easy to be intreated - or easy to those that intreat, not slander; full of mercy and good fruits - full of the mercy of God, which produces good fruits instead of antinomianism; without partiality, and without hypocrisy, James, iii. 17. It teaches no man to be partial in the word of God; it teaches no man to justify a false preacher, nor to slander a true one; it is without hypocrisy - it makes a man honest in heart, and sound in the truth; it teaches no man to "condemn the just, nor justify the wicked, for both these are an abomination."

My. This gentleness is a fruit of the Spirit; but the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Gal. v. 22. If it be a fruit of the Spirit, it cannot be found in any but those that are born of the Holy Ghost - who love God - have peace with him - and joy in him; hypocrites may pretend to it, and contend for it, but they know nothing about it.

This grace was, and still is, wonderful' exercised by the Saviour toward his own tried children, especially towards poor humble penitents in soul travail: He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are wish young, Isa. xl. 11. But the Saviour made use of none of this gentleness to Herod the fox; nor to the dogs, when he tells us not to cast that which is holy to them; nor to the swine, before whom we are not to cast our pearls; nor yet to the serpents and vipers, for he was not a gentle shepherd to them; they were not of his sheep; he threatens them with the damnation of hell.

The apostle made use of this grace of gentleness, when he acted the part of, a nurse to those that were babes in grace: For our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness; God is witness, nor of men sought we glory, nor of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome as the apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children, 1 Thess. ii. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.

Thus we may see that the Saviour in his character of a shepherd used gentleness, but as the lion of the tribe of Judah, he will use his sword. So Paul, in the character of a nurse used gentleness, but this did not destroy his valour as a soldier; for when those of the circumcision called him an antinomian, asserting, that he made void the law through faith; and that he said, let us do evil that good may come; let us sin that grace may abound. Paul lays by his gentleness and takes his sword, and tells them that their damnation is just. I come now to treat of the aptness or aptitude of the Lord's servant to teach, and the cause of it; and of the unaptness of pretenders to it, and the reason why. I chose to handle my heads in this manner because the word of God is called a two edged sword; and if so, we ought to make it cut both ways.

This word apt, signifies that he has received gifts and grace to fit him for the work; that his abilities are suitable to it; and by the constraining power of grace, he is inclined to teach others, and has a quickness or readiness for it, which he is inwardly moved to by the Spirit of God. He knows both law and gospel experimentally; the one fires his zeal, the other draws his love to God; and this fire moves him and constrains him; he knows the terrors of the Lord, and persuades men; he has felt the pardon of his own sin, and therefore can preach forgiveness to others; he is at peace with God, and therefore preaches peace; he believes, and therefore speaks; he is justified or made righteous, and is a preacher of righteousness; he has tasted that the Lord is gracious, and preaches grace; he has made his own calling and election sure, and so calls others, and preaches election to them; God's word has quickened him, and he holds forth the word of life; the Spirit of the Lord ministers gifts and grace to him, and he is a minister of the Spirit to others, that they might partake of his grace; God has put abundance of grace in his heart, and it is out of the abundance of his heart that his mouth speaks; God has put the treasure into his earthen vessel, and he brings out of his treasure things new and old; in a word, it is an experimental knowledge of the happy enjoyment of these things that makes the servant of the Lord so apt, fit, forward, ready, and quick to teach.

The moving cause is God's love to him, and its constraining power in him; "the love of Christ constraineth us," says Paul, to suffer all things for the elects' sake, that they may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. The word of God dwelling richly in the heart, makes a man weary of holding in; it is like a fire, it will blaze out; the spirit is like new wine, it will have vent. It is a well of water springing up, and will flow over; and men of understanding will draw it out, and refresh themselves with it. I come now to shew the unaptness of graceless pretenders to this work, and the reason why they are so unapt.

1st. Because they aim at nothing but the double honour that belongs to the office; the applause of the people, the fleece of the sheep, and at a genteel life; they grasp at the ministry to nurse their pride, and indulge their laziness; hence they are called heady, highminded, dumb dogs, sleepy dogs loving to slumber, and greedy dogs that can never have enough. These men are apt to dress, apt to fleece, apt to eat, and apt to sleep; but not apt to teach. Because though they may have a gift, yet they have not life; "they are instruments without life-giving sound;" but God says, take away the noise of thy viols - he is not charmed with violins or fiddles.

The reason of their unaptness is, there is no springing well in their hearts, no oil in the cruse, no new wine in the bottle, no divine treasure in the earthen vessel, no life in the soul, no faith in the heart. Their treasure is at least stole from others, pilfered out of other men's works, and committed to paper; their treasure lays all in their pocket, and how should such be apt to teach who have no heart-treasure for it; if the heart be exercised with covetous practices, as Peter says, it cannot be exercised with an aptness or fitness to teach.

Others have got a strong memory, and all that they can hear or borrow they commit to that; their treasure is laid up in their bead; head-knowledge without the springing well, is like a pool of standing water, soon stale, and soon dry. Yet with this stock they will at times cut a tolerable figure in a pulpit; and the godly themselves will say the doctrines are sound, the prayer is evangelical, the speech in prayer and in the sermon is sound speech that cannot be condemned; but when the preacher is out of the pulpit he is quite another thing; he is no evangelist only when he preaches; hence enquiring Souls who go to him when he has done, and make use of some part of his sermon, telling him how it agreed with their experience, can get no satisfactory answer; the sermon was one thing, the conversation is another; this is the man that wears a garment of linen and woollen together; he is a time-server, a man-pleaser, who thirsts for

nothing but applause, a genteel appearance, and an idle life; such cannot preach the faith, for they have no faith; how can they believe that receive honour one of another, and not the honour that cometh from God only? These are not servants of the Lord, they serve their own belly, and as the love of God is not in them, we cannot suppose that they are apt to teach; which leads me.

3dly. To consider the patience of the Lord's servant, and of them that are said to wear it out. A labourer in the Lord's vineyard has need of patience, for he is called to bear the burden and heat of the clay; superficial professors will condemn his ploughing; erroneous men will oppose the precious seed that he bears; his zeal will be called rage; his fervour, spleen and bitterness; his attachment to study, reservedness; his continuing wherein he is called, singularity - his endeavours to separate the vile from the precious, the effects of a party spirit; preaching free grace will be called antinomianism; handling dark passages, is enthusiasm; and refusing confederacy with them that say a confederacy is the effect of pride; and those that earnestly contend for the faith, have no candour. The servant of the Lord, as a labourer in the vineyard, had need of patience to bear all this, so as not to be discouraged or frightened from his work by it; "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation that shall come upon all the world to try them." The Lord's labourer is not to leave his work, because of the opposition that is made against him; he is to continue patiently in his labour, use the mouth and wisdom that God has given him, and oppose all that oppose the truth; "I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them that are evil; and thou hast tried them that say they are apostles and are not, and hast found them liars; and hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted," Rev. ii. 2, 3. Thus we see a man's patience is not to drive him from his labour, nor from trying them that say they are apostles or evangelists; this is a good work, and is coupled will, patience, and is approved by the Lord; whosoever pretends to these offices is to be proved a liar by the servants of the Lord, if he is not.

Nor are we to cease ploughing and sowing as the Lord's labourers, on account of the various winds of error; nor be discouraged at it by feigned pretenders to candour, nor by the clouds of false witnesses. "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand." He that "observeth the wind shall not sow," and he that "regardeth the clouds (of false witnesses) shall not reap," Eccles. ii. 4.

Those that sin openly are to be rebuked before all, that others may fear; and in this work we are to continue, whatever we may suffer in it - "Preach the word, be instant in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine: for the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine," 2 Tim. iv. 2, 3.

The servant of the Lord has need of patience, and ought to pray for it, for the good of his own soul; for it is "faith that worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope;" and he had need of it in exercise daily, that after he has done the will of God, he may inherit the blessing; which will be, to try them that say they are apostles, and to prove them liars if they are not; to separate the vile from the precious; to stop the mouths of gainsayers; to oppose, and not suffer a woman to teach, nor usurp authority over the man; to oppose errors, and the vain janglings of those that desire to be teachers of the law; to fight against them that creep into houses, and lead captive silly women; and to have nothing to do with those that are heady and high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God: a servant of the Lord is to purge himself from these, that he may be a vessel unto honour, prepared unto every good work.

The servant of the Lord in his military character, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ, has need of patience; soldiers, in the literal sense, are a very unwelcome guest to many, especially to inn-keepers; every upstart landlady, every bar-maid, and draggletailed girl that attends the tap, will flout and hoot at a soldier; and so a good soldier of Jesus Christ often finds it. Jezebel kills all that she could, and drives an hundred more into a cave, and then pursued one of the best men that ever lived, namely, Elijah; and swears to kill the defence of the nation, even the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof.

Not only Jezebel destroys them, but Herodias counsels her daughter to get the invaluable prize of a prophet's head, as a reward for her dancing; as if nothing but the blood of one of the greatest prophets that ever was born of a woman could pay the demands of a dancing miss; thus have the good soldiers of Jesus Christ suffered by old wives, harlots, and dancing girls.

Moses, who was faithful in all God's house, had no small trouble from this quarter: we read of Miriam's taking a timbrel in her hand, and going before the women, and leading on the music and the dancing, and ordering her female attendants to sing to the Lord, because they had triumphed gloriously, Exod. xv. 20, 21; but soon after she opposes Moses, and wants

to be a mediator and a law-giver; and Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses: Miriam first, and Aaron afterwards; she had engaged the high priest in her conspiracy: "And they said, Hath the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us? and the Lord heard it," Num. xii. 1, 2. Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth, Num. xii. 3, yet his meekness or candour did not screen him from the scourge of women's tongues. Therefore God comes down to stop this rebellious female teacher. "And the Lord spake suddenly unto Moses, Aaron, and unto Miriam, Come out ye three unto the tabernacle of the congregation; and he called Aaron and Miriam, and they both came forth," Num. xii. 4, 5; and "he said, hear now my words; if there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream; my servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house; with him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches;" wherefore "then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses," Num. xii. 7, 8, and the anger of the Lord was kindled against them, and he departed; and the cloud departed from off the tabernacle, and behold Miriam became leprous, white as snow. And Aaron said unto Moses, Alas, my Lord, I beseech thee, lay not the sin upon us wherein we have done foolishly, and wherein we have sinned; let her not be as one dead, Num. xii. 10, 11, 12. And Moses (who was not destitute of candour) cried unto the Lord, saying, Heal her now, O God, I beseech thee; and the Lord said unto Moses, If her father had spit in her face, should she not be ashamed seven days; how much more for spitting in the face of her Maker, and rebelling against the prophet and mediator that God had appointed? "Let her be shut out of the camp seven days," Num. xii. 12, 13, 14.

Miriam was not like Deborah the prophetess; when she had received a message from the Lord, she tells Barak of it privately, after she had sent and called him; and when Barak declared that he would not go unless she went with him, she rebukes him, and tells him if he wants a woman's aid to defend him, a woman shall take the glory of the victory from him: "And Barak said unto her, If thou wilt go with me then I will go; but if thou wilt not go with me, then I will not go: And she said, I will surely go with thee; notwithstanding the journey that thou takest shall not be for thine honour; for the Lord shall sell Sisera into the hands of a woman," Judges, iv. 8, 9. Here is a woman that is called a prophetess; one to whom a message from heaven came; yet she did not turn her divine message into a twopenny squib, in order to fire it off against the Lord's ministers at the door of the synagogues when the people were going to worship. She received her message from God to Barak, and to him she delivered it; and when he called for her help, she predicted the loss of his honour.

And this I will be bold to affirm, that if I have written falsehood; if I am in errors; if my doctrine makes void the law; if I be an antinomian, and influenced by a bad or by a party spirit; if I am of a blood-thirsty disposition; if influenced with rancour, spleen, and bitterness; if destitute of meekness and candour, and too big by one-half; then it may be depended upon that the conduct of the present combination has been consistent with the will of God; and that our present prophetess, who has made so free with me, my office, my doctrines, and my stature, in my pretensions to excel, has done right; and that God will shew his approbation, and bear his comfortable testimony to them, and incline his saints to justify his proceeding in and by them all. But if, on the other hand, I am a child of his, and am called by him to the ministry, and am doing his work instead of deceiving the people or dividing them by a bad spirit of spleen and bitterness, then I say, God shall shew me a token for good, and that others that hate me shall see it; and those of the combination who have slandered me, reproached me, and injured me, together with the present prophetess that has made so free with my ministry, shall sensibly meet with the visible disapprobation of God; and it shall be made known in as plain a manner as the approbation of God to Abel was before Cain. I shall pawn my honour in the ministry upon this, and the present generation shall bear witness to it; and I will leave God to justify his own conduct with respect to sending out such bad spirited mien as me, and to vindicate me if I am his servant.

I wish every true Israelite to observe what this enthusiastic Micaiah saith, and watch the event. If I am the Lord's servant, these weapons of women shall not prosper against me; but if I am not they certainly shall. Zeresh herself, the wife Haman, though the daughter of the devil, could never predict success even to her own husband against the seed of the Jews, Est. vi. 13, and God has declared that no weapon formed against his servants shall prosper; and I believe he speaks as he means. What I have asserted I found on the testimony of his own word, and upon the testimony that I think he has given me; testifying my adoption, and my call to the ministry, which I shall submit to his will to own or disown according to his faithfulness and truth.

Thus we see that the servants of the Lord, both as labourers in the vineyard and as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, have need of patience, and that in many respects. It is in patience that we are to possess our 2000 souls; and this grace is coupled with faith, and is to be found in none but real believers; hence it is called the patience and faith of the saints. We see that all sorts of people will try this grace more or less; not only

persecutors, devils, and ungodly men, but little children, as Elisha found it, and old women also.

I have received letters from all sorts of people, women and all; some have informed me that they have been intolerably prejudiced against me, and desired me to call upon them to remove it, which I did not see to be a part of my duty as a minister; for people that live in idleness can attend upon me better than I can upon them; especially women destitute of grace, who rather command than intreat. I own Wisdom is gentle to them that intreat, but not to women that command. I did not get at my ministry so easy, and therefore dare not make it too cheap: "Let them return unto thee," says God, "but return thou not unto them." Jer xv. 1:19.

