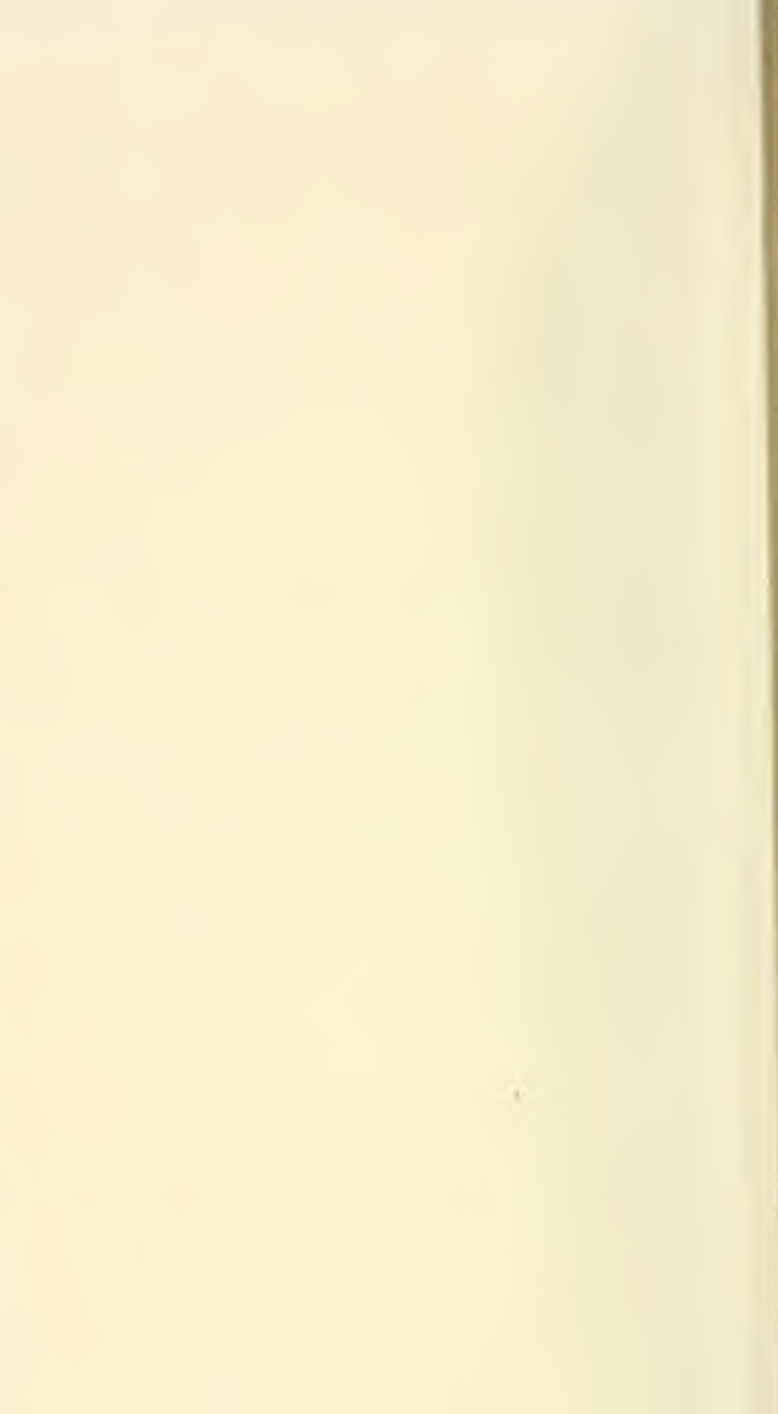


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THE
FATHERS
OF THE
ENGLISH CHURCH;
OR,
A Selection
FROM THE
WRITINGS OF THE REFORMERS
AND
EARLY PROTESTANT DIVINES,
OF THE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

VOL. VI.

CONTAINING THE WORKS OF
JOHN BRADFORD
AND
LAWRENCE SAUNDERS:

WITH AN

APPENDIX,

COMPRISING

THE LIFE AND REMAINS OF LADY JANE GREY.

LONDON :

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and every other Bookseller in the United Kingdom.

1810.

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AIR A
V. 6

to
HIS MOST GRACIOUS MAJESTY
GEORGE III.

OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND
KING,

DEFENDER OF THE FAITH, &c. &c.

TO THE MOST REVEREND
THE ARCHBISHOPS;

THE RIGHT REVEREND
THE BISHOPS;

AND THE REVEREND
THE CLERGY,

OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF ENGLAND AND IRELAND;

THIS WORK,

INTENDED AS A MONUMENT

TO THE HONOUR OF

THOSE HOLY MARTYRS, VENERABLE CONFESSORS,

AND EARLY PROTESTANT DIVINES,

TO WHOM, UNDER GOD,

THE REFORMED CHURCH OF CHRIST IN THESE REALMS

OWES ITS

RISE, PROGRESS,

AND SUBSEQUENT ESTABLISHMENT,

IS,

WITH GREAT RESPECT,

DEDICATED,

AND SUBMITTED TO THEIR PATRONAGE,

BY

THE EDITORS.

417581



TO THE PUBLIC.

IN the Selection from the writings of the noble army of English martyrs and confessors which these volumes contain, the Conductors have peculiar satisfaction in bringing to notice the remains of JOHN BRADFORD, now first collected together.

It has been justly observed by a celebrated annalist, that “ he was one of the four prime pillars of the reformed Church of England ;” who also adds, that he was “ a man of great learning, elocution, sweetness of temper, and profoundness of devotion towards God. Of whose worth, the Papists themselves were so sensible, that they took more pains to bring him off from the profession of religion, than any other. But he, knowing the truth and goodness of his cause, remained steadfast and unmoveable.”—(*Strype, Ecc. Mem. iii. 230.*)

Bishop Ridley, speaking of this eminently holy minister, says, “ He is a man by whom, as I am as-

surely informed, God hath and doth work wonders, in setting forth his word." And still more strongly on another occasion, that venerable prelate said of Bradford; " In my conscience I judge him more worthy to be a bishop, than many of us, that are bishops already, are of being parish priests."