I received another long epistle from a woman after the above, which I must confess was pregnant with a deal of warm zeal; and it was sent by one who it seems is a staunch advocate for a certain evangelist; I opened it just before I went into the pulpit; but as I found no candour in it, I carried it into the vestry, and delivered it into the hands of Mr. Brayne, and desired that it might be read to the deacons, which it accordingly was; and I was glad that they read it; for at the conclusion it savoured too much of spleen and bitterness, for she plainly "dññd me for a rascal for writing against so good a man." I do not pretend to say that this woman is not a prophetess, for I believe she is, and one of the same stamp that bear that name in the 13th chapter of Ezekiel's prophecy; and such as the apostle Paul was troubled with in his days; yet I must do her justice; for although she was found out upon the enquiry of the deacons to be a common prostitute on the town, yet she did not print her letter and send it after me from one place of worship to another; she had modesty enough to seal it up and direct it to me as a private rebuke which was well taken, because she did not seem to wish to hurt the cause of God on my account, nor to act the part of a devil at the chapel door; that is, she did not order an outcry to be made at the door of the congregation when the people were going out, as the devil its said to do, who comes in the character of the wicked one, to steal away the seed that is sown in people's hearts, in order to make them unfruitful to God. In this she shewed some symptoms of fear and reverence, and some regard for the cause of God, Though she thought it her duty to lay a private lash upon me. By these things it may be seen that a labourer in the Lord's vineyard, and a good soldier of Jesus Christ, had need of patience.

I come now to treat of the meekness mentioned in my text, and wherein it differs from that which is common to flesh and blood, which produces what is commonly called candour, which is so much admired by hypocrites.

This meekness is a grace that is never to be found in any but regenerate people, though something like it may at times be seen in an alarmed sinner, or in a discovered hypocrite, which has deceived thousands of gracious souls, whose natural passions have been moved at their trouble, as Samuel was at the calamity of Saul, for which God rebuked him; yet this meekness that I have to treat of has not corrupt nature for its soil; the embalmed hypocrite may counterfeit it, but never can produce it; the person that is a stranger to real conversion, and to the operations of the Holy Ghost, has nothing of this invaluable grace; it is one of Zion's ornaments; an hypocrite may counterfeit it, as a whore does the dignity of a wife, who feigns to be the lady of a nobleman, or as a concubine puts on the diadem of a queen; who has just as much right to it as Satan had to his dignity when he told the Saviour that the kingdoms of this world were his, and to whom he would he gave them; but he could never make his title gold.

Spiritual meekness is an ornament that God puts upon a regenerated and renewed soul, and has its existence in that which is called the new, or hidden man: "Let your adorning be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price," 1 Peter, iii. 4. Here we learn that spiritual meekness exists in that which is incorruptible, namely, in the Holy Ghost, and is a fruit of him; "the fruit of the Spirit is meekness," Gal. v. 23. It is the compassionate bowels of the new or hidden man of the heart; and as it is a fruit of God's Spirit, it is in his sight of great price.

This softening humbling grace attends and assists the faith of a real believer in his attending on the preached word, when he is enabled to mix faith with it. Spiritual meekness softens the soil of the believing heart, and gives the word a deepness of earth to strike root in, and moistens it that he may not fall away for the want of root, Matt. xiii. 6, nor wither for the want of moisture, Luke, viii. 6. This softening grace makes way for the word of God to gender or engraft itself under the operations of the Spirit, to every faculty of the heaven-born soul; insomuch that the word becomes an incorruptible seed in the believer, that lives and abides forever, and assures him of salvation. Hence the believer is said to receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save his soul, James, i. 21. Without this fruit of the Holy Ghost there is no feeding on the word, there is no digesting nor concocting; man may fill his head with notions, but not his soul with good: 41 The meek shall eat and be satisfied; they shall praise the Lord that seek him," Psalm xxii. 26.

I shall now shew how this meekness is produced. We find it is to be found in none but regenerate men; this meekness is in the hidden man, and the residence of this hidden man is the heart; hence he is called the hidden man of the heart; but the sinner's heart must be broken, and thrown open too, before this new man can come in to hide himself, so as to become a hidden man there. A stony-hearted sinner can give this new man no residence; the stone must be removed from the well's mouth; sin purged; an heart of flesh given; and a new spirit be received; self be debased and abhorred, and God discovered as pacified towards us, before this meekness will appear. God's word is a hammer to break this rock, especially when accompanied with the thundering voice of God in his law, which pierces the deepest recesses of the soul, and makes inquisition for blood; demands perfect obedience on peril of damnation; carries the scrutiny with all imaginable rigour; strikes the sinner dumb at the dreadful tribunal, until he is sinking between a double sentence, namely, that of a broken law and an honest conscience, until the sting of death and wrath of God acquaint him with the snares of death and pains of hell, which give him a foretaste of what he justly deserves. This man is sore broken in the place of dragons, and covered with the shadow of death, and knows the terrors of the Lord; yet all this will not produce meekness.

Such a sinner will be drowned in tears, filled with self-pity and universal candour; his deport and countenance will discover a deal of humility; he will cry out against sin, and his words will be smoother than oil; but in heart he frets against the Lord; he curses the clay of his birth; blames his Maker for bringing him into existence; wishes there was no God to punish him; fain would fly out of his hand; or, like the devil himself, he would be glad to ascend above the height of the clouds, and be equal to the Most High, while he is sensibly sinking into hell to the sides of the pit, Isa. xiv. 14, 15. But when the Holy Ghost opens the heart, and lets a divine ray into it, there is an healing balm that attends this wing or beam of the Sun of Righteousness; the understanding receives the unctioⁿ or eye-salve; and, beginning to see, the poor sinner pursues the beam up to the blessed face from whence it came, and discovers something of the "light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." This unctioⁿ dispels the veil from the understanding, influences the mind, and conveys to the heart the pleasing tidings of a door of hope being discovered; while the heart appears wide open, broken with desires, pouring out petition after petition, backed with ten thousand wishes, longings, sighings, and groanings, that the object of hope who has shewed himself through the lattice, will but come into the garden, where he is to meet with the kindest reception and the best entertainment that can be prepared by a lost, ruined, self-loathed, and self-condemned sinner.

At length the Lord descends on his own beam, and tells the sinner that he has overcome him, and appears the author of faith, and dwells in the heart by it; where the sinner finds such an entertainment as none know but God and himself; now he feeds on the hidden manna; sings a song, that none can learn but the redeemed; the new name of a son of God by adoption is written on him; the white stone, that witnesses his sonship, is received; he is established in hope like a pillar, and the name of God is written in legible characters on him, and appears as conspicuous to others as, "Holiness to the Lord," did on the high priest's mitre. Now he arises and shines, for his light is come, and the glory of God is risen on him; this man knows what spiritual meekness is; Christ crucified, and his broken spirit have had a meeting; he knows something of the meek and lowly Jesus experimentally; but those that are strangers to all these things, have no more of this meekness about them than those that Christ calls weepers and wailers in hell. Such a soul as this cannot give an account of the goodness of God to him without being sensibly and deeply affected: "He will sanctify the Lord in his heart, and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh him a reason of the hope that is in him, with meekness and fear," 1 Peter, iii. 15.

But the hypocrite goes another way to work; he calls for meekness and candour; and if you ask him a reason of the hope that is in him, he waives the subject, being conscious that it is experience that worketh hope; and knowing he has no experience, he is afraid of his hypocrisy being discovered; for if his false hope be taken away, his countenance, profession, and reputation, all fall together. These call for meekness but not for a reason of our hope; meekness without hope, is like the full assurance of faith without a spiritual birth; one contends for the bowels, and the other for the feet of the new man; yet can give us no reason of this hidden man of the heart, or of Christ in them the holes of glory. They have yielded up the palace by a profession; out they cannot tell us, whether the strong man armed keeps it, nor he that is mighty to save; but I suppose the former, because Christ says, he keeps it in peace; and if so, he chuses not to be disturbed with a perpetual outcry about the power of religion, but to be rocked to sleep with gentleness and candour. These serve us as Talkative served Bunyan's Christian; he erases all knowledge and candour, until Christian began at his heart; then, says John, "like the moon into the wane he goes," and so will all but he that heart work knows. This is a truth John, and I can set my seal to it, for I have seen it verified in numbers of professors. John tells us, he knew nothing of the burden falling from his back at the cross; he had met with no difficulties at the wicket gate; he was a stranger to those things that make the gate so strait, at the head of the path of regeneration. John says, he came in of himself, and he will go out

of himself, which is another truth. This meekness, that I have described, lays in the hidden man; is a fruit of the blessed Spirit of God, which makes the new-born soul behave itself before God as a weaned child; nothing afflicts it so much as the loss of the breasts of consolation, after which it will pine like the dove, until the sounding of God's bowels is felt again towards the believer. A clear discernment of the depravity of nature, and the desperate evil of sin, together with the long-suffering, mercy, and immutable love of God in Christ Jesus, will perpetually draw forth in private before God these bowels of spiritual meekness in a believer. Moses found grace in God's sight, and dwelt perpetually in his favour, and none so meek; but this did not destroy his faithfulness; he was zealous for his God, and faithful in his house. But nothing of this is to be found in unregenerate men; they may be quiet and shew something like it, but there is a woe to them that are at ease in Zion; sinners at ease are not troubled like other men, not plagued like them; they can talk about the meek and lowly Jesus, and well they may; for he has never "met them as a bear bereft of her whelps, nor rent the caul of their hearts," Hosea, xiii. 8, therefore they feel no plague, fear no wrath, nor see any danger; they are alive (to sin) without the law, and dead (to God) being without the power of the gospel; strangers to divine inspiration, and to divine instruction; hence they always ran counter to the spiritual man's judgment, both in preaching and conversing; nor can they ever touch upon, or run parallel with, the tender feelings, or keen sensations, of a quickened and new-born soul. I have given you a description of the meekness of the Lord's servant, and how he came by it, together with the manner how he receives the law, and the gospel also. This man knows by experience, the righteous attributes of God; he knows the righteousness of the law, and the blessedness of an imputed one; and to such souls as these God speaks, and for their attention he calls. "Hearken unto me, my people, and give ear unto me, O my nation; for a law shall proceed from me (not from old women) and I will make my judgment to rest for a light of the people. My righteousness is near, my salvation is gone forth, and mine arm shall judge the people; and the isles shall wait upon me, and on mine arm shall they trust. Hearken unto me ye that know righteousness; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings; for the moth shall eat them like's garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool; but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation," Isai. li. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

Reader, whenever thou bearest a man talk about the law being the only rule of a believer's life, ask him, how he came by the law, and whether it proceeded from God to him? How it operated on his heart? What it discovered within and without him? What his sensations were, under the

operation? What occasion or advantage sin took by its rigorous demands? What it wrought in him, love or hatred? Whether it did bring him as a schoolmaster to Christ, or whether it drove him from him, revealing forbidding wrath, instead of attracting love and mercy? and whether he did not fly before it in his soul, as far as the very gates of hell would let him go, instead of coming by it to Christ? or to speak in scripture language, whether he did not find an hatred to the light, and skulk from it rather than approach it, seeing it reprov'd him for his sinful deeds; and try all that he says, not only by thy judgment, but by the powerful and lively oracles of thine own conscience; for the believer has both law and gospel there, and if he cannot touch thy feelings have nothing to do with him; he has not got the law, it is not written on his heart, he knows nothing of righteousness, he has not passed under the rod, nor is he brought into the bond of the covenant. Pay no regard to the speech of them that are puffed up, but inquire and feel after the power; the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power. Saints are to speak of the glory of God's kingdom, and to talk of the power; they are to make known to the sons of men the mighty acts (that have passed on their souls) and the glorious majesty of the kingdom, when Christ sets it up in their hearts. If they are strangers to these things, they are the subjects of Satan; he reigns under their veil, never was discovered by the light of God, nor cast out by his power; under a mask of religion, under the veil of ignorance, and in the centre of an impenitent heart, the prince of darkness reigns, rules, and triumphs. Is my reader a believer in Christ? if he is, I tell him the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power. Was it words of candour that laid affliction on thy loins at first, and kept thee impending on the brink of hell, or was it power? Was it the cant of hypocrites that brought thee up out of the horrible pit, or was it power? Was it empty words that wrought faith in thee, or was it the arm of God revealed, that "worked in thee the good pleasure of his will, and the work of faith with power?" How hast thou been delivered in six troubles, and escaped the seventh? Was it the empty sound of carnal professors, or was it the right hand of God's power, that upheld thee and brought thee through? Has it not been the mighty power of God that has given thee spiritual might in the inner man? that has appeared the most conspicuous in thy weakness, and that has often appeared when a temptation has discovered itself, and thy deceitful heart has already given in to it, and the death brought forth by sin conceiving has been felt in thy conscience. I ask, if it was the doctrines of the law that appeared and kept thee, and delivered thee, or the power of God? and whether by word thou art kept through faith to salvation, or by the power of God? and lastly, whether the word of candour will prop thee up in a dying hour, or God who is the strength of his people's heart and their portion for ever? If thou sayest all this is right, then I ask, Art thou now staggering between the omnipotent arm of

the Saviour and the cant of old women, who walk in craftiness, and by idleness deny the faith, and are worse than infidels; and all for the sake of a few pence, or a morsel of bread. Thou art not to receive the law from old women; they are to "teach younger women to be Toner, to guide the house, love their husbands and their children," this is their sphere; out of this, they are out of character, and put the church of God to shame; "it is a shame for women to speak in the church; came the word of God to them, or came it out from them only," 1 Cor. xiv. 35, 36. God tells thee, that a "law shall proceed from him; Receive the law, I pray thee from God's mouth, and lay his words in thine heart," Job, xxii. 22. thy faith is not to stand in old wives' fables, nor in human wisdom, but in the power of God. It was Mr. Worldly-wise-man that sent Christian to Mr. Legality to get rid of his burden, till Sinai was ready to fall on his bead, and others who have been directed by Evangelist, have forsook his council, and gone to Sinai for rules, till they have brought a fresh burden on their souls, and an old yoke on their necks, conceived fresh enmity in their minds, and have not spared to spit their venom at the grace of God; this shews what wrath the law works, and what bondage it genders; such preachers can only prejudice, plunder, ensnare, and strip thee; when God will use others, to settle, comfort, support, and succour thee; these latter are they that he makes manifest in thy conscience, whether thou knowest it or not, 2 Cor. v. 11; and such, agreeably to thine own heart's experience, thou wilt be glad to live and die with. This divine manifestation brings about the divine cement or bond of union which the carnal professor cannot get at, for savoury souls will smell them out, though they labour hard to deceive them. I come with one more appeal to conscience, which is, whether this doctrine of the law being the only and all-sufficient rule of life, was the doctrine in whole or in part that God applied to thee, when thou escaped the damnation of hell at first; or whether it was any thing like it; if you say, No, nothing bore me up, nor brought me out of the regions of the shadow of death, but that experimental preaching that set forth Christ as all in all; very well, the kingdom stands in the same power still, and on that same shoulder whereon, as a lost sheep, thou wast laid at first, and brought into the fold; as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him. He has appeared the author, believe in him as the carrier on, and hope in him as the finisher of faith; and thou shalt have hope in thy death, nor shall thine expectations be cut off Let others contend for legal rules, run thou the race set before thee, looking to Jesus; walk in him, and in union with him; he has promised to keep that man in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on him, and continue thou so to do to the very last for they, and only they, are blessed, that die in the Lord; that is, in confidence in him, in view of him, and in union with him: As the Lord God of hosts liveth, this must be thy confidence and thine hope at last, if thy dying head finds any support;

therefore, recline on this arm in thy life, which alone can support thee, when heart and flesh fail. The law, or the doctrines of it, will afford thee but little comfort in a dying hour. Footmen who never get into the chariot of love, have sometimes set thee a running a wrong road and wearied thee; and if thou hast been often wearied of the warfare in a land of peace, how wouldest thou smite the waters with such a mantle at the swellings of Jordan, Jer. xii. 5. Surely Israel did not enter into that land of Canaan for their righteousness sake, nor for their obedience to the rule of the law; it is called the land of promise; God gave it to Abraham by promise, and God brought them in, and by an high hand drove he the Canaanites out. I have written thus that you might have somewhat to answer them that glory in appearance, but not in heart. Let these men and women who call for meekness and candour give us a better account than this of it, that we may know what it is, and where they got it; whether it is from heaven, or of men; whether from grace, or from themselves, and whether they mean the thing, or the name only. It is true, men may cull scripture, and write something like it, who never tasted that the Lord is gracious, yet the wise will find them out; for if they borrow, or steal the words, yet, the broad seal of God is wanting; therefore their attempts make no impression, nor can they be received as a part of the mystical body, which (by the Spirit) is to be fitly joined together; for before they can be a part of this connected body, they must have an unction; without this joint oil, there can be no union; the body is compacted by that which every Joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in every part, making increase, Eph. iv. 16. But, alas, a noise about candour produces no joint oil; these pretended members have no effectual working in them; they have got no hold of the head, and consequently cannot be spiritually joined to the body, nor afford any increase to it. I come now to show, that this meekness does not destroy the zeal nor the faithfulness of the Lord's servants.

Of all the children of men Moses is reported to be the meekest man; and no wonder, when God had so clearly revealed himself to him, telling him, that he had found grace in his sight, and that he knew him by name, and that he would be with him. Moses had seen God's providential care over him, and his people, the dreadful severity of God to the Egyptians, and the deliverance he wrought for Israel; the destruction of the one, and the salvation of the other. He had received the law, and - quaked and trembled at the promulgation of it, therefore he knew the terrors of God; and on the other hand, God had revealed himself to him as his God in covenant; he had proclaimed his name before him, and communed with him mouth to mouth. He dwelt perpetually under the cloud of divine favour, and was led by the pillar of eternal love for forty years together, 2000 and had seen God rise up at his request, and return at his desire; and had been kept

perpetually crippled in spirit by a stiffnecked people, who had so grieved his spirit that he spake unadvisedly with his lips; nay, it went ill with Moses for their sakes. The princes, yea! almost the whole congregation, besides the company of Corah, had at times opposed him; Aaron his brother, Miriam his own sister in the flesh and in the spirit, had at times added to his burthen, and tried the meekness of this good soldier, which was enough to keep him meek and humble with a witness; but this did not root out his zeal for God. As a good soldier Moses was still God's honourable servant, and faithful in all his house; he was not afraid, at his farewell sermon, to tell them, that he had led them forty years in that wilderness, and yet God had not given them eyes to see, ears to hear, nor hearts to understand. He rebuked them for their rebellion against the Lord, and called them foolish and unwise, for their base requiting, forsaking him, and lightly esteeming the rock of their salvation; for which he tells them, their feet should slip in due time and their calamities should make haste; that God would provoke them to jealousy with a foolish nation, as they had provoked him to anger with that which was not God, that he would heap mischiefs upon them for their folly, and spend his arrows upon them in his wrath, Deut. xxxii. 23. Having treated of the meekness of God's servant, and from whence it arises, and that it doth not destroy zeal for God, nor faithfulness in his work; I come now to treat of the meekness which is common to flesh and blood, that produces the candour of hypocrites that is so highly esteemed.

I have known some that have sat under the word of God for years, and frequently drowned in tears; I have observed it, and when I came to be in company with them, I heard of nothing but the success they had formerly in business, and the various methods they used in order to accumulate their independency; they seemed as ignorant of the plan of salvation, and as destitute of the power of religion, as those that never heard a sermon or read a bible. I received a little instruction from this, and by observation I found that the subjects that mostly affected them, were those that were levelled at the sin of covetousness, which described the awful end of a man that has his portion in this life, the impossibility of the love of God dwelling in a heart that loves this world or the things of it, and that if the salvation of God was applied to such souls as it was to the heart of Zaccheus, the root of all evil would lose its soil, the grace of God would give covetousness no ground to root in. We know the rich man's wealth is his strong city, and as an high wall in his own conceit; but this wall can stand no firmer before the everlasting love of God, when' applied, than the walls of Jericho could before the blasts of the rams' horns. Treating of these things has stirred up the meekness of the above described misers; they have heard it with many tears, and like the young man in the gospel,

they have gone away sorrowful because they had great possessions; this is the sorrow of the world that worketh death.

2dly. I have known women of the town who have sinned with so high an hand, that their consciences have been like a nest of vipers, who have run for refuge to bear the gospel, and if unclean persons have been cut at in the discourse, and the visible mark that God has set on a whore's forehead, Jer. iii. 3, has been described, together with her attire, leer wanton gait, her nets and snares with which she entangles her prey, the wrath of God that she incurs by increasing transgressors among men, together with the certainty of God's judging whoremongers and adulterers, and their woeful end if grace prevent not; these things have set such characters to weeping and wailing; they have discovered much meekness, but never left off their old trade; they never cried to God with their hearts, though they have wept in a chapel and howled upon their beds, Hosea, vii. 14. This meekness is like Ephraim's goodness, compared to early dew, which vanishes before the sun, but is nothing like that which is called a fruit of the Spirit, which Mary Magdalen had when she poured out her soul at the Saviour's feet, and obtained the pardon of her silt and a sense of the love of God in her heart; she vomited up her folly at the Saviour's feet, and left it for good and all; but these, after all their crying and howling, act according to the proverb; "As a dog returneth to his vomit, so a fool like these returneth to his folly," Prov. xxvi. 11.

3dly. An empty graceless professor, who has heard the gospel till his brutal enmity against the preachers and professors of it has been slain; who has been tamed and become tractable, and on the account of this and its being attended with the use of the tongue and an outward reformation, he has been received into the church; and if the ministry has been rather superficial he has become one of the greatest note in it; but when heresies have crept in, to make manifest who are the Lord's and who not, he is the man that is generally caught in the net; and this column, in appearance, has been a stumbling-block to many of the poor weaklings, who have thought him more than man.

Sometimes God discovers him by removing the old pastor and bringing in one more acquainted with heart work, in order to separate the vile from the precious; this is a ministry that his soul hates, because it lays him open; he becomes the greatest opposer of it; but if God's hand is with the servant, and he comes in to be the pastor in the face of all opposition, this opposer sets no bounds to his rage, he discovers himself daily in the eyes of others what he really is, and conceives such an implacable enmity against both the minister and his ministry as slays the silly one. He will at times seem to

shed tears on the account of his sinking reputation, when he gets with those who condole him in his degraded point of light, when with shame he takes the lowest room. This meekness and candour was found in Saul, when in the like circumstances; ∞∞ Then came up the Zephites to Saul to Gibeah, saying, Doth not David hide himself with us. Now therefore, O king, come down, according to all the desire of thy soul to come down, and we will deliver him into thine hand. And Saul said, Blessed be ye of the Lord for ye have compassion on me," 1 Sam. xxiii. 19, 20, 21; but all this meekness and candour sprang from malice against David, because God was with him; it had no other root than murder; he that hateth his brother without a cause is a murderer; he that hateth a believer in Christ hateth Christ. This meekness appeared in Esau when he sought the blessing carefully with tears; he lift up his voice and wept, and said, Bless me, even me, O my father; and after he had wept he received comfort; for it is said, "that Esau comforted himself, purposing after the death of his father to kill his brother Jacob," Gen. xxvii. 42; and if he had done that, he had but one more blow to strike in order to extirpate the whole church of God, and that was to kill his mother Rebecca, and then the fraternity of heaven had been extinct, and Esau had been more renowned than Cain, who killed the third part of the world at one blow.

Self, self-pity, self-seeking, and self-applause, is the only root of all this feigned meekness; it is a fruit of fallen nature; like loves its like; sinners love sinners; it savours not the things that be of God, but those that be of men; to fallen nature it is candid, especially to discovered hypocrites, to desperate rebels, and to apostates; to these it shews much candour, it is gentle, it calls for meekness; but its enmity against the experimental preachers of Christ, or the spiritual children of God, is such, as breaks through all bounds of God and man, of decency and modesty, and would venture on the bosses of God's buckler, and expose the whole cause of God to contempt, and their 2000 own souls to every curse in the bible, in order to seek revenge on a minister of the Spirit. The report of power attending the word, and of sinners being called by it, is what they cannot endure: "From the time that it goeth forth it takes them; for morning by morning it passes over them; yea by day and by night; and it is a vexation to them only to understand the report of it," Isaiah, xxviii. 19. And as it was then by professing Israel, so it is now by hypocritical professors; they cannot endure the power of religion to be enforced.

Not long ago I had a two-penny pamphlet on candour addressed to me, and sold at my chapel doors, which I did not much wonder at; as I know hypocrites cannot love the saints, nor can the righteous nation that keep the truth find much love to them. Besides, there had been a penny address

sent to me in Feint some time before, throughout the whole of which the author contradicted and condemned himself; which I did not wonder at, when I perceived it to be the work of a poor arminian, who had nothing in his head but wind and confusion; a friend desired me to answer it, but I told him "it was written by some poor faithless free-will monger, who being destitute of the grace of God could not trust his Maker for a loaf; and if he could get a bit of bread for his poor children by an Address to Mr. Huntington; he was very welcome; I was willing to live and let live;" which I am informed he did; for it was reported to me, that he cleared fourteen pounds by it, which might help to pay his rent, if he was not too far gone with his landlord.

But this last two-penny pamphlet on candour, which was first sent out without a name, seemed to cause great triumphs in Gath; the Philistines shouted, supposing that Sampson was bound by a woman; and to be sure, when I heard that it was written by a female, I was surprised at her brazen brow, especially when I was informed it was done by a woman that professes religions woman that is a member of a church - a woman that gospel ministers countenance and visit; I never was more surprised; and must confess it was such a piece of infernal presumption, such contempt of God, such rebellion against his command, and such daring insolence, as I never read nor heard of as coming from any of the weaker sex since I have been in the world.

I turned my thoughts to all the honourable women mentioned in scripture, to their writings, and to their conduct; I considered the lesson that Bathsheba taught her son Solomon, and of the council she gave him, together with the description she gives of a virtuous woman; who seeketh wool and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands; that she layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff; that she is not afraid of the snow, for her household are clothed with scarlet; that she maketh fine linen and selleth it; that she looketh well to her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness, Prov. chap. xxxi. This prophecy I admire; and as Solomon was the son of her womb, and the son of her vows, she acted the mother's part in endeavouring to instruct him, and took her part of the burthen. as all mothers ought to do, instead of laying the whole weight upon the father; but when Solomon came to the throne, the dignity of the mother did not devour the obedience of a subject: she laid by her power to command, and took a petition, "I desire one small petition of thee, I pray thee say me not nay," 1 King: ii. 20.

I considered the conduct of the virgin mother, who at the age in Cana of Galilee, when the mother of Jesus said unto him, "They have no wine;"

and of the rebuke she got for limiting the power of God, "Woman what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not come," John, ii. 2 - 4. I considered the reproofs she gave him at his first public appearance, when she said unto him, "Son, why hast thou dealt thus with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my father's business?" Luke, ii. 48, 49. I perused the conduct of Deborah, that pious prophetess in Israel, who, upon the delivery of her divine message to Barak, refused to go with, out her; who declared to him that a woman should take the honour of the victory; yet she did not bring against him a railing accusation. She joined with Barak in the song, instead of publishing a two-penny ballad against him; "Then sang Deborah and Barak, the son of Abinoam, on that day, saying, Praise ye the Lord for avenging of Israel," Judges, v. 1, 2; "Awake, awake, Deborah; awake, awake, utter a song: arise Barak, and lead thy captivity captive, thou son of Abinoam," verse 12.

There is no two-penny squib in all this song fired off against Barak, though he skewed such unbecoming cowardice. It is true, she did not write with that meekness and candour that hypocrites call for in our days. " Curse ye Meroz," says Deborah; but this rancour must be overlooked, seeing "the Angel of the Lord said, Curse ye Meroz, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not up to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty," Judges, v. 23. If they are cursed who come not to help, they are not likely to be blessed who hatch mischief in the chimney corner, on purpose to hinder the Lord's helpers against the mighty.

I have considered the conduct of Abigail toward David, when he and his men were equipped and armed to destroy her whole house; which certainly savoured of a little spleen and bitterness; but she did not throw it in his teeth, nor tell him that he was too big by one-half, but fell at his feet, and said, "Upon me, my Lord, upon me' let this iniquity be, and let thine handmaid I pray thee speak in thine audience, and hear the words of thine handmaid. Let not my lord, I pray thee, regard this man of Belial, even Nabal; for as his name is so is he; Nabal is his name and folly is with him; but thine handmaid saw not the young men whom thou didst send. Now therefore, my lord, as the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, seeing the Lord hath withholden thee from coming to shed blood, and from avenging thyself with thine own hand; now let thine enemies, and they that seek evil to my lord, be as Nabal. I pray thee, forgive the trespass of thine handmaid; for the Lord will certainly make my lord a sure house; because my lord fighteth the battles of the Lord, and evil hath not been found in thee all thy days: yet a man is risen up to pursue thee and seek thy soul,

but the soul of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of life," 1 Sam. xxv. 24-28. This woman does not accuse him of any rancour, spleen, or bitterness; she brings no railing accusation against the man after God's own heart; she complains not of his being too big; she gives no rule to him to go by, nor limits the divine power that was with him by prescribing to the Holy Ghost that came on him after Samuel had anointed him. She enforces the promise, predicts his salvation and the destruction of his enemies, and desires to be remembered by him when it would be well with him.