It is sincerely hoped that the republication of the works of so great and good a man may prove a benefit to many.

Lawrence Saunders was a leading Reformer, minister and sufferer for the truth's sake. The little that he has left behind him is contained in the present volume.

Although this selection is entitled " The *Fathers* of the English Church," it has been judged right, by way of Appendix to the lives and writings of the Reformers in the reigns of Edward VI. and Mary, to insert those of one female, whose illustrious and interesting character, notwithstanding her extreme youth, may justly be considered as that of " a *Mother* in Israel." This volume therefore concludes with " The precious Remains of the Lady JANE GREY."

The next volume will proceed to the reign of Elizabeth, and the works of one of its brightest ornaments, Bishop JEWEL.

From the six volumes of this publication which are now before the Public, a satisfactory estimate of its plan and execution may be formed. It will be manifest to every reader, that as the work consists principally of entire and unbroken tracts, no partial selection to serve any particular purpose is likely to exist; the more so, because every tract of the most eminent of the Fathers of the English church that can interest a modern reader, has hitherto been given.

In fact, a full, impartial, and clear statement of the history, controversies, doctrines, biography, language, manners, religion, and general habits of our forefathers during the memorable era of the Reformation, may be attained by the study of this work. As such the Conductors submit it to the friends of the great cause of truth, ever looking to God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ for that blessing, without which all our doings are nothing worth.

of the world, and the progress of the human mind, from the earliest times to the present day. The author has endeavored to present a comprehensive view of the various nations and empires, and to show the influence of their different governments, laws, and customs, on the progress of civilization and the improvement of the human race. The work is divided into several volumes, and is written in a clear and concise style, which renders it highly interesting and instructive to the reader.

The first volume contains the history of the ancient world, from the earliest times to the fall of the Roman Empire. The second volume contains the history of the Middle Ages, from the fall of the Roman Empire to the discovery of America. The third volume contains the history of the modern world, from the discovery of America to the present day. The author has endeavored to present a comprehensive view of the various nations and empires, and to show the influence of their different governments, laws, and customs, on the progress of civilization and the improvement of the human race. The work is divided into several volumes, and is written in a clear and concise style, which renders it highly interesting and instructive to the reader.

THE
LIFE, MARTYRDOM,
AND
SELECTIONS FROM THE WRITINGS
OF THE REV.
JOHN BRADFORD,
PREBENDARY OF ST. PAUL'S,
AND
MARTYR IN THE CAUSE OF CHRIST.



THE HISTORY
OF THE WORTHY MARTYR AND SERVANT OF GOD,
MASTER JOHN BRADFORD;

WITH

HIS LIFE, ACTS, AND SUNDRY CONFLICTS WITH HIS AD-
VERSARIES, AND MARTYRDOM, AT LENGTH MOST
CONSTANTLY SUFFERED FOR THE TESTIMONY
OF CHRIST AND HIS TRUTH.

As touching the first country and education of John Bradford, he was born at Manchester, in Lancashire. His parents did bring him up in learning from his infancy, until he attained such knowledge in the Latin tongue, and skill in writing, that he was able to gain his own living in some honest condition; then he became servant to Sir John Harrington, Knt. who in the great affairs of King Henry the Eighth and King Edward the Sixth, which he had in hand, when he was treasurer of the King's camps and buildings, at divers times in Bullonois, had such experience of Bradford's activity in writing, his expertness in the art of auditors, as also of his faithful trustiness, that not only in those affairs, but in many other of his private business, he trusted Bradford in such sort, that above all other he used his faithful service.

Thus continued Bradford certain years, in a right honest and good trade of life, after the course of this world, like to come forward (as they say), if his mind could so have liked, or had been given to the world as many other be; but the Lord, which had elected him unto a better function, and pre-ordained him to preach the Gospel of Christ, in that hour of grace which in his secret counsel he had ap-

pointed, called this his chosen child to the understanding and partaking of the same Gospel of life: in which call he was so truly taught, that forthwith his effectual call was perceived by the fruits. For then Bradford did forsake his worldly affairs and forwardness in worldly wealth: and after the just account given to his master of all his doings, he departed from him, and with marvellous favour, to further the kingdom of God by the ministry of his holy word, he gave himself wholly to the study of the holy Scriptures: the which his purpose to accomplish the better, he departed from the Temple at London, where the temporal law is studied, and went to the university of Cambridge, to learn by God's law how to further the building of the Lord's temple. In Cambridge, his diligence in study, his profiting in knowledge and godly conversation, so pleased all men, that within one whole year after that he had been there, the university did give him the degree of a Master of Art.

Immediately after, the Master and Fellows of Pembroke Hall did give him a fellowship in their college with them: yea, that man of God, Martin Bucer, so liked him, that he had him not only most dear unto him, but also oftentimes exhorted him to bestow his talent in preaching. Unto which Bradford answered always, that he was unable to serve in that office, through want of learning. To the which Bucer was wont to reply, saying, "If thou have not fine manchet bread, yet give the poor people barley bread, or whatsoever else the Lord hath committed unto thee." And while Bradford was thus persuaded to enter into the ministry, Dr. Ridley, that worthy Bishop of London, and glorious martyr of Christ, according to the order that then was in the church of England, called him to take the degree of a deacon; which order, because it was not

without some such abuse, as to the which Bradford would not consent; the Bishop yet perceiving that Bradford was willing to enter into the ministry, was content to order him deacon, without any abuse, even as he desired. This being done, he obtained for him a license to preach, and did give him a prebend in his cathedral church of St. Paul's.

In this preaching office, by the space of three years, how faithfully Bradford walked, how diligently he laboured, many parts of England can testify. Sharply he opened and reprov'd sin, sweetly he preached Christ crucified, pithily he impugned heresies and errors, earnestly he persuaded to godly life. After the death of blessed young King Edward the Sixth, when Queen Mary had gotten the crown, still continued Bradford diligent in preaching, until he was unjustly deprived, both of his office and liberty, by the Queen and her council. To the doing whereof, because they had no *just* cause, they took occasion to do this injury, for such an act as, amongst Turks and infidels, would have been with thankfulness rewarded, and with great favour accepted, as indeed it did no less deserve.

The fact was this: the 13th of August, in the first year of the reign of Queen Mary, M. Bourn, then Bishop of Bath, made a seditious sermon at Paul's cross, in London, to set Popery abroad, in such sort that it moved the people to no small indignation, being almost ready to pull him out of the pulpit. Neither the reverence of the place, nor the presence of B. Bonner, who was his master, nor yet the commandment of the mayor of London, whom the people ought to have obeyed, stayed their rage; but the more they spake, the more the people were incensed. At length Bourn, seeing the people in such a mood, and himself in such peril (whereof he was sufficiently warned by the hurling of a drawn

dagger at him as he stood in the pulpit), and that he was put from ending his sermon, fearing lest (against his will) he should there end his wretched life, desired Bradford, who stood in the pulpit behind him, to come forth, and to stand in his place and speak unto the people. Good Bradford, at his request, was content, and there spake unto the people of godly and quiet obedience, whom, as soon as the people saw to begin to speak unto them, so glad they were to hear him, that they cried with a great shout, "Bradford, Bradford, God save thy life, Bradford!" well declaring, not only what affection they bare unto him, but also what regard they gave unto his words. For after that he had entered a little to preach unto them, and to exhort them to quiet and patience, eftsoons all the raging ceased, and they in the end quietly departed each man to his house. Yet in the mean season (for it was a long time before that so great a multitude could all depart) Bourn thought (and truly) himself not yet full sure of his life, till he were safely housed, notwithstanding that the Mayor and Sheriffs of London were there to help him. Wherefore he desired Bradford not to depart from him till he were in safety; which Bradford, according to his promise, performed. For while the Mayor and Sheriffs did lead Bourn to the schoolmaster's house, which is next to the pulpit, Bradford went at his back, shadowing him from the people with his gown, and so to set him safe.

Let the reader now consider the peril of Bourn, the charity of Bradford, and the headiness of the multitude, and also the grudging minds of certain, which yet still there remained behind, grieved not a little in their minds, to see that so good a man should save the life of such a Popish priest, so impudently and openly railing against King Edward. Among whom one gentleman said these words: "Ah, Brad-

ford, Bradford! thou savest him that will help to burn thee. I gave thee his life; if it were not for thee, I would (I assure thee) run him through with my sword." Thus Bourn for that time, through Bradford's means, escaped bodily death; but God hath his judgment to be shewed in the time appointed.

The same Sunday in the afternoon Bradford preached at the Bow church, in Cheapside, and reprov'd the people sharply for their seditious misdemeanour. After this he did abide still in London, with an innocent conscience, to try what should become of his just doing.

Within three days after, he was sent for to the Tower of London, where the Queen then was, to appear there before the council. There was he charged with this act of saving of Bourn, which act they there called seditious, and also objected against him for preaching, and so by them he was committed, first to the Tower, then unto other prisons, out of which neither his innocency, godliness, nor charitable dealing could purchase to him liberty of body, till by death (which he suffered for Christ's cause) he obtained the heavenly liberty, of which neither Pope nor Papist shall ever deprive him. From the Tower he came to the King's Bench, in Southwark; and after his condemnation, he was sent to the Compter in the Poultry, in London; in which two places, for the time he did remain prisoner, he preached twice a day continually, unless sickness hindered him: where also the sacrament was often ministered, and through his means (the keepers so well did bear with him) such resort of good folks was daily to his lecture, and to the ministration of the sacrament, that commonly his chamber was well nigh filled therewith. Preaching, reading, and praying, was all his whole life. He did not eat above one meal a day, which was but very little when he took

it; and his continual study was upon his knees. In the midst of dinner, he used oftentimes to muse with himself, having his hat over his eyes, from whence came commonly plenty of tears, dropping on his trencher. Very gentle he was to man and child, and in so good credit with his keeper, that at his desire in an evening (being prisoner in the King's Bench in Southwark) he had license, upon his promise to return again that night, to go into London without any keeper, to visit one that was sick, lying by the Steelyard. Neither did he fail his promise, but returned unto his prison again, rather preventing his hour, than breaking his fidelity, so constant was he in word and deed.

Of personage he was somewhat tall and slender, spare of body, of a faint sanguine colour, with an auburn beard. He slept not commonly above four hours in the night; and in his bed, till sleep came, his book went not out of his hand. His chief recreation was, in no gaming or other pastime, but only in honest company, and comely talk, wherein he would spend a little time after dinner at the board, and so to prayer and his book again. He counted that hour not well spent, wherein he did not some good, either with his pen, study, or in exhorting of others, &c. He was no niggard of his purse, but would liberally participate that he had to his fellow-prisoners: and commonly once a week he visited the thieves, pick-purses, and such others that were with him in prison, where he lay, on the other side, unto whom he would give godly exhortation, to learn the amendment of their lives by their troubles; and after that so done, distributed among them some portion of money to their comfort.

By the way, I thought not to conceal, while he was in the King's Bench, and Master Saunders in the Marshalsea, both prisoners, on the back side of

those two prisons, they met many times, and conferred together when they would; so mercifully did the Lord work for them, even in the midst of their troubles: and the said Bradford was so trusted with his keeper, and had such liberty in the backside, that there was no day but that he might have easily escaped away if he would, but that the Lord had another work to do for him. In the summer-time, while he was in the said King's Bench, he had liberty of his keeper to ride into Oxfordshire, to a merchant's house of his acquaintance, and horse and all things prepared for him for that journey, and the party in a readiness that should ride with him; but God prevented him by sickness that he went not at all.