I have considered the song of Hannah, who suffered so long (on the account of her barrenness) under Peninah, who is said to be "her adversary, who provoked her sore to make her fret because that the Lord had shut up her womb; and this she did year by year, when she went up to the house of the Lord, so she provoked her; therefore she wept and did not eat," 1 Sam. i. 6, 7. Nor did the conduct of Eli, who charged her with drunkenness, divest her of that modesty and candour that becomes women professing godliness: she never mentions a word against her husband Elkanah, who I think dealt very unkindly and untenderly with her; she only acknowledged that by strength no man could prevail over the womb or any thing else, Nor does she bring one slander against the priest, who had innocently brought a false charge against her, who was one of the best of women; which must be very provoking to one of a broken heart, influenced by the Holy Ghost, smashed and shattered by the repeated insults of an hypocrite, who had been her rival in the bed as well as her adversary in religion; for it is said she made her fret, because the Lord's hand had gone out against her in shutting her womb. But Hannah brings no charge in a two-penny pamphlet against either the priest or the husband; she speaks of the providence of God, of the salvation of the saints, and of the destruction of hypocrites: "He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail. The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken in pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them," 1 Sam. ii. 9, 10.

I have considered all the good prophetesses of the old and new testament, together with all them that are called faithful or honourable women in Paul's days, who had lodged strangers, brought up children, washed the saints' feet, laboured with Paul and helped him, who carried his messages or epistles, who served the churches, who were to be received; relieved, and brought on their ways by the members of the same, or to be conducted safe over the difficult or dangerous parts of their road, so that nothing was to be lacking to them; but not one of all these women, who were called faithful or honourable, ever wrote a word against a penitent sinner or a believer, much less against a minister of Christ Jesus.

I have considered the false prophetesses against whom Ezekiel was commanded to prophesy, Ezek. xiii. 17, who were to be rebuked, and against whom God pronounces his woe: "Wo to tile women that sow pillows under all arm-holes, and make kerchiefs upon the head," verse 18. These were accused of polluting God's name among his people for handfuls of barley, and for pieces of bread, rather than work; "wherefore, saith God, I am against your pillows, wherewith ye bunt souls to make them flee from the truth. I will tear them from your arms, and will let the souls go; your kerchiefs also will I tear, and deliver my people out of your hand; because with lies ye have made the righteous sad whom I have not made sad, and strengthened the hands of the wicked," Ezek. xiii. 20-22. But I cannot find that one of these ever wrote against a servant or prophet of the Lord.

Even the witch of Endor, though she was a pimp for the devil in private, yet had modesty enough to conceal her friend, and her private converse with him, until the king of Israel disguised himself, and went to her with a petition, and an "oath of God in his mouth, swearing unto her, as the Lord liveth there shall no punishment happen unto thee for this thing," 1 Sam. xxviii. 10. This woman's wickedness was exceeding great; she is said to hold converse with a familiar spirit; to correspond with the devil be a bawd to him, and stand pimp for him, is the quintessence of spiritual wickedness; yet to give this daughter of the devil her due, it must be granted that she was not without. some modesty, for she never reproaches the king for what he had done, only says to his messenger, "Behold thou knowest what Saul has done, how he hath cut off those that have familiar spirits, and the wizards out of the land, wherefore then layest thou a snare for my life, to cause me to die?" 1 Sam. xxviii. 9. Yet even this woman, who had lost so many brothers and sisters in profession, did not write to ridicule the king, though he had destroyed so many of her own synagogue, that belonged to the same fraternity, or was familiar with the same father; nor does she inveigh against any of the children of Israel whom Saul employed to cut off the wizards and witches; and so far is she from writing twopenny volumes against the Lord's servants that she is frightened at the appearance of her own father when he had swaddled himself up in the likeness of Samuel's mantle. "For when the woman saw Samuel she cried with a loud voice, and the woman said, Why hast thou deceived me? for thou art Saul. And the king said unto her, Be not afraid, for what sawest thou? and the woman said unto Saul, I saw gods ascending out of the earth, for an old man cometh up covered with a mantle," 1 Sam. xxviii. 12, 13, 14. This woman is so far from opposing the prophets of God, that she could not stand before the devil when he was

disguised in a prophet's mantle, until the king encouraged her, and told her not to be afraid.

Among all the women that are called mothers in Israel; among all the women that are called blessed; among all that are called faithful; among all that are called prophetesses of the Lord; among all that are called honourable women; among all that are said to minister to the Saviour, or help his servants; nay, not one among the false prophetesses, not Herodias herself; not one among Paul's tattling women, who waxed wanton, learned to be idle, wandering about from house to house; not one of the old wives that dealt in fables; not one of the witches that held familiarity with the devil himself, had ever courage or insolence enough to write against the servants of the Lord but Jezebel; who, among all the females that ever were born of women, was the most infamous for spiritual wickedness and murder; and her end was as dreadful as her life was vile. She "wrote letters in Ahab's name, and sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters unto the elders, and to the nobles that were in Ahab's city dwelling with Naboth." This woman was not afraid to send her address from house to house; she desired to skew her abilities—she was not ashamed of the cause she espoused. "She wrote in the letters, saying, Proclaim a fast [this woman was not without religion—she enforced fasting, and set Naboth on high among the people;" that is, she pretended to exalt him as one of God's servants, but conceals her villainous intention; and when you have done this then set the children of the devil at him—set two men, sons of Belial [or the devil] before him, to bear witness against him [charge him with antinomianism and disloyalty, saying, Thou didst blaspheme God and the king; and then carry him out, and stone him that he may die. And the men of his city, even the elders and the nobles (who are no great friends to religion), did as Jezebel had sent unto them, and as it was written in the letters which she had sent; and they proclaimed a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people." I suppose they said they had no doubt of his being a servant of the Lord: "And there came in two men, children of Belial, and sat before him." I suppose one was a plaisterer, and the other a musician; be that as it may, they enforced the law, and shewed they were no friends to antinomianism, nor to party spirits, for they agreed in their verdict. "And the men of Belial witnessed against him, even against Naboth in the presence of the people, saying, Naboth did blaspheme God and the king." These men enforced the moral law, and shewed their loyalty in bearing a public witness against this singular man, who would not part with his vineyard; "Then they carried Naboth forth out of the city, and stoned him with stones that he died," 1 Kings, xxi. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13.

This venerable mother Jezebel is all the precedent that our present prophetess has got to countenance her in writing against the servants of God; and the mystical body, to which this name Jezebel is now applied, is as pregnant with mischief, and as unsatiated for the blood of the saints, as her literal mother was, and all the artillery of God is levelled at her; even at popish Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess and pretends to teach. From these few observations it may be seen how the servants of God have fared in every age; and I shall endeavour to shew that the best of men have been charged with antinomianism, and of being influenced by a bad spirit; though it must be acknowledged, that the devil never could harden any women to write against the servants of God but Jezebel.

In prophetic times the "prop 2000 hets were called fools; spiritual men were called mad; the snare of a fowler in all his ways, and was hated in the house of his God," Hos. ix. 7, 8. If he was a fool he was tintured with enthusiasm, and if mad he was influenced by a bad spirit, for all madness is of the devil. Christ was accused of being influenced by a bad spirit; they said he cast out devils by Beelzebub, who was the God of Ekron; he was accused of antinomianism "This man is not of God;" he makes void the law; he keepeth not the sabbath, John, ix. 16; he was accused of disloyalty "he speaketh against Caesar," John, xix. 12.

Paul was accused of teaching the people to forsake Moses, and of doing evil that good might come; and all these enemies pretended great zeal for the law; even Jezebel herself fled for refuge here, as hath been already observed. It appears evident that the worst adversaries that ever Christ or his church have had upon earth, were hypocritical professors of religion; and all their rage and murder that they committed upon the saints, was always done under a cloak of zeal for the holy law of God. Jezebel pretended to act by this rule: Naboth blasphemed God and the king-stone him to death. "Whosoever curseth his-God shall bear his sin; and he that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, he shall surely be put to death; all the congregation shall certainly stone him," Levit. xxiv. 15, 16.

The Jews took shelter under the law when they crucified Christ; "We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God," John, xix. 7. But the holy law of God was no protection for them; it countenances no murderer, no false witness, no hypocrite, no slanderer, no false teacher, no false accuser; Did not Moses give you the law? and yet none of you keep the law: why go ye about to kill me, John, vii. 19. When the Saviour brought the law against them, they accused him of a bad spirit; they said, Thou hast a devil. Who goeth about to kill thee? verse 20. This was the Jews' plea against Paul: "And they are informed of thee,

that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses; saying, that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs," Acts, xxi. 21. The rulers that attempted to put Paul to death at Jerusalem put on this cloak:- Thou west brother Paul how many thousands there are that believe, and they are. all zealous of the law," Acts, xxi. 20. And under this cloak of maliciousness they laid violent hands upon the apostle, crying out, Men of Israel help; this is the man that teacheth all men every where against the people, and the law, and this place, verse 28. Poor Stephen was murdered under this cloak: "Then they suborned men which said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and against God: For we have heard him say, that this Jesus shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us," Acts, vi. 11, 14.

Thus it appears how the children of the free woman have been put to death by the children of Hagar; and all under a cloak of zeal for the law. Modern hypocrites fly here when they attempt to ridicule the grace of God; yea, even pharisees, who are farther from the kingdom of God than publicans and harlots, will charge the children of God with want of love to holiness. Yet none of these persecutors and murderers were destitute of candour. It is true, they used sharpness against the saints; yet even Jezebel, though she charged Naboth with antinomianism, or making void the law, by blaspheming, God and the king, yet she shewed much gentleness and candour to some that were of a different persuasion, for she kept four hundred of these at her own table.

But I suppose you want to know what these people mean by candour. Let me once more describe an hypocritical professor of religion; though I have touched upon him before in this discourse, yet I will stir up your pure minds again by way of remembrance.

First, they attend alarming preachers, and receive some light into the letter of the law; which light does not teach the heart to discover sin, but the bead only, which is enlightened into the letter of the law; they have a form of knowledge [that is all] and of the truth in the law, Rom. ii. 20. This form of knowledge is the lamp which these foolish virgins take; the law is a light to their feet, the commandment is a lamp, Prov. vi. 23. These are said, as Paul said of himself, to be alive without the law; that is, they are alive to this their form of knowledge, and accordingly make this form their only and all-sufficient rule of life: and no wonder, when they have not got the law at all they are alive without the law-the law has not killed them. To this form of knowledge which they are alive to, they perform a deal of eve-service, which is mercenary; such as the elder son boasted of, who told his father

that he never transgressed his commandments at any time, saying, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, Luke, xv. 29, in the oldness of the letter, Rom. vii. 6. To this form of knowledge out of the law, the hypocrite adds an assent to the truths of the gospel; the law is his lamp and his rule; the gospel serves only for a cloak. To this assent to the truths of the gospel, they add a reformation of life and manners, which is called escaping the pollution that is in the world; and their apostasy is called a turning from the holy commandment, not from the promise of Christ, nor the grace of God, but from the holy commandment delivered to them, 2 Peter, ii. 20, 21. To this form of knowledge out of the law, and assent to the gospel (or what is called a feigned faith), and an external reformation, they add one thing more, which makes the hypocrite pass -n disguise into the church; which is, they skew their wisdom, in being forward to talk; they are diligent in their will worship, and put on the garb of voluntary humility, Coloss. ii. 18, 23. which completes the spiced or perfumed hypocrite, who hath been sweetened and embalmed by an empty profession, and appears to be changed by the gospel just as lemon-peel is by clarified sugar; hence their flummery or candour is called a sweet spirit; and such a disguised perfumed hypocrite is called a candid person. There were great numbers of old women in Jerusalem who made a livelihood by such meekness and candour as this; they were called mourning women, and used to be hired at burials to weep and mourn when the surviving could not do it; you might have enough of it if you had but money to pay them for it. God talks of these hypocrites: Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Consider ye, and call for mourning women, and send for cunning women that they may come, and let them make haste and take up a wailing for us, Jer. ix. 17, 18. But what has all this to do with a saint of God? he is quite another thing; the law proceeds from God to him; he receives it at his mouth, and lays up his words in his heart; the commandment comes with power, sin revives and he dies, and then rises with Christ under the operations of the Spirit of God; such walk in newness of life, and serve in the newness of the Spirit, follow Christ in the regeneration, and go from strength to strength till they appear before God in Zion and as many as walk according to this rule, mercy on them and peace, and upon the Israel of God.

From what has been said, it is plain, there is nothing in this text that militates against a labourer in the Lord's vineyard, or against a good soldier of Christ Jesus; nor is there any thing in it that countenances or encourages sensual men or mourning women, to vilify, slander, or ridicule the servants of God as being destitute of candour. The same God that tells me to be gentle, tells me to use sharpness where it is wanted; to be gentle to all men, yet to reject an heretic after the first or second admonition to be apt to teach, and yet to stop the mouths of gainsayers; to reprove and

rebuke, as well as comfort and encourage; to honour widows that are widows indeed; but not to suffer idle, tattling, canting women to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man; to insist upon such women's using the spindle and distaff, instead of eating the bread of idleness and living upon the labour of others. "Behold this was the iniquity of their sister Sodom, pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness," Ezek. xvi. 49; and it is women that give themselves over to the same lazy life, that are bringing the same fiery judgments on their own souls; who, rather than work with their hands, will pretend even to the Spirit of grace, counterfeit religion, injure the ministry, oppose the servants of God, and expose the worshippers of him to contempt at the doors of the congregation, and set the uncircumcised to triumph in order to pick up a few pence, to indulge their idleness rather than stoop to the needle, or to the honest calling of; gathering a few rags, or selling laces and pins. Such set themselves up for prophetesses and teachers, and so blind the eyes of poor simple people and mump a livelihood out of them, while these poor honest souls think they are serving Christ, by housing and feeding his saints; whereas they are only serving the devil, nursing his hypocritical family, and bringing themselves to poverty. God says, if they will not work neither shall they eat; keep such tattling hypocrites as these out of your houses; enquire after the experience of their religion, and keep your pantry door locked, and they will soon leave clone with you, when they find you destitute of candour. Remember, a real believer thinks it is more blessed to give than to receive; a true Christian is diligent in business and fervent in spirit. Such idle, tattling, and graceless women who pretend to the Spirit of God, while they are destitute of his operations and act so diametrically opposite to the word of the Lord, sin with an higher hand than I did when in a state of nature; for even then there appeared something so sacred and awful in the name Holy Spirit or Holy Ghost, that I never cared even to mention it unless in reading; but these hardened hypocrites are more undaunted than Simon Magus; he offered to buy the Spirit with money, and these pretend to be influenced by him in order to get money. God shall discover this woman, whom I believe to be destitute of all reverence of God or fear of him. And Mr. Holywellmount, who bought ninety two-penny volumes to circulate in order to injure me in the work of the Lord, he knows nothing of the plague of his own heart, nor of a spiritual birth; and as for Sir Ham Cottish and Mr. Belly, God never sent them at all to preach his word. As I have obtained mercy, I hope to be found faithful, to try the spirits whether they are of God, and to try them which say they are apostles or evangelists, and to prove them liars if they are not. This is a work that belongs to the Lord's servants, and God in his own time shall bring forth our righteousness as the light, and our judgment as the noon day; and then it shall be made manifest who are his and who not. Now to the King

eternal. immortal, Invisible, the only wise God, our Saviour, be glory, majesty, dominion, and power, now and for ever. Amen and amen.