One of his old friends and acquaintance came unto him whilst he was prisoner, and asked him, if he sued to get him out, what then he would do, or whither he would go? Unto whom he made answer, as not caring whether he went out or no; but if he did, he said he would marry, and abide still in England secretly, teaching the people as the times would suffer him, and occupy himself that way. He was had in so great reverence and admiration with all good men, that a multitude, which never knew him but by fame, greatly lamented his death: yea, and a number of the Papists themselves wished heartily his life. There were few days in which he was thought not to spend some tears before he went to bed; neither was there ever any prisoner with him, but by his company he greatly profited, as all they will yet witness, and have confessed of him, no less to the glory of God, whose society he frequented, as among many, one special thing I thought to note, which is this.

Bishop Farrar, being in the King's Bench, prisoner, was pressed withal of the Papists, in the end of

Lent, to receive the sacrament at Easter in *one hind*, who after much persuading yielded to them, and promised so to do. Then (so it happened by God's providence) the Easter eve, the day before he should have done it, was Bradford brought to the King's Bench, prisoner, where the Lord, making him his instrument, Bradford only was the mean that the said Bishop Farrar revoked his promise and word, and would never after yield to be spotted with that papistical pitch : so effectually the Lord wrought by this worthy servant of his ; such an instrument was he in God's church, that few or none there were that knew him, but esteemed him as a precious jewel and God's true messenger.

The night before he was had to Newgate, which was the Saturday night, he was sore troubled divers times in his sleep by dreams, how the chain for his burning was brought to the Compter gate, and how the next day, being Sunday, he should be had to Newgate, and on the Monday after burned in Smithfield, as indeed it came to pass accordingly, which hereafter shall be shewed. Now he being vexed so oftentimes in this sort with these dreams, about three of the clock in the morning he waked him that lay with him, and told him his unquiet sleep, and what he was troubled withal. Then after a little talk, Master Bradford rose out of the bed, and gave himself to his old exercise of reading and praying, as always he had used before ; and at dinner, according to his accustomed manner, he did eat his meat, and was very merry, nobody being with him from morning till night, but he that lay with him, with whom he had many times on that day communication of death, of the kingdom of heaven, and of the ripeness of sin in that time.

In the afternoon, they two walking together in the keeper's chamber, suddenly the keeper's wife came

up, as one half amazed, and seeming much troubled, being almost windless, said: "Oh, Master Bradford, I come to bring you heavy news."—"What is that?" said he. "Marry," quoth she, "to-morrow you must be burned, and your chain is now a-buying, and soon you must go to Newgate." With that Master Bradford put off his cap, and lifting up his eyes to heaven, said: "I thank God for it; I have looked for the same a long time, and therefore it cometh not now to me suddenly, but as a thing waited for every day and hour; the Lord make worthy me thereof:" and so thanking her for her gentleness, departed up into his chamber, and called his friend with him, who when he came thither, he went secretly himself alone a long time, and prayed. Which done, he came again to him that was in his chamber, and took him divers writings and papers, and shewed him his mind in those things, what he would have done; and after they had spent the afternoon till night, in many and sundry such things, at last came to him half a dozen of his friends more, with whom all the evening he spent the time in prayer and other good exercises, so wonderfully, that it was marvelous to hear and see his doings.

A little before he went out of the Compter, he made a notable prayer of his farewell, with such plenty of tears, and abundant spirit of prayer, that it ravished the minds of the hearers. Also when he shifted himself with a clean shirt, that was made for his burning (by one Master Walter Marlar's wife, who was a good nurse unto him, and his very good friend), he made such a prayer of the wedding garment, that some of those that were present were in such great admiration, that their eyes were as thoroughly occupied in looking on him, as their ears gave place to hear his prayer. At his departing out of the chamber, he made likewise a prayer, and gave money to

every servant and officer of the house, with exhortation to them to fear and serve God, continually labouring to eschew all manner of evil. That done, he turned him to the wall, and prayed him vehemently, that his words might not be spoken in vain, but that the Lord would work the same in them effectually, for his Christ's sake. Then being beneath in the court, all the prisoners cried out to him, and bid him farewell, as the rest of the house had done before with weeping tears.

The time they carried him to Newgate was about eleven or twelve o'clock in the night; when it was thought none would be stirring abroad: and yet, contrary to their expectation in that behalf, was there in Cheapside and other places (between the Compter and Newgate), a great multitude of people that came to see him, which most gently bade him farewell, praying for him with most lamentable and pitiful tears; and he again as gently bade them farewell, praying most heartily for them and their welfare. Now whether it were a commandment from the Queen and her Council, or from Bonner and his adherents, or whether it were merrily devised of the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Sheriffs of London, or no, I cannot tell; but a great noise there was overnight about the city by divers, that Bradford should be burnt the next day in Smithfield, by four of the clock in the morning, before it should be greatly known to any. In which rumour many heads had divers minds; some thinking the fear of the people to be the cause thereof: other thought nay, that it was rather because the Papists judged his death would convert many to the truth, and give a great overthrow to their kingdom. So some thought one thing, and some another, that no just conjecture of the cause could be known that ever I heard yet. But this was certain, the people prevented the

device suspected: for the next day, at the said hour of four o'clock in the morning, there was in Smithfield such a multitude of men and women, that many being in admiration thereof, thought it was not possible that they could have warning of his death, being so great a number in so short a time, unless it were by the singular providence of Almighty God.

With Bradford, was carried to the stake, a young man, named John Leaf, an apprentice. When they came to Smithfield, Master Bradford lying prostrate on the one side of the stake, and the young man, John Leaf, on the other side, they lay flat on their faces, praying to themselves the space of a minute of an hour. Then one of the Sheriffs said to Master Bradford, "Arise, and make an end, for the press of the people is great."