Spoils taken from the Tower of London

- without Siege, Violence, Bloodshed, Conquest, or Loss to the Owners.

IN A LETTER TO A FRIEND.

William Huntington S.S. (1745-1813)

Moreover I have given thee one portion above thy brethren. -
Gen. 48:22.

From a certain loyalist in the burning bush, to the son of David, alias Mr. Davidson, no. 7, postern row, secured by a wall, though in view of the ditch, living near the tower.

Dear Sir,

I WISH grace, mercy, and peace to be for ever with thee through Jesus Christ, our most blessed God and Saviour. In my way home after you was so kind as to accompany me in viewing the many curiosities in the Tower, I fell to considering and spiritualizing the various things that I had seen; and upon reflection my roving fancy took her flight, and at her return many things were exhibited on the threshold; the conclusion I made is, that your situation is somewhat singular, and your privileges such as few can boast of.

You live in daily prospect of the high tower, Psal. xviii. 2; which the royal psalmist, though highly favoured of God, was not always indulged with. When we are fixed on the high tower the world appears as the drop of a

bucket, or the small dust of a balance, lighter than vanity and less than nothing. You know the promise is that the saint shall dwell on high, that his place of defence shall be the munition of rocks, that bread shall be given him and his water shall be sure, that he shall see the King in 2000 his beauty, and behold the land that is very far off.

The royal armoury is within a bowshot of your person, "whereon there hang a thousand buckle"" , all shields of mighty men," Cant. iv. 4. Many a good soldier of Jesus Christ, when engaged in the fight of faith, has felt his need of the helmet of hope, the breastplate of righteousness, the shield of help, the shield of faith, the girdle of truth, and the sword of the Spirit, who never could say, as you can, that they lived all the year round close to and in full view of the royal armoury.

Nor have you any thing to fear from the horse armoury. The horses, their armour, their formidable riders, and their weapons of war, strike no terror; they are all fixed, and confined in perpetual imprisonment; there is no apprehension of any danger from them; all the terror they have caused in the land of the lying is now over. What would thousands of Christians have given to have seen the Saracens in the same manner confined when they appeared so terrible: as it is written, "And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them. And thus I saw he horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone; and the heads of horses were as the heads of lions, and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone. By these three was the bird part of men killed." Thus the Tower presents some things in effigy which John saw in vision; and the iron breastplates on the Saracens' troop horses were lively emblems of the seared consciences of that troop of locusts who spread the doctrines of the Turkish alcoran; and of the trading swarm of popish priests, who get money for themselves, and souls for the devil, by selling bulls and pardons.

Many a young Christian who has had Christ in him the hope of glory, has been afraid at first to launch out into the world in a public profession, saying, with the sluggard, "There is a lion without, I shall be slain in the streets," Prov. xxii. 13; whereas you can go every day and see not only the lions, but wolves, bears, tigers, and leopards, all confined in their dens; yea, you can lay on your bed and hear their terrible roar, but not one of them can come nigh thy dwelling. Highly favoured Daniel, only for calling upon his God, was east in among them; but as he cleaved close to the lion of the tribe of Judah, the others could do him no mischief. O what a day will that be, when the lion of the bottomless pit shall be as closely cooped

as those are in the Tower. The angel will come down at the time appointed, and bring his chain in his hand, lay hold of that old serpent the devil, and bind him a thousand years, cast him into the pit, and set a seal upon him, which will make the den more secure than the seal of the king of Babylon made that of the lions' den, that his purpose might not be changed concerning Daniel; or the seal of the Jewish rabbies on the Saviour's sepulchre, which was intended to baffle the force of omnipotence.

The Tower-ditch may serve to remind thee of the very many who by missing the way to the strait gate, have been directed further from it by blind guides, who have groped for the wall till the leader and the led have both fell into the ditch together. Two or three persons have fell into the Tower-ditch in thy days; but it is to be feared there are many more who daily fall into a ditch far worse and far deeper than that. But there is a wall between thee and the ditch, though but a very low one, which may serve to remind thee of Zion's safety; "In that day shall this song be sung, We have a strong city, salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks," Souls encompassed with these are well secured from the ditch. The wall being so very low on the hill side, and so high on the side of the ditch, serves to shew us the side on which the miser takes a view of his bags, whose "wealth is his strong city, and as an high wall in his own conceit," Prov. xviii. 11; so the outward Tower wall appears to a person on the ditch-side; but was he upon Tower-hill it would hardly be seen; so let a worldling be stationed on Zion-hill, and his wall vanishes altogether, and appears less than nothing. But to set a man here is the work of him who said to the publican, "This day is salvation come to this house;" upon the proclamation of which the wall of wealth yielded up the fort of the heart, and the root of all evil was no longer a bulwark of safety.

You have a considerable number of men under arms near your dwelling both day and night; whereas Zion and her rightful sovereign have but few if any more who keep guard round their royal state bed: "Behold his bed which is Solomon's; threescore valiant men are about it, of the valiant of Israel. They all hold swords, being expert in war; every man hath his sword upon his thigh, because of fear in the night." This guard may serve to remind thee of the ministers of the gospel, who are to defend the truth, and the church of the living God, which is the ground and pillar of it, with such spiritual weapons as the Lord's armoury furnishes them with. But thy sure defence is in the God of armies, who is both our guardian and our watch; "Unless the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain."

If I mistake not, thy dwelling is between two hills; one is died Great and the other Little Tower Hill. It is a blessed thing to have one's dwelling among the hills; that is, to have the ancient mountain of eternal election made sure behind, and the everlasting hill of glorification in full view before. It is prophesied that "the mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills by righteousness ;" upon these God has promised towers of blessing, which make the heart soft, and cause joy unspeakable to spring up within; this crowns a gospel year with goodness, while God's paths drop fatness; "They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness, and the Little hills rejoice on every side," Psalm lxxv. 11, 12.

The royal crown may serve to remind thee of the crown of knowledge with which the prudent are crowned; of the crown of loving-kindness and tender mercies, which the believer appears in on certain court days; of the crown of life promised to the faithful overcomer at his death; of the crown of righteousness, which is to be worn by kings and priests when they will appear as faithful witnesses at the day of judgment; and of the incorruptible crown of glory that is undefiled, and that never fades ray, reserved in heaven for those who are kept by the mighty power of God through faith to salvation. He whose eyes are as flame of fire, and on whose head are many crowns, Rev. xix. 12; will one day or other bring these forth in all their divine tree when the chosen fraternity are raised up from the dust, and the beggars from the dunghill, and made to sit among princes, and to inherit the throne of glory, 1 Sam. ii. 8.

The royal diadem with its numerous gems brought to my mind the inconceivable beauty, and the sparkling lustre of divine majesty, that the ever blessed Saviour, the Prince of Peace, sometimes appears in, when he comes to pay his addresses or love-visits to poor wretched sinners, in order to woo and espouse them to himself. In those nuptial days, the Lord of Hosts is a crown of glory and a diadem of beauty to the residue of his people, Isa. viii. 5. Nor will Zion be less in the eyes of her royal bridegroom when he rises and shines with all his glorious majesty on her; she will be a royal diadem in the hand of her God, and be no more termed forsaken or desolate, but Hephzibah, the Lord's delight, Isaiah, lxxii. 3, 4. To be blessed with a savoury experience of this, and to enjoy the Spirit's sweet influences, are summary pledges and foretastes of what is to come; these are the marks that secure the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. The soul that knows, experiences, and enjoys these things, and is persuaded in his own mind, by the Spirit of faith, of the reality of them, and of his part and lot in them, may say, as Job did, "My judgment is as a robe and a diadem."

The golden sceptre may remind thee of the sceptre of righteousness, by which every faithful subject of the King of kings is ruled. Victory over devils, the world, self, sin, and death, is, the blessed effect of being under the sceptre of righteousness and the dominion of grace. It is true none of these adversaries are destroyed in the strictest sense; but their destroying power is with respect to the elect, and they will be all beat down under our feet in due time. I am an eye witness that you touched the golden sceptre once; but this is not enough, we must appear at court daily to renew our friendship, and give proof of our loyalty. Beware of a shyness; a distance; a lukewarmness; indulged sins; contracted guilt; an accusing devil; or, what is worse than all, an accusing conscience getting between the King and thee; these things obscure or bring a cloud over the throne of grace, which in time hinders prayer from going forth. At the worst of times, and with the worst of cases, do as some did in the days of old, who said, I will go in and stand before the King, and if I perish I perish; to whom the golden sceptre was held out, and half the kingdom promised; but Christ gives more, for the whole kingdom is ours.

The curtana, or blunt sword of mercy, which is carried between the two swords of justice, the spiritual and the temporal, brought to my mind the terrible appearance that the Lord makes when he first comes to the chosen sinner, and wounds him with the sword of the Spirit, which separates joints and marrow, and discovers the recesses of the heart; insomuch that the poor sinner thinks he is going to destruction; whereas the sword of mercy, though it hath got two edges, yet it hath no point. The wound, or rather bruise, that the Saviour gives us with this, when he appears as conqueror, serves to make more work for him as a physician. I wound and I heal, saith the blessed Redeemer; the Lord maketh sore and bindeth up; he that girds his sword upon his thigh as the most mighty, is anointed to bind up the broken hearted, and to set at liberty those that are bruised, Luke, iv. 18. I think this blunt sword may represent that which Moses speaks of; "Happy art thou, O Israel; who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thine excellency?" An excellent sword this, there is none like it; the wounds we receive from this are excellent, noble, divine, and durable; God grant they never may be healed while we live in the world, seeing a broken spirit is an acceptable sacrifice; under every wound remember it is the sword of mercy; in mercy it is used, and through mercy it will do no hurt; mercy has a soft hand, a tender heart, and compassionate bowels; if fatherly severity gives a wound, tender pity applies the balm. It may be said of a saint in a good sense as it is said of the popish beast in a bad one; That he received a wound by a sword and did live, for his deadly wound was healed; and the whole world will one day wonder as much at the saint, as it wondered

after the beast. In short, it will not be terrible to a child of God to die of the wounds given by the sword of mercy. This weapon is generally used where peace is proclaimed; "There is that speaketh like the piercing of a sword, but the tongue of the wise is health."

The ivory sceptre with the dove on the top put me in mind of Solomon's ivory throne, which that peaceable prince made for himself, "overlayed with the best gold; the throne had six steps, and the top of the throne was round behind; and there were stays on either side on the place of the seat, and two lions stood beside the stays. And twelve lions stood there on the one side and on the other upon the six steps; there was not the like made in any kingdom." This throne beautifully typified the throne of grace; the light colour may shew the Saviour's holy and merciful proceedings with his own people; the two lions at the foot of the throne, the one representing the terrible majesty of his deity; "The lion hath roared, who will not fear? the Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy?" the other the majesty of his risen, exalted, and glorified humanity, he being the lion of the tribe of Judah. The six steps may prefigure the Saviour's way to his throne; he went to it, 1. By his descent from heaven. 2. By his assumption of human nature. 3. By his state of humiliation as a servant. 4. By his obedient descent by death into the grave. 5. By his resurrection; and 6. By his ascension to heaven, where he is sat down on the throne of majesty on high. The twelve lions on the steps of the ivory throne might represent not only the twelve tribes, who at first supported Solomon on his throne, but the twelve apostles, who as prime ministers of state, and the honourable privy council of the great king, appeared bold, valiant, and courageous, spent all they had, and were spent themselves in defending the honour, hereditary and meritorious right of their royal master to the throne of David, and the government of the house of Israel; their standing on the steps may denote their ascension after their master, and the impossibility of any getting to the Saviour but by obedience to the doctrines which they taught; it may likewise denote their ascension to be with their Lord, who will one day appear twelve lions indeed, when they sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. The ivory sceptre put me in mind of the sceptre swayed by the Saviour in glory; he is king of Zion and king of glory, king of saints, and king of angels, principalities and powers. The colour of this sceptre put me in mind of the bright, the glorious, and lovely proceedings of the great King among the spirits of just men made perfect.

The dove upon the top, the emblem of peace, served to remind me of those peaceable mansions and quiet habitations above, where uninterrupted peace shall be enjoyed, the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary be for ever at rest. The dove brought to my mind the

blessed Spirit of God, which rests upon every loyal subject of the Saviour's spiritual kingdom; and on which account the church is called by her royal bridegroom, "My love, my dove, my undefiled;" "My dove that art in the clefts of the rock, Let me see thy countenance," says the altogether lovely, "Let me hear thy voice, for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely."

The silver fountain being empty put me in mind of the emptiness of all sublunary enjoyments, which at first sight seem to promise much, but afford no more than the fountain did to us, that is, the beholding of it with our eyes, which are never satisfied with seeing. An empty fountain seems a contradiction in terms, because it has no supply from itself; it should rather be called a cistern, because it will hold water if you put it into it; but all the transient enjoyments of this world are in a cistern that can hold no water. "My people," saith God, "have committed two evils, they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water." God is a fountain of living water, from whom through the Lamb comes that glorious river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God.

Souls filled and satisfied with this water never thirst for the vanities of this world again; he has got a spring within him, as wisdom says; "A good man is satisfied from himself," that is, from a knowledge of his own safety and happiness, for his very heart is a fountain being partaker of that water that springs up into ever lasting life; on which account the church is called "A garden enclosed a spring shut up, a fountain sealed." This spring shall carry us at last into that inexhaustible fountain from whence the streams descend; then we shall be abundantly satisfied with the goodness of his house, and drink of the 2000 river of his pleasure; for with him is the fountain of life; until which happy and blessed period we must content ourselves with that glorious declaration that heaven has made to Zion; "All my springs are in thee."