At that word they both stood up upon their feet, and then Master Bradford took a faggot in his hand and kissed it, and so likewise the stake. And when he had so done, he desired of the Sheriffs, that his servant might have his raiment; "For (said he) I have nothing else to give him, and besides that, he is a poor man." And the Sheriff said he should have it. And so forthwith Master Bradford did put off his raiment and went to the stake, and holding up his hands, and casting his countenance to heaven, he said thus: "O England, England, repent thee of thy sins, repent thee of thy sins. Beware of idolatry, beware of false antichrists; take heed they do not deceive you." And as he was speaking these words, the Sheriff bade tie his hands if he would not be quiet. "O Master Sheriff (said Master Bradford), I am quiet: God forgive you this, Master Sheriff." And one of the officers which made the fire, hearing Master Bradford so speaking to the Sheriff, said, "If you have no better learning than that, you are but a fool, and were best hold your

peace." To the which words, Master Bradford gave no answer ; but asked all the world forgiveness, and forgave all the world, and prayed the people to pray for him, and turned his head unto the young man that suffered with him, and said, " Be of good comfort, brother, for we shall have a merry supper with the Lord this night ;" and embracing the reeds, he said thus : " Strait is the way, and narrow is the gate that leadeth to eternal salvation, and few there be that find it."

And thus they both ended their mortal lives, most like two lambs, without any alteration of their countenance, being void of all fear, hoping to obtain the price of the game that they had long run at, to the which I beseech the Almighty God happily to conduct us, through the merits of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

EPISTLES
OF
JOHN BRADFORD,
WRITTEN ON
VARIOUS OCCASIONS.

1871

to

JOHN TRAFALGAR

1871

ALBION COGNAC

A comfortable Letter of Master BRADFORD to his Mother, a godly Matron, dwelling in Manchester, and to his Brethren and Sisters, and others of his Friends there.

OUR dear and sweet Saviour Jesus Christ, whose prisoner at this present (praised be his name therefore!) I am, preserve and keep you my good mother, with my brothers and sisters, my father John Traves, Thomas Sorrocold, Lawrence and James Bradshaw, with their wives and families, &c. now and for ever, Amen.

I am at this present in prison, sure enough for starting, to confirm that I have preached unto you: as I am ready (I thank God) with my life and blood to seal the same, if God vouchsafe me worthy of that honour. For, good mother and brethren, it is a most special benefit of God, to suffer for his name sake and Gospel, as now I do; I heartily thank him for it, and I am sure that with him I shall be partaker of his glory, as Paul saith, if we suffer with him, we shall reign with him. Therefore be not faint-hearted, but rather rejoice at the least for my sake, which now am in the right and high way to heaven, for by many afflictions we must enter the kingdom of heaven. Now will God make known his children. When the wind doth not blow, then cannot a man know the wheat from the chaff: but when the blast cometh, then flieth away the chaff, but the wheat remaineth, and is so far from being hurt, that by the wind it is more cleansed from the chaff, and known to be wheat. Gold, when it is cast into the fire, is the more precious; so are God's children by the cross of affliction. Always God beginneth his judgment at his house; Christ and the Apostles were in most misery in the land of Jewry, but yet the whole land smarted

for it after : so now God's children are first chastised in this world, that they should not be damned with the world, for surely great plagues of God hang over this realm.

Ye all know, that there was never more knowledge of God, and less godly living and true serving of God. It was counted a foolish thing to serve God truly, and earnest prayer was not passed upon ; preaching was but a pastime, the communion was counted too common ; fasting to subdue the flesh was far out of use, alms was almost nothing ; malice, covetousness, and uncleanness, were common every where, with swearing, drunkenness, and idleness. God therefore now is come, as you have heard me preach ; and because he will not damn us with the world, he beginneth to punish us, as me for carnal living. For as for my preaching, I am most certain it is and was God's truth, and I trust to give my life for it by God's grace ; but because I love not the Gospel truly, but outwardly, therefore doth he thus punish me ; nay, rather in punishing blesseth me. And indeed I thauk him more of this prison than of any parlour, yea, than of any pleasure that ever I had ; for in it I find God my most sweet good God always. The flesh is punished, first to admonish us now heartily to live as we profess ; secondly, to certify the wicked of their just damnation, if they repent not.

Perchance you are weakened in that which I have preached, because God doth not defend it as you think, but suffereth the popish doctrine to come again and prevail ; but you must know, good mother, that God by this doth prove and try his children and people, whether they will unfeignedly and simply hang on him and his word. So did he with the Israelites, bringing them into a desert after their coming out of Egypt ; where (I mean the wilder-

ness) was want of all things in comparison of that which they had in Egypt. Christ, when he came into this world, brought no worldly wealth nor quietness with him, but rather war. The world (saith he) shall rejoice, but ye shall mourn and weep, but your weeping shall be turned into joy; and therefore happy are they that mourn and weep, for they shall be comforted. They are marked then with God's mark in their foreheads, and not with the beast's mark, I mean the Pope's shaven crown, who now with his shavelings rejoice; but woe unto them, for they shall be cast down, they shall weep and mourn. The rich glutton had here his joy and Lazarus sorrow, but afterwards the time was changed. The end of carnal joy is sorrow. Now let the whoremonger joy with the drunkard, swearer, covetous, malicious, and blind buzzard Sir John; for the mass will not bite them, neither make them to blush, as preaching would. Now may they do what they will, come devils to the church, and go devils home, for no man must find fault, and they are glad of this; now they have their heart's desire, as the Sodomites had when Lot was gone; but what followed? Forsooth when they cried, Peace, all shall be well, then came God's vengeance, fire and brimstone from heaven, and burnt up every mother's child; even so, dear mother, will it do to our Papists.

Wherefore fear God, stick to his word, though all the world swerve from it. Die you must once, and when or how, can you not tell. Die therefore with Christ, suffer for serving him truly and after his word; for sure may we be, that of all deaths, it is most to be desired to die for Christ's sake. This is the most safe kind of dying; we cannot doubt but what we shall go to heaven if we die for his name sake. And that you shall die for his name sake, God's word will warrant you, if you stick to that

which God by me hath taught you. You shall see that I speak as I think; for by God's grace I will drink before you of this cup, if I be put to it.

I doubt not but God will give me his grace, and strengthen me thereto: pray that he would, and that I refuse it not. I am at a point, even when my Lord God will, to come to him: death nor life, prison nor pleasure, I trust in God, shall be able to separate me from my Lord God and his Gospel. In peace, when no persecution was, then were you content and glad to hear me, then did you believe me; and will ye not do so now, seeing I speak that which I trust by God's grace, if need be, to verify with my life? Good mother, I write before God to you, as I have preached before him.