The golden eagle with her expanded wings put me in mind of the amazing condescension and tender love of God, which quickens, inflames, and bears the church above the world. Moses represents this bird as turning over her eggs, that they may all get warm alike; as hovering over her young, and taking them on her wings and mounting up with them, in order to teach them how to fly; and then compares it to the tender care and love of God to his people. "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord alone did lead him [Jacob] and there was no strange

God with him. He made him ride on the high places of the earth," Deut. xxxii. 11 - 13.

The eagle is a very towering flyer, noted for scent and quickness of sight; on which account heavenly-minded souls are compared to her; "They shall mount up as upon eagles' wings, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." Job says the eagle beholds afar off; and I am sure that the eye of faith sees further than all the eagles in the world; the ancient saints saw the promise at a distance. Enoch, the seventh from Adam, saw the day of judgment; and the eye of faith will pry into heaven itself, and see the way thither; so that the eye of faith exceeds the eye of the eagle, for that is "a path that no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath never seen." It is said of the eagle that she can look at the full blaze of the sun; so can the Christian, when the Sun has looked upon him; he can see him that is invisible, and find his sight strengthened instead of weakened; it affords pleasure instead of pain; "a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun."

We were informed that the holy oil is put into the golden eagle, and poured out of its beak into the golden spoon, with which the kings of Great Britain are anointed; this put me in mind of the golden pipes, which empty the golden oil out of themselves, Zech. iv. 12. The candlestick represents the church; the bowl upon the top of it the gospel of Christ preached; the seven lamps the eyes of the Lord upon it, and his precious salvation in it; the seven pipes represent tried, purified, and faithful ministers, who are ministers of the spirit; who being anointed with the oil of joy themselves, anoint others with the same oil in the name of the Lord, James, v. 14; and all this comes from Him who is said to bear Jacob as on eagles' wings, who was anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows, that he might give us "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness," Isaiah, lxi. 3. This anointing makes us kings and priests unto God. This oil makes the countenance of a saint to shine; it keeps the lamp of his salvation burning with love, light, and zeal, so that it goeth not out by night, nor even at midnight; the light of the righteous rejoiceth, when the lamp of the wicked is put out, Prov. xiii. 9. "There is a treasure to be desired," saith the wise man "and [it is] oil in the dwelling of the wise;" which will certainly be fulfilled when the foolish virgins will say to the wise, Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out. This oil is no less than the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of all grace. Jesus was anointed with the Holy Ghost. The soul that has got this blessing shall find all things work for his good; "Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness; and let him reprove me, it shall be an excellent oil." Job was no stranger to this when he made this doleful and lamentable complaint: "O that I were as in

months past, as in the days when God preserved me; when his candle shined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness; as I was in the days of my youth, when the secret of God was upon my tabernacle; when the Almighty was yet with me, when my children were about me; when I washed my steps with butter, and the rock poured me out rivers of oil."

The golden spoon may serve to caution us against remissness in duty, coldness, slothfulness, and negligence in the ways of God, which make Christians weak, sickly, and childish in spiritual things. Spoons are table furniture, generally used to feed children; we are commanded to grow in grace and knowledge; to be men in understanding. A stunted, weak, rickety child is always in the cradle, the chair, the arms, the swing, the backstring, or the go-cart; they are always in danger; never out of harm's way. Paul speaks of the Hebrews, who for the time they had made a profession ought to have been teachers, who needed teaching again, being children; needing milk instead of meat; he that useth milk, says the apostle, is unskilful in the word of righteousness for he is a babe. It is to our own advantage that grow in knowledge and experience; we are then able to give a reason of our hope, defend our own testimony, stop the mouth gainsayer, and discover the emptiness of a fawning hypocrite. It is by trials, by watchfulness, by diligence, by meditation, by reading, by spiritual conversation, and by prayer, that Christians grow as the vine, revive as the corn, and flourish as the palm tree. Such souls are capable of discerning, receiving, and digesting and wholesome doctrines, which the apostle calls meat. "I have fed you," saith he, "with milk, not with meat, for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able." "Strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern between good and evil." If my friend can bear such food as this, there is another curiosity that may be considered, and that is:

The golden salt-cellar of state, made like the square white tower which is used at the king's table on the day of coronation. This golden salt-cellar may prefigure a believing heart blessed with the grace of God, which will preserve us to God's everlasting kingdom: "Have salt in yourselves," says the Saviour, "and have peace one with another." Every spiritual sacrifice stands in need of this savoury article. The sacrifices of a broken heart, of prayer, of praise, of almsgiving, of thanksgiving, yea, even the body which is to be presented as a living sacrifice, in need of salt: "Every oblation of thy meat-offering shalt thou season with salt; neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking from thy meat-offering; with thine offerings thou shalt offer salt." "Every sacrifice shall be salted with

salt." The apostles and Jewish disciples were the salt of the land of Canaan; "Ye are the salt of the earth," and so the Jews found it at the destruction of Jerusalem. When the Christians fled to Pella in Celosyria, the Jews had lost all their seasoning, and their savour, and they became a stink in the nostrils of God, and he numbered them to the sword, till they stank upon the earth.

Salt is a preservative, and of a communicative nature; so divine grace saves a man, and serves to season others; without this a man is nothing; without this he can be of no spiritual use or advantage to others: "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man." It is this savoury article that makes the difference between a real Christian and a hypocrite; the latter may learn the language of a Christian, his outward deportment, and the form of religion, and talk about a good and bad spirit, as some do who know of no other spirit than that of spirituous liquors; but these hypocrites cannot counterfeit nor describe this salt; this seasoning lies too deep for them, it can only be known by experience, and described by the experienced. He that was instrumental in making known the savour of Christ's name in every place, and was a sweet savour unto God in them that are saved and in them that perish, could say, "It is meet for me to think this of you all; that ye are all partakers of my grace," Phil. i. 7. A wolf in sheep's clothing may preach, converse, or write, but he cannot season; hypocrites may be pleased and charmed with words, for they do not know but what the kingdom of God is in word; we know that salt is good, but with them it hath lost its savour; they have no relish for it, therefore how shall they be seasoned with it? Luke, xiv. 34. The true Christian looks more after the power than the sound; he is more for savoury meat than music: "Can that which is unsavoury be eaten without salt," says Job, "or is there any taste in the white of an egg?" "How forcible are right words, but what doth your arguing reprove?"

The golden bracelets brought to my mind the spiritual ornaments of the Jewish church in her prosperity; I decked thee also with ornaments, and I put bracelets upon thy hands, and a chain on thy neck. And I put a jewel on thy forehead, and earrings in thine ears, and a beautiful crown upon thy head, Ezek. vi. 11, 12. The best royal robe that ever Zion put on is the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ; the next to that is the garment of salvation; and under both these "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, in the sight of God of great price." The finest and most delicate hand is the hand of faith by which the soul lays hold on eternal life; by this the king of heaven was held in the galleries; with this the princess royal held her adorable lover: I held him, I would not let him go, until I had brought him to

my mother's house, and into the chamber of her that conceived me," where the marriage treaty was settled; "My beloved is mine and I am his." The best spiritual bracelet that I know *, is the bond of everlasting love; this is the bond of union and the bond of all perfection, and is a ring for the finger, Luke, v. 22; a chain for the neck, Cant. iv. 9; and a bracelet for the fist, Ezek. vi. 11: it is a sure, a satisfactory, and an everlasting token; it is the main tie of eternal wedlock, and the root of all the joys that attend it either in this world or in that which is to)me. The hand of faith, however delicate in the eyes of some, is nothing without this ornament; "Faith worketh by love." This ornament makes the spouse appear an honour to her husband and an honourable manager of her household; "Her children rise up and call her blessed? Faith worketh by love, and love is an helpmate to faith: "Charity believeth all things;" with this working hand the spouse maketh fine linen and selleth it, and delivers girdles of truth to spiritual merchants; strength and honour are her clothing, and she shall rejoice in time to come, Prov. xxxi. 24, 25.

The golden spurs worn at the coronation may serve to caution s against slothfulness; we are commanded to run the race set before us, not to turn to the right hand or the left, not to look back or tarry in all the plain; Christians are not compared to elephants or camels, but to horses, harts, hinds, and roes; creatures that are swift afoot. The spurs brought to my mind the cutting reproofs and rebukes that the lively and truly gracious christian sometimes gives to the sluggish, careless, and remiss professor. Solomon says, "A reproof entereth more into a wise man than n hundred stripes into a fool." A bright, shining, diligent christian is a living reproof to the wicked, and a golden spur to sluggish professor. Nothing is more mortifying to a heavy horse than a good rowelled spur; you know the flock of the house of Judah, that the Lord of hosts visited, are called his goodly horse in the battle, Zech. x. 3, and troop horses are seldom ridden without a provoking spur; Paul speaks of the liberal Corinthians, of whom he boasted to them of Macedonia, that some in Achaia were ready a year ago, and that their zeal had provoked very many, 2 Car. ix. 2.

The most disagreeable sight to me in all the Tower was what they call, the school of apes. This apish academy, without a teacher, put me in mind of a band of hypocritical professors, who think to bribe heaven with a counterfeit shew, and to pass disguised in sheep's clothing, though they are without Christ in the world. Eliphaz says, "The congregation of hypocrites shall be desolate, and fire shall consume the tabernacles of bribery." That very large ape that sat at the left-hand corner as we entered the room, which took the other little ones into its hands, put them between its hinder legs, warmed them by the fire, hugged them in its arms, while all

the little ones sat in awe with their eyes fixed, observing nothing but the motions of him, had a very strange appearance. This lord paramount, which sat as a father of the Family, put me in mind of the devil's fondling and making sport of those of his own household, which the Saviour calls the synagogue of Satan. Christ says that mammon is the master of those mimickers of religion, who draw near to God with their mouth while their hearts are far from him; yea, he calls the devil the father of hypocrites; "Wo unto you scribes and pharisees, hypocrites," Luke, xi. 44. "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." Apes are noted for mimicry and activity; I have seen some of them mount over and tumble like a mountebank on a stage; you know the word hypocrite, signifies a mountebank or stage player in scripture, who generally appears in the character of another instead of his own, as an hypocrite does in the character of a saint; hence the Saviour's caution, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves." I considered the school of apes as lively emblems of Job's congregation of hypocrites, on the following accounts.

First, They come the nighest to the human species of any of the brute creation; and of all the religious orders among men there is none come so near the new creation, or to souls created anew in Christ Jesus as a varnished hypocrite, who has laid by his written form of religion and counterfeits a spiritual worshipper.

Secondly, The use that the ape makes of its fore paws, which are so much like the human hands, displays the dexterity of the hypocrite, who can weave the spider's web of self-righteousness, and hatch the cockatrice egg of serpentine mischief; even in the church of God. Hence wisdom compares the hypocrite to that weaver; and there is a kind of apes called the spider ape; "The spider taketh hold with her hands and is in king's palaces," Prov. xxx. 28; and like the spider, the hypocrite generally entangles himself in his own web; hence Bildad declares "the hypocrite's hope shall perish; whose hope shall be cut off; whose shall be a spider's web," Job, viii. 13, 14.

Thirdly, The sagacity of the ape which tries to imitate every thing that it sees a person do; so the hypocrite imitates the saint. Does the christian enforce spiritual holiness? the hypocrite does the same; but to what purpose? If a man was to enforce obedience to the third commandment all the year round to me, yet if himself lived in blasphemy, I should hate him, and lightly esteem his as it appeared to have no influence on himself. It is common for hypocrites to make a great outcry against the grace et God, and cry up the holy law as the only rule of life, while any discerning eye

may see they privately hate and seek to injure the cause of God; would sooner offend his servants and worshippers, spend one hour to reform the vile. This shews their enmity God, the pleasure they take in the triumphs they give the Philistines; besides, precepts enforced by people abandoned to wickedness, who live on, cohabit with, and stand as pimps for drunkards, what can be expected from them? when it is evident they are destitute of the grace of God, nurses for hypocrites, making a gain of godliness, living like drone bees on the honey of the industrious, and eat the bread of idleness. Reproofs or instructions given by such awful characters only harden rebels their sins, and can have no more weight on a serious person as the rebukes of Judas, whom the Saviour calls a devil, had, he rebuked the Saviour and Mary about the waste of ointment; no saint under the dominion of grace and in union with Christ can ever slight the power of the Spirit, by giving heed to abused precept in the mouth of a palpable impostor. We know the grace of God teaches the saint to have respect to all the commandments, the fourth as well as the rest; the precept in the mouth of a rebel is like a parable in the mouth of a fool. "Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work." If any will not work neither shall he eat, 2 Thess. iii. 10. "If any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." They are to study to be quiet, to do their own business, and work with their own hands, 1 Thess. iv. 11. If the hypocrite denies the faith, how can he keep his credit up but by making a noise about the law? for it is the talker and the hearer of the law that is justified by him, not the doer; for he is an Antinomian.

Fourthly, The knowledge that these creatures seem to have of the different sexes of the human species has something very shocking and disgusting in it. They are creatures noted for craftiness, always in mischief, stealing things and hiding them, and the seeming pleasure that they take in doing it is emblematical enough of the lechery and treachery of hypocrites; witness the counsel of that arch monster, that sworn enemy to God's Israel, namely Balaam, as it is written; "And Moses said unto them, Have ye saved all the women alive? Behold, these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit a trespass against the Lord in the matter of Peor," Num. xxxi. 15, 16. Thus the devil got his end through the instrumentality of wretched Balaam, which ended in the destruction of the women of Moab, as well as the men of Israel. The effects of Balaam's counsel may be gathered from the following passage; "And Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab. And they called the people to the sacrifices of their gods; and the people did eat, and bowed down to their gods. And Israel joined himself to Baal-peor; and the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel." This old

leaven lurked at the root of the Nicolatians, who taught community of wives, which the Saviour complains of to the angel of the church of Pergamos; "Thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balsam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel. So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolatians, which thing I hate." We know there is no escaping the pollutions that are in the world through lust, but by the almighty power and sovereign grace of God: it is true, there is a nation pure in their own eyes but they are not so in God's eyes till washed from their filthiness. The cunning, artful craftiness, the pilfering tricks, and the pleasure that the ape takes in doing mischief brought to my mind the subtle proceedings of those professors which Jude compares to natural brute beasts, made lo taken and destroyed, who speak evil of the things that they understand not," Jude, 10. They are said to walk in craftiness, and handle the word of God deceitfully. Some of this stamp came to betray the Saviour, but he could penetrate into their craftiness, Luke, xx. 23. The pleasure those false professors take in doing mischief to the cause, to the reputation, and usefulness of the saints, by giving offence to them, by staggering the weak, by tripping up the heels of the seeker, by strengthening the hands of evil doers, by emboldening the presumptuous, fortifying the erroneous, and furnishing rite contemptuous with arguments against the children of God. Some in Paul's days pretended to love the same Saviour, preach the same doctrine at Paul did, and yet averred that he said, "Let us do evil that good may come." The description Wisdom gives of these is, they are said to sit at the doors, to call passengers who go right on their way, to be loud and clamorous, to watch for the saints' halting, to rejoice when their feet slip, to wait for iniquity, and ever to rest at quiet unless they have prejudiced or stumbled me one or other. "They sleep not unless they have done mischief, and their sleep is taken away unless they cause some to fall."

The brutal fondness of these apes brought to my mind the way which an hypocrite deceives and plunders a simple believer; there is hardly a sincere soul that I know but in his infant state of grace has fallen a prey to these. When they bare a mind to pick your pocket or make a gain of you, they generally take a glass or two of rum, brandy, or good old Geneva, and the operation of that sets all the bowels of candour to work; then they will pour you out a whole gill of tears; Joel well understood their way, "Awake, ye drunkards, and weep; and howl, all ye drinkers of wine," Joel, i. 5; and so they will until they have got the baubees, and then like the ape with the apple, they set, as he does, upon the house top, chattering and bidding fiancÉ to all the inhabitants within. Of this stamp were the multitude that followed the Saviour over the sea of Tiberius, for the loaves

and fishes, whom he sent back, telling them, they must eat his flesh and drink his blood, or die for ever.

An ape is very odious and dangerous to pregnant women; bad effects have been known to have been produced from women in such cases taking flight at the sight of an ape; and surely nothing is more dangerous to a pregnant or fruitful church than a profound hypocrite, who hates the power of religion and the possessors of it; by their hypocrisy and their errors they have sometimes so injured Zion, and even her pastors also, that her very offspring have appeared improper children, visibly marked, and chattering a wild gibberish, between Hebrew and Ashdod, till sundry fiery trials have melted their spirits, and the divine Potter has put his hand a second time to this work on the wheels, and turned these ill-shaped vessels into a better form; for as the clay is in the hand of the potter, so are we in his hand, and he does with us as the potter does with Isis clay, makes us such vessels as please him, namely, vessels of honour; and when done, there that erred come to understanding, and those that murmured learn doctrine; so that those marked ones, which seemed to have the face of an ox, come to appear with the lace of a man, Ezek. i. 10; when the living creature appears in the wheels, Ezek. x. 17.

I observed in the school of apes, that notwithstanding all their likeness to the human species, their cunning, mimicry, and fondness, they were all chained down to the floor, as not to be trusted, though in the precincts of tile Tower; this brought to my mind the state of hypocrites, who, notwithstanding their likeness to real saints, their cunning by which they deceive, their seeming fondness of those they flatter, they are all bound down; the wicked is holden with the cords of his sin, says Solomon. Some are tied down to lust, some to covetousness, some to envy against the saints, some to errors, and some to the dram bottle, insomuch that the carbuncles of their face proclaim the good spirit of candour that ebbs and flows in their bowels; the well known cant of these is, put sugar and brandy, but no wormwood nor gall, in the ministry of the word; all zeal, faithfulness, reproof, warning, caution, and rebuke, is fathered upon the spirit of the devil, as if Satan was divided against himself. Those who make a gain of godliness are noted for candour, anti those that God uses to bring sinners to Christ, are of the spirit of devil; so it was in the days of old; to Simon Magus they had all respect as 2000 the great power of God, Acts, viii. 10; but Christ, -'ho declared that hypocrites could not escape the damnation of hell, they called Beelzebub, the prince of devils. These were an open candid spirit; they preached one thing and lived another, as Peter talks of some who promised liberty to others, while themselves are the servants or corruption. We read of the prophets who prophesied of wine

and strong drink, Mic. ii. 11 and no doubt but such filled their bottles by their pleasing candid prophecies, till they made sport of them that were prophets of the Lord, calling them fools, and spiritual men mad, or influenced by a bad spirit, Hos. ix. 7. David complains that he was the song of the drunkard, However the hypocrites may get into the church, yet they are in bondage under the sentence of God, as well as to their own sin; hence we read of such, who were of old ordained to this condemnation, Jude, 4. Solomon had a navy of ships that came once in three years, bringing apes and peacocks, I Kings, x. 22; but our eternal Solomon has no call to send so far for them; he has scarcely a palace or a lodge in Great Britain where the stewards of the household are not complaining that they are overstocked with, these hairy ones.

I have such an aversion to apes, that I would sooner keep a serpent or a scorpion in my house than one of those creatures; and as a minister, I would sooner preach to fifty careless unreformed sinners, who are called serpents and vipers, than to a thousand hypocrites, who sit under the gospel for base ends, abandon themselves to idleness, and by walking in craftiness get a livelihood out of simple people, or even stand pimp for drunkards, rather than work with their own hands, and with quietness eat their own bread; these are enemies to God, strangers to power of religion, and the experience of it on the heart of the righteous. The poor seeker, who is sensible of his want, is of a teachable spirit, waits at Wisdom's gate, esteems them that fear the Lord, favours the Saviour's righteous cause, and longs for the manifestation of pardoning mercy, I love, pity, and pray for; but idle, empty hypocrites I cannot away with; for their whole study is to prejudice the minds of weaklings, and to injure the cause of God; with these I trust I shall ever carry on an offensive and defensive war; Christ came to send peace between us and them, but a sword, therefore it is a just and a holy war. Perhaps you will answer,

Peace is thy calling, friend, not
Doth not thy calling and contention jar?
'Tis holy war, this makes the wonder cease:
The fight of faith becomes a man of peace.

The traitor's bridge and gate, by which some rebels came into the Tower to lost: their lives, put me in mind of the archway which some come into the church; and the traitor's gate that leads to the river, shews the wine gate by which many hypocrites go out, who, as Paul says, are drowned in destruction and perdition. I Tim. vi. 9. Let this bridge and gate caution us against the disloyalty and rebellion of hypocrites; it is dreadful to a loyalist

to be imprisoned, though but for a time by the great King; but it is a fearful thing to fall into the revengeful hands of the living God. We saw the axe by which some lost their heads; but to miss of Christ, to lose the Head of the church, an infinite, irreparable, and eternal loss. The blackest character in the Bible, excepting Satan, the prime leader of angelic sinners, is Judas the traitor.

The pieces of cannon that are mounted around the Tower, me in mind of some of our present Boanergeses, falsely so called, who deliver every message from the mount that burns with fire, with blackness, darkness, and tempest, the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words, Heb. xii. 18, 19. The prophet Elijah, who travelled so far to pay his visit to Horeb, found the same earthquake, wind, and fire, as Moses had done: a caution this to every believing soul not to attempt seeking the King of Zion at Sinai or Horeb. Moses put a veil on his face near this mount; and Elijah, who was the chariot and horsemen of Israel, was obliged to wrap his head in his mantle, when God demanded, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" I Kings. xix. 13. The fiery law is to be handled, in order to alarm, rouse, shake, and awaken the drowsy, careless sinner; but if you batter his ear's and entertain his mind with nothing but repeated rounds of fiery salutations, you will soon sear his conscience as with a hot iron, and make his heart cannon and bomb proof; and, like Job's horse when his neck was clothed with thunder, he will paw in the valley; and instead of being afraid or awed, he will rejoice his strength, and go forth even to meet the armed men, Job xxxix. 19 - 21.

"To threats the stubborn sinner oft is hard.
Wrapt in his crimes against the storm prepar'd;
But when the milder beams of mercy play,
He throws his garb, his cumbrous cloak away.

Thunder and lightning, heaven's artillery,
As harbingers before the Almighty fly;
These but proclaim his style, and disappear,
The stiller sound succeeds, and God is there."

The old shattered and neglected tower, which stands at the remotest part from the gate of entrance, and the lowness when compared to the white tower, brought to my mind our mystical Babel-builders, who, as the Saviour tells us, are intending to build a tower, the top of which is to reach heaven; like that which the ancient towering schemers, called by way of

derision Babel-builders, began in the plains of Shinar; but the Saviour tells us such tower-builders sat not down first to count the costs; and for want of this they began to build, as the Babel-builders did, but have not wherewith to finish; hence the Saviour says, the beholders began to mock, as the Trinity did after Nimrod's architects had produced the plan, and got the royal command for the execution thereof: "Go to," said the builders, "let us make brick and burn them thoroughly: and they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven, and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the earth." The Trinity adopts their language: "Go to," says is God, "let us go down and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech," Gen. xi. 7. This tower was intended to exceed the rainbow, that was not sufficient to secure them against a second deluge; its top was to reach heaven; it was intended to get them a name, and to prevent their being scattered; but they left it unfinished; for the Trinity had them in derision, laughed at their calamity, and mocked when their fear came. It is true they got a name, which will last as long as the world stands; it will never be forgot so long as a false prophet or a legal workmonger remains in the world; yea, even at the day of judgment there will be a confounding of the language of some builders; but from this the believer is secure; he is not to be ashamed or confounded world without end, Isaiah, xlv 17. This tower was first erected in their imagination; nothing will restrain them, says God, from that which they have imagined to do; they were all bent upon it, lest they should be scattered abroad; but their unanimous precaution against separation was the cause of their dispersion; "So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence, and they left off to build the city," or, as the Psalmist says, he scattered these proud ones in the imagination of their hearts.

The ensign staff upon the Tower reminded me of the rod that came out of the stem of Jesse. And this rod of Jesse is to stand for an ensign of the people; "To it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious." This staff reminded me of union; before the standard the troops are ranged and mu 2000 stered; and in detente of the imperial colours they all unite as the heart of one man; to the royal standard rebels are commanded to repair, as soon as a proclamation of the royal favour is proclaimed; blematical this of saints uniting in one faith, hope, and spirit, and of lost sinners coming over to him who received gifts for the rebellious, that the Lord God might dwell among them.

The flag or banner may serve to remind us of the banner of everlasting love, which is displayed over the head of a young recruit when in the

rendezvous or banqueting house, Song ii. 4; to let him know that he must engage in the fight of faith as soon as the royal bounty is spent.

The mint and the balance, by which coin is tried and adjusted, brought to my mind the many counterfeit religions which pass current in our days; some are said to be impressed and bear an image that God will despise, Psalm lxxiii. 20; others to receive the mark of the beast, Rev. xiii. 17; others a countenance that witnesseth against them, Isaiah, iii. 9; others wear a whore's forehead, Jer. iii. 3; but there are some who bear the image of the heavenly Adam, Rom. viii. 29. Only these will pass for sterling in the great day; all must be put into the balance and tried; God will take no man's word; many commend their own candid spirit, but God will try them in the balances of the sanctuary: "All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes, but the Lord weigheth the spirits." "Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie; to be laid in the balance together they are altogether lighter than vanity," Psal. lxii. 9. In short, all that have not Christ in them the hope of glory, will have Tekel written on them," weighed in the balances and found wanting."

The Spanish armoury, that contains the instruments of torture and cruelty, the iron collar, the iron thumbscrews, the formidable toothpick, and their strange weapons that were taken from the formidable armada, brought to my thoughts the views that tile children of Israel bad when they saw the troops, troop-horses, war chariots, arms, and armour, of Pharaoh and his host, on the shore of the Arabian gulf, after the king's predicted success and momentary triumph was ended: "I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil, my lust shall be satisfied upon them; I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them;" but God blew with his wind, and they sank like lead in the mighty waters, Exod. xv. 9, 10. One blast of the breath of God's nostrils got the victory; and it was but a puff from the same almighty conqueror that blasted this expensive, deep-laid, and well-contrived expedition. The pope's blessing and cross-keys were no security against his power, who rides on the heavens for our help, and in his excellency upon the skies; nor is it likely they should, seeing it is predicted that the pope himself shall be destroyed by a blast from the same quarter; "Whom the Lord shall consume with tile Spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming."

Tower gates being kept shut until opened by a porter, serves to shew the way by which sinners enter the gates of Zion; it is by the king's leave these gates are open to any; if he issues out a command to the contrary, there is no entrance. The King of Zion does more; he not only grants, but gives orders; without his voice there is no admission; to him the porter openeth,

and to none else; without a royal grant there is no entering the strait gate or getting within the inner walls of Zion; the hypocrite may grope for them, or go round about Zion, count her lowers, mark her bulwarks, and consider her palaces, and that is all; while the inhabitants of the citadel can triumph and say, "This God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even unto death," Psalm xlviii. 14.

The warders or guardians of the Tower, who wear the king's livery, shew and explain the curiosities, detect idle and ill-disposed persons attempting to enter, exhibited to my mind the duty of a gospel minister when clad with the righteousness of Christ with the garment of salvation, and with the Spirit of sanctification, whose business it is to shew and explain the royal and the peculiar treasures of the great King; to make all men see what is the hope of our calling, and to reveal and make known the fellowship of the mystery, things which have been hid for many ages past, but are now brought to light in a glorious manner by the gospel. It is the duty of gospel ministers to take up strollers who are backsliding and wandering from their resting place, or out of the way of understanding; to take them up with a royal warrant, bring them to the bar of conscience, appeal to truth against their conduct, and try them by the laws of Zion; the ancient watchmen served the spouse so; "The watchmen that go about the city found me." She strolled until she had lost sight of her royal consort, provoked him to jealousy by her conduct, insomuch as she sought him but found him not, she called him but he gave her no answer. She was gone back to her first husband the law, Rom. vii. 3, 4; and had I got the old veil on her face again; therefore the watchmen found her, they smote her with the staff of authority, they wounded her with the sword of the Spirit; the keepers of the wall took away her veil from her, Song v. 6, 7; and brought her back with a blushing face, covered with shame and confusion, to her much slighted Lord, from whom, without any provocation, she had treacherously eloped. These warders take up idle pilfering persons; so ministers are to detect hypocrites, who, under a mask of religion, and by making a false shew and an outcry about holiness, deceive the simple and live by sacrilege, by robbing the church of God, countenancing and strengthening the hands of evil doers. The apostle had no small trouble with these; "For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies; now them that are such we command, that with quietness they work and eat their own bread," 2 Thess. iii. 11, 12.