It is God's truth I have taught, it is that same infallible word whereof he said, "Heaven and earth shall pass, but my word shall not pass." The mass and such baggage as the false worshippers of God and enemies of Christ's cross (the Papists I say) have brought in again, to poison the church of God withal, displeaseth God highly, and is abominable in his sight. Happy may he be which of conscience suffereth loss of life or goods in disallowing it. Come not at it. If God be God, follow him; if the mass be God, let them that will, see it, hear or be present at it, and go to the devil with it: what is there as God ordained? His supper was ordained to be received of us in the memorial of his death, for the confirmation of our faith, that his body was broken for us, and his blood shed for pardon of our sins; but in the mass there is no receiving, but the priest keepeth all to himself alone. Christ saith, Take, eat: No, saith the priest, gape, peep.—There is a sacrifice, yea killing of Christ again as much as they may. There is idolatry in worshipping the outward sign of bread and wine; there is all in Latin, you

cannot tell what he saith. To conclude, there is nothing as God ordained; wherefore (my good mother) come not at it.

Oh! will some say, it will hinder you, if you refuse to come to mass, and to do as others do; but God will further you (be you assured), as you shall one day find, who hath promised to them that suffer hinderance or loss of any thing in this world, his great blessing here, and in the world to come life everlasting.

You shall be counted an heretic, but not of others than of heretics, whose praise is a dispraise.

You are not able to reason against the priests, but God will, that all they shall not be able to withstand you. Nobody will do so but you only; indeed no matter; for few enter in at the narrow gate which bringeth to salvation. Howbeit, you shall have with you (I doubt not) father Traves and other my brothers and sisters, to go with you therein; but if they will not, I your son in God, I trust, shall not leave you an inch, but go before you; pray that I may, and give thanks for me. Rejoice in my suffering, for it is for your sakes to confirm the truth I have taught. Howsoever you do, beware this letter come not abroad, but into father Traves his hands; for if it should be known that I have pen and ink in the prison, then would it be worse with me. Therefore to yourselves keep this letter, commending me to God, and his mercy in Christ Jesus, who make me worthy, for his name sake, to give my life for his Gospel and church sake. Out of the Tower of London, the 6th day of October 1553.

My name I write not, for causes you know well enough: like the letter never the worse. Commend me to all our good brethren and sisters in the Lord. Howsoever you do, be obedient to the higher powers, that is, in no point either in hand or tongue rebel;

but rather if they command that which with good conscience you cannot obey, lay your head on the block, and suffer whatsoever they shall do or say: by patience possess you your souls.

After the time that Master Bradford was condemned and sent to the Compter, it was purposed of his adversaries, that he should be had to Manchester, where he was born, and there be burned; whereupon he writeth to the city of London, thinking to take his last farewell of them in this letter.

To the City of London.

To all that profess the Gospel and the true doctrine of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in the city of London; John Bradford, a most unworthy servant of the Lord, now not only in prison, but also excommunicated and condemned to be burned, for the same true doctrine, wisheth mercy, grace, and peace, with increase of all godly knowledge and piety, from God the Father of mercy, through the merits of our alone and omnisufficient Redeemer Jesus Christ, by the operation of the Holy Spirit for ever. Amen.

My dearly beloved brethren in our Saviour Christ:—Although the time I have to live is very little (for hourly I look when I shall be had to be conveyed into Lancashire, there to be burned, and to render my life by the providence of God, where I first received it, by the same providence); and although the charge is great to keep me from all things whereby I might signify any thing to the world of my state; yet having, as now I have, pen and ink, through God's working, maugre the head of Satan and his soldiers, I thought good to write a short confession of my faith, and thereto join a little exhortation unto you all to live according to your profession.

First, for my faith: I do confess, and pray all the

whole congregation of Christ to bear witness with me of the same, that I believe constantly, through the gift and goodness of God (for faith is God's only gift), all the twelve articles of the symbol or creed, commonly attributed to the collection of the Apostles. This my faith I would gladly particularly declare and expound, to the confirmation and comfort of the simple; but, alas! by starts and stealth I write in manner that I write, and therefore I shall desire you all to take this brevity in good part. And this faith I hold, not because of the creed itself, but because of the word of God, the which teacheth and confirmeth every article accordingly. This word of God, written by the Prophets and Apostles, and contained in the canonical books of the whole Bible, I do believe to contain plentifully all things necessary to salvation, so that nothing (as necessary to salvation) ought to be added thereto; and therefore the church of Christ, nor any of his congregation, ought to be burdened with any other doctrine, than which thereout hath its foundation and ground. In testimony of this faith, I render and give my life, being condemned, as well for not acknowledging the antichrist of Rome to be Christ's vicar-general and supreme head of his catholic and universal church, here or elsewhere upon earth; as for denying the horrible and idolatrous doctrine of transubstantiation, and Christ's real, corporal, and carnal presence in his supper, under the forms and accidents of bread and wine.

To believe Christ our Saviour to be the head of his church, and kings in their realms to be the supreme powers, to whom every soul oweth obedience, and to believe that in the supper of Christ (which the sacrament of the altar, as the Papists call it, and use it, doth utterly overthrow) is a true and very presence of whole Christ, God and man, to the faith

of the receiver, but not to the stander-by and looker-upon, as it is, a true and very presence of bread and wine to the senses of men: to believe this (I say) will not serve, and therefore as an heretic I am condemned, and shall be burned; whereof I ask God heartily mercy that I do no more rejoice than I do, having so great cause, as to be an instrument wherein it may please my dear Lord God and Saviour to suffer.

For albeit my manifold sins, even since I came into prison, have deserved at the hands of God, not only this temporal, but also eternal fire in hell, much more my former sinful life, which the Lord pardon for his Christ's sake, as I know he of his mercy hath done, and never will lay mine iniquities to my charge, to condemnation, so great is his goodness, (praised therefor be his holy name!) although (I say) my manifold and grievous late sins have deserved most justly all the tyranny that man or devil can do unto me; and therefore I confess that the Lord is just, and that his judgments be true and deserved on my behalf: yet the bishops and prelates do not persecute *them* in me, but Christ himself, his word, his truth, and religion. And therefore I have great cause, yea, most great cause, to rejoice that ever I was born, and hitherto kept of the Lord; that by my death, which is deserved for my sins, it pleaseth the heavenly Father to glorify his name, to testify his truth, to confirm his verity, to repugn his adversaries. O good God and merciful Father! forgive my great unthankfulness, especially herein.

And you, my dearly beloved, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, I humbly and heartily in his bowels and blood do now, for my last vale and farewell in this present life, beseech you and every of you, that you will consider this work of the Lord accordingly. First by me be admonished to beware of hypocrisy

and carnal security; profess not the Gospel with tongue and lips only, but in heart and verity; frame and fashion your lives accordingly; beware God's name be not evil spoken of, and the Gospel less regarded by your conversation. God forgive me, that I have not so heartily professed it as I should have done, but have sought much myself therein. The Gospel is a new doctrine to the old man; it is new wine; and therefore cannot be put in old bottles, without more great hurt than good to the bottles. If we will talk with the Lord, we must put off our shoes and carnal affections; if we will hear the voice of the Lord, we must wash our garments and be holy; if we will be Christ's disciples, we must deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow Christ; we cannot serve two masters. If we will seek Christ's kingdom, we must seek for the righteousness thereof. To this petition (Let thy kingdom come) we must join, Thy will be done, done on earth as it is in heaven. If we will not be doers of the word, but hearers of it only, we sore deceive ourselves. If we hear the Gospel, and love it not, we declare ourselves to be but fools, and builders upon the sands. The Lord's spirit hateth feigning; deceitfulness the Lord abhorreth; if we come to him we must beware that we come not with a double heart; for then may chance that God will answer us according to the block which is in our heart, and so we shall deceive ourselves and others.

To faith see that we couple a good conscience, lest we make a shipwreck. To the Lord we must come with fear and reverence. If we will be gospellers, we must be Christ's; if we be Christ's, we must crucify our flesh with the lusts and concupiscences thereof; if we will be under grace, sin must not bear rule in us. We may not come to the Lord, and draw nigh unto him with our lips, and leave our hearts else-

where, lest the Lord's wrath wax hot, and he take from us the good remaining. In no case can the kingdom of Christ approach unto them that repent not. Therefore, my dearly beloved, let us repent and be heartily sorry that we have so carnally, so hypocritically, so covetously, so vaingloriously professed the Gospel. For all these I confess myself to the glory of God, that he may cover mine offences in the day of judgment. Let the anger and plagues of God most justly fallen upon us, be applied to every one of our deserts, that from the bottom of our hearts every of us may say, It is I, Lord, that have sinned against thee: it is my hypocrisy, my vain glory, my covetousness, uncleanness, carnality, security, idleness, unthankfulness, self-love, and such-like, which have deserved the taking away of our good king, of thy word and true religion, of thy good ministers by exiles, imprisonment, and death; it is my wickedness that causeth success, and increase of authority, and peace to thine enemies. Oh, be merciful, be merciful unto us. Turn to us again, O Lord of hosts, and turn us unto thee; correct us, but not in thy fury, lest we be consumed in thine anger; chastise us not in thy wrathful displeasure; reprove us not, but in the midst of thine anger remember thy mercy. For if thou mark what is done amiss, who shall be able to abide it? But with thee is mercifulness, that thou mightest be worshipped. Oh then be merciful unto us, that we may truly worship thee. Help us, for the glory of thy name: be merciful unto our sins, for they are great: Oh, heal us, and help us for thine honour. Let not the wicked people say, Where is their God? &c.

On this sort, my right dearly beloved, let us heartily bewail our sins, repent us of our former evil life, heartily and earnestly purpose to amend our lives in all things, continually watching in prayer; dili-

gently and reverently attend, hear, and read the holy Scriptures, labour after our vocation to amend our brethren. Let us reprove the works of darkness. Let us flee from all idolatry. Let us abhor the anti-christian and Romish rotten service, detest the popish mass, renounce their Romish god, prepare ourselves to the cross, be obedient to all that be in authority, in all things that be not against God and his word; for then answer with the Apostles, It is more meet to obey God than man. Howbeit, never for any thing resist, or rise against the magistrates. Avenge not yourselves, but commit your cause to the Lord, to whom vengeance pertaineth, and he in his time will reward it. If you feel in yourselves a hope and trust in God, that he will never tempt you above that he will make you able to bear, be assured the Lord will be true to you; and you shall be able to bear all brunts. But if you want this hope, flee and get you hence, rather than, by your tarrying, God's name should be dishonoured.

In sum, cast your care upon the Lord, knowing for most certain, that he is careful for you; with him are all the hairs of your head numbered, so that not one of them shall perish without his good pleasure and will: much more, then, nothing shall happen to our bodies, which shall not be profitable, howsoever for a time it seem otherwise to your senses. Hang on the providence of God, not only when you have means to help you, but also when you have no means, yea, when all means be against you. Give him this honour, which of all other things he most chiefly requireth at your hands; namely, believe that you are his children through Christ, that he is your Father and God through him, that he loveth you, pardoneth you all your offences, he is with you in trouble, and will be with you for ever. When you fall, he will put under his hand, you shall not lie

still: before you call upon him he heareth you; out of evil he will finally bring you, and deliver to his eternal joy. Doubt not, my dearly beloved, herein, doubt not (I say) this will God your Father do for you, not in respect of yourselves, but in respect of Christ your Captain, your Pastor, your Keeper; out of whose hands none shall be able to catch you; in him be quiet, and often consider your dignity: namely, how that ye be God's children, the saints of God, citizens of heaven, temples of the Holy Ghost, the thrones of God, members of Christ, and lords over all.