The prophet Ezekiel, that watchman of Israel, had no small trials from sacrilegious ladies; "Likewise, thou son of man, thy face against the daughters of thy people, which prophesy out of their own heart; and prophesy thou against them, and say, Thus saith the Lord God, Wo to the

women that sew pillows to all armholes. Will ye pollute me among my people for handful, of barley, and for pieces of bread, to slay the souls that should not die, and to save the souls alive that should not live, by your lying to my people that hear your lies? With lies ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, and strengthened the hands of the wicked," Ezek. xiii. 17 - 22. The work of these upholsterers was making pillows for the armholes, that is, bolstering up hypocrites, loose professors, and idle persons; for which wickedness, the word, or judgments of God, often smote them, and they beginning to sink under the stroke, ran to one of these ladies of candour, who told them that the man that rebuked them was not a prophet of a good spirit, but quite the reverse, therefore not to be retried; nothing but candour and sweetness could ever come from God, from his word, or from his Spirit; and with this pillow, the smitten, blasted, withering, and sinking hypocrite was propped up and fortified against the sword of the Spirit, and those that handled it; so that all reproofs, rebukes, and sharpness, used against an hypocrite, an idle professor, a busybody, or a blowzyfaced drunkard, are the effects of a bad spirit, and not to be regarded. A minister of Christ is not to speak like the piercing of a sword, nor to use sharpness, lest he rouse the sleepy disquiet the carnally secure professor nothing but candour and sweetness is to be used; no zeal for God, no disobedience is to be revenged, no mumping hypocrite is to be discovered, nothing but bowels of mercy are to be put on by a servant of the Lord; thus hypocrites are bolstered up and fortified against the word of God, until, being often reprov'd, they harden their own neck, and are suddenly destroyed, and that without remedy, Prov. xxix. 1. This is the business of these prophetesses: the objects of their hatred are the children of God; they are said to make the righteous sad, to destroy souls that should not die, by hardening them against all conviction; the end they aimed at was a livelihood; it was done for pieces of bread and handfuls of barley; the name of God was polluted, the hands of evil-doers strengthened, and the righteous opposed, to indulge themselves idleness, get the name of prophetesses, and to enshrine themselves in the house, pantry, pocket, and conscience of every poor purblind sinner that received a wound or stripe from his Maker.

The secret watchword put me in mind of the witness of God's Spirit in the hearts of the faithful. This is one secret that is with the righteous; none knows any thing of this but the armies of the Lord of hosts; this watchword comes from the Captain of our salvation, it is whispered to the heart of every good soldier of Jesus Christ, and is kept a profound secret in the camp of the saints; it can never be explained nor divulged by any adversary or hypocrite in the world; neither the wicked nor the fool understand this.

The drawbridge, which when drawn up, cuts off all communication, brought to my mind the Saviour, who is the only way to the Father; by venturing on whom, millions have gone safely over the very verge of the bottomless pit, which still continues to bear all up and safely over, who come by this new and living way; but the time will come when this bridge will be drawn up to heaven; the master will rise up and shut the door: then all communication will be cut off; no more grace, mercy, or truth communicated to men; no more communicating troubles to God in prayer; the bridge is drawn, and the waters of wrath separate; "Lord ! Lord ! open to us," will be all in vain at that day. The Lord forgave the iniquity of my sin, saith the Psalmist. "For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee, in a time when thou mayest be found; surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him," Psalm xxxii. 5, 6.

The bold attempt of Colonel Blood (who disguised himself in the garb of a doctor of divinity, with a band, false band, a cap with ears, &c. in order to get acquainted with the keeper of the regalia, who, with his accomplices, knocked down the keeper with a mallet, seized the crown, sceptre, dove, &c. and put them into a wallet, in order to carry them off, but was discovered and secured before he could get out of the Tower), brought to my mind the daring and presumptuous claim that hardened hypocrites lay to the crown of loving-kindness and tender mercy; who come into the church only to spy out our liberty, misuse the officers, encourage rebels in their wickedness, and lead them to destruction. They cannot endure to see the officers of Zion's king intrusted with such valuables; they covet the office and the honour of it; but they have no power from the king, therefore they hate and oppose the power in others, and palm the devil, that actuates them,, upon those that oppose their hypocrisy; and by these means they support the interest of Satan, and bring thousands to his gloomy regions. Jannes and Jambres, who withstood Moses, did, by counterfeiting his power, render him in the eyes of Pharaoh no more than a magician; and the miracles of God, which Moses wrought, were debased to a level with magic, or devilish art. This was enough to harden the heart of Pharaoh and all his house, till their country was ruined, the fierceness of God's wrath poured out, evil angels were sent among them, the first-born of man and beast destroyed, and Pharaoh and all his hosts overwhelmed in the Red Sea.

It was four hundred false prophets kept in idleness by Ahab that brought him to his destruction; these all spoke in the name o the Lord. "Jehoshaphat said unto the king of Israel, Inquire, I pray thee, at the word of the Lord to-day. Then the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, about four hundred men, a said, shall I go against Ramoth-gilead to battle,

or shall I forbear? And they said, Go up, for the lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king. And Jehoshaphat said, is there not here a prophet of the Lord besides, that we might inquire of him? And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, There is yet one man, Micaiah the son of Imlah, by whom we may inquire of the Lord; but I hate him, for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil. And Jehoshaphat said, Let not the king say so. Then the king of Israel called an officer, and said, Hasten hither, Micaiah the son of Imlah. And the messenger spake unto Micaiah, saying, Behold now, the words of the prophets declare good unto the king with one mouth;" there is not a bad spirited man among them; every one is clothed with bowls of mercy, there is no wormwood, bitterness, or gall made use of; nothing but sweetness and candour drops from their lips; yet not thy bitter spirit blast the king's scheme, nor dare to set thy face against an assemblage of four hundred prophets, who prophesy good with one consent; be entreated, lay by your singularity; I speak as a friend; I know you. are a prophet of the Lord, but you must not prophesy against these good men; these a man have prophesied good; "let thy word, I pray thee, be like the word of one of them, and speak that which is good. And Micaiah said, As the Lord liveth, what the Lord saith unto me, that will I speak." Can this be the Spirit of the Lord? is it not the reverse? "So he came to the king. And the king said unto him, Micaiah, shall we go against Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall we forbear? And he answered him, Go, and prosper, for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king." These were the words verbatim that were delivered by the four hundred good prophets. But yet this will not do; the king took it as a humorous jest, and said unto him, "How many times shall I adjure thee that thou tell me nothing but that which is true in the name of the Lord," This was intended to represent Micaiah as a lying prophet in the eyes of Jehoshaphat, though he had spoken nothing but the very words which the prophets of candour had dropped. "And Micaiah said, I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills as sheep that bare not a shepherd, and the Lord said, These have no master," their king was killed; "let them return every man to his house in peace. And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, Did I not tell thee that he would prophesy no good concerning me, but evil? And Micaiah said, Hear thou therefore the word of the Lord; I saw the Lord sitting on his throne, and all the hosts of heaven standing by him, on his right hand and on his left. And the Lord said, Who shall persuade Ahab that he may go up, and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one said on this manner and another said on that manner."

Now we come to the fountain-head of candour, where all prophets and false prophetesses fill their pitchers, to supply and entertain the minds of a candid public. "And there came forth a spirit and stood before the Lord,

and said, I will persuade him. And the Lord said unto him, wherewith? and he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets and he said, thou shalt persuade him and prevail also; go forth and do so." This was the spirit that clothed them all with bowels of mercy, and that filled their hearts with that candour and sweetness which entertained not only the king and his nobles, but a candid public at large; they were in the sweetest union, unanimous in their predictions, and prophesied good with one mouth. But Micaiah, with his rancour, spleen, and bitterness, persists in his singularity. "Now therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil concerning thee." Who could have thought that a lying spirit could be in the mouth of four hundred prophets, whose mouth prophesied nothing but good? Here is Micaiah, who is said to prophesy nothing but evil, opposing four hundred prophets, who are said to prophesy good with one consent; now, how is a candid public to judge? why this pudding must be proved by its spending. If the good prophecies are true, the victory will be given to Ahab, and if Micaiah's evil prophecies be true, then Ahab loses his life, and Israel is scattered, having no master; but as it may be some time before God decides the point, it will be necessary to give Micaiah a good drubbing, if it is but to caution others. "But Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah went near and smote Micaiah on the cheek, and said, which way went the Spirit of the Lord from me speak unto thee?" This man had got the Spirit of the Lord, according to his own account, and he prophesied good to a candid public; but as Micaiah did not belong to the public, he had no part of the candour; all that he got was a knock on the head to extort a confession; "Which way went the Spirit of the Lord from me? And Micaiah said, Behold, thou shalt see in that day, when thou shalt go into an inner chamber to hide thyself. And the king of Israel said, take Micaiah, and carry him back to Amon the governor of the city, and to Joash the king's son; and say, Thus saith the king, Put this fellow in the prison, and feed him with bread of affliction and with water of affliction, until I come in peace." If Micaiah has nothing but these bitter herbs to live on till the king returns in peace, he will have a starving and long imprisonment. But the prophet knew better; "If thou return at all in peace, the Lord hath not spoken by me; and he said, hearken O people, every one of you;" read I Kings twenty-second chapter. Micaiah stuck to his text, and the Lord preached the sermon, the application of which was the death of Ahab, of Jezebel, of the royal family, and of all the prophets, who fell by the sword; and so they arrived at the eternal habitations, and in the good company of that spirit from which all their candour; sweetness, and good prophecies came. Thus it often happens, that men of candour perish in their sweetness, while those that are said to prophesy no good, but evil, prolong their lives and die in peace; and what shall we say to

these things? why, if God be for these bitter prophets, who can be against them? Those that prophesied nothing but good to men, prophesied nothing but lies, and God was against them; the other prophesied nothing but evil, and yet he prophesied nothing but truth, and God was with him: therefore I conclude, that it is better to prophesy evil by the Spirit of truth from God, though false prophets smite us and a candid public condemn us, than to prophesy good by the spirit of lies from the devil, though all the world approve and admire the moderation, openness, sweetness, compassionate bowels, tender pity, and candid disposition of the prophet: it is not what men call good, for they sometimes call evil good, Isaiah, v. 20; but what God calls truth, that must make people free.

The river Thames, which is of inestimable worth to this metropolis, being composed of the Thame and the Isis; Rickmansworth, the river Mole, &c. &c. may remind thee of that river the streams whereof make glad the city of God, Psalm xli. 4. You may embark at the Tower and sail to the Nore, to the Downs, and into the English channel, and so round the world, if you keep a proper distance from the poles; nor will you feel much want of either light or heat if you keep under the torrid or temperate zone. So every vessel of mercy that embarks in the river of the waters of life shall make a glorious and eternal voyage; he shall sail in his God, and end in an eternity of pleasure that knows neither bottom nor shore: the river of regeneration, but no other, leads to this: "There the glorious Lord will be to us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ships pass thereby; then is the prey of a great spoil divided, the lame take the prey. And the inhabitants shall not say I am sick; the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity."

This is the glorious end we have in view; possessed by our covenant head and representative, who in our nature, name, and persons has taken possession, and appears in the presence of God for us, who are kept by Almighty power through, faith to the same. It is secured by promise, by oath, by covenant, by the blood of the testator, by the broad seal of heaven, and by the omnipotence anti faithfulness of divine, immutable, and infinite veracity; the first-fruits are gathered by the band of faith, and are a satisfactory earnest or sweet foretaste to the expectation of hope; we are predestinated and called, and shall therefore be glorified; we are ransomed, and shall return with songs and everlasting joy upon our head, Isaiah, xxxv. 10; we are enabled to believe, and shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end; we are loved with an everlasting love; partakers of everlasting life; clothed with an everlasting righteousness; saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation; we shine in everlasting light; are heirs of an eternal inheritance; and shall possess an everlasting

kingdom. O what has grace done for us! we are wooed and espoused, and shall therefore be wedded and enjoyed; we shall bear the image and likeness of our royal head; possess a mansion of his own preparing; and be no less than heirs of God and joint-heirs with the King of kings and Lord of lords! This world is our furnace, the angels are our guard, regeneration is our road, Christ is our end, and heaven our home.

I hope thou wilt not be offended at this public present. I know alms ought to be given in secret, but as thou art, through grace, a partaker of the promise, it is rather a present than an alms. You know I must be employed about something; I hate idleness; I would sooner be what Elijah was, a zealous, faithful troubler of Israel, than a candid sluggard, who will not lift his hand to his mouth. You would insist upon treating me with a sight of the curiosities of the Tower, and as a recompense I have sent you the few spoils that I pilfered and pocketed from thence: one good turn deserves another; I have presented to your view what you desired should be presented to mine; and in order to pull down the price of seeing the Tower, the greatest part of its curiosities are here exhibited to a candid public at so small a price as one shilling only, for the sake of ready money.

With respect to the sale of these curiosities, your assiduity, vote, interest, and recommendation is expected. Advertisements in public newspapers, booksellers' prefaces, outcries at places of public resort, or the vapourish puffs of hawking pedlars, appear to me as so many indications of the craftiness of the trader, and the worthlessness of the stale commodity: stinking fish require a loud and a lying cry; they must be turned over in haste before the customer's eyes; a large price fixed and insisted on; a deal of talk in striking the bargain is required; and an hasty flight, ended with a great noise, when the commodity is delivered, lest a hue and cry should follow.

I was very sorry at the report of thy sickness; am thankful for thy recovery: this sickness has not been unto death; all the time we gain by trading there is no room for complaint, whether we occupy business in deep waters or suffer in the furnace of affliction; every confession, petition, supplication, intercession, or tribute of praise that is offered to God, has its promise in the word of God, and will turn out to good account at last. It is better to live

near the lower with a good hope through grace, than to have the bounds of our habitation fixed in Stationers' Court, where there is Creed Lane at the back, Paternoster Row in the face, Ave Maria Lane on the right hand, and Amen Corner at the left. I would sooner find the blessings of one chapter of the Bible in my heart, than have possession of the Chapt 272 er House; it is better to bare Paul's God than to be Dean of St. Paul's church. I would sooner be blessed with a good slate of health, than have the advice, gratis, of a college of physicians; a useful doctor of divinity is better than a doctor of physic; a man's spirit will sustain the infirmities of the body, but a wounded spirit who can bear? Farewell; excuse haste; and believe me to be thy willing servant, to serve thee with such as I have.

W. H.

Dated from the Burning Bush,

April 10, 1798.

William Huntington