Therefore be ashamed to think, speak, or do any thing that should be unseemly for God's children, God's saints, Christ's members, &c. Marvel not though the devil and the world hate you, though ye be persecuted here, for the servant is not above his master. Covet not earthly riches, fear not the power of man, love not this world, nor the things that be in this world: but long for the Lord Jesus his coming, at which time your bodies shall be made like unto his glorious body: when he appeareth you shall be like unto him; when your life shall thus be revealed, then shall ye appear with him in glory.

In the mean season live in hope thereof.' Let the life you lead, be in the faith of the Son of God: for the just doth live by faith, which faith fleeth from evil, and followeth the word of God as a lantern to her feet, and a light to her steps; her eyes be above, where Christ is; she beholdeth not the things present, but rather things to come; she glorieth in affliction, she knoweth that the afflictions of this life are not like to be compared to the glory that God will reveal to us and in us. Of this glory God grant us here a lively taste; then shall we run after the scent it sendeth forth. It will make us valiant men to take us to the kingdom of God; whither the Lord of

mercy bring us in his good time, through Christ our Lord, to whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, three Persons and one God, be all honour and glory, world without end. Amen.

My dearly beloved, I would gladly have given here my body to be burned, for the confirmation of the true doctrine I have taught here unto you; but that, my country must have. Therefore I pray you take in good part this signification of my good-will towards every of you. Inpute the want herein to time and trouble. Pardon me mine offences and negligent behaviour when I was amongst you. With me repent, and labour to amend. Continue in the truth which I have truly taught unto you by preaching in all places where I have come, God's name therefore be praised. Confess Christ when you be called, whatsoever cometh thereof; and the God of peace be with you all. Amen. This 11th of February, anno 1555.

Your brother in bonds for the Lord's sake,
JOHN BRADFORD.

To the University and Town of Cambridge.

To all that love the Lord Jesus, and his true doctrine, being in the university and town of Cambridge, John Bradford, a most unworthy servant of the Lord, now not only prisoned, but also condemned for the same true doctrine, wisheth grace, peace, and mercy, with increase of all godliness from God, the Father of all mercy, through the bloody passion of our Saviour Jesus Christ, by the lively working of the holy Spirit for ever. Amen.

Although I look hourly when I should be had to the stake (my right dearly beloved in the Lord), and although the charge over me is great and strait; yet having, by the providence of God, secretly pen and ink, I could not but something signify unto you

my solicitude which I have for you and every of you in the Lord, though not as I would, yet as I may. You have often and openly heard the truth (specially in this matter wherein I am condemned) disputed and preached, that it is needless to do any more, but only to put you in remembrance of the same; but hitherto you have not heard it confirmed, and as it were sealed up, as now you do and shall hear by me, that is, by my death and burning. For albeit I have deserved (through my uncleanness, hypocrisy, avarice, vain-glory, idleness, unthankfulness, and carnality, whereof I accuse myself, to my confusion before the world, that before God, through Christ, I might, as my assured hope is I shall, find mercy) eternal death and hell fire, much more than this affliction and fire prepared for me: yet, my dearly beloved, it is not these, or any of these things; wherefore the prelates do persecute me, but God's verity and truth; yea, even Christ himself is the only cause and thing whereof I am now condemned, and shall be burnt as an heretic, because I will not grant the antichrist of Rome to be Christ's vicar-general and supreme head of the church here, and every where upon earth, by God's ordinance, and because I will not grant such corporal, real, and carnal presence of Christ's body and blood in the sacrament as doth transubstantiate the substance of bread and wine, and is received of the wicked, yea, of dogs and mice. Also I am excommunicated, and counted as a dead member of Christ's church, as a rotten branch, and therefore shall be cast into the fire.

Therefore ye ought heartily to rejoice with me, and to give thanks for me, that God, the eternal Father, hath vouchsafed our mother to bring up any child in whom it would please him to magnify his holy name as he doth, and I hope, for his mercy and truth's sake, will do in me and by me. Oh! what

such benefit upon earth can it be, as that I, which deserved death by reason of my sins, should be delivered to a demonstration, a testification, and confirmation of God's verity and truth! Thou, my mother, the university, hast not only had the truth of God's word plainly manifested unto thee, by reading, disputing, and preaching publicly and privately, but now to make thee altogether excuseless, and, as it were, almost to sin against the Holy Ghost, if thou put to thy helping hand with the Romish rout to suppress the verity, and set out the contrary, thou hast my life and blood as a seal to confirm thee, if thou wilt be confirmed, or else to confound thee, and bear witness against thee, if thou wilt take part with the prelates and clergy, which now fill up the measures of their fathers which slew the Prophets and Apostles, that all the righteous blood, from Abel to Bradford, shed upon earth, may be required at their hands.

Of this therefore I thought good before my death, as time and liberty would suffer me (for love and duty I bear unto you), to admonish thee, good mother, and my sister the town, that you would call to mind from whence you are fallen, and study to do the first works. You know (if you will) these matters of the Romish supremacy, and the antichristian transubstantiation, whereby Christ's supper is overthrown, his priesthood evacuate, his sacrifice frustrate, the ministry of his word unplaced, repentance repelled, faith fainted, godliness extinguished, the mass maintained, idolatry supported, and all impiety cherished: you know, I say (if you will), that these opinions are not only besides God's word, but even directly against it; and therefore, to take part with them, is to take part against God, against whom you cannot prevail.

Therefore, for the tender mercy of Christ, in his

bowels and blood I beseech you to take Christ's eye-salve to anoint your eyes, that you may see what you do and have done in admitting (as I hear you have admitted, yea, alas! authorized, and by consent confirmed) the Romish rotten rags, which once you utterly expelled. Oh! be not a dog returned to his vomit. Be not the washed sow returned to her wallowing in the mire. Beware, lest Satan enter in with seven other spirits, and then thy last state shall be worse than the first. It had been better ye had never known the truth, than after knowledge to run from it. Ah! woe to this world and the things therein, which hath now so wrought with you. Oh! that ever this dirt of the devil should daub up the eye of the realm. For thou, O mother, art as the eye of the realm. If thou be light and give shine, all the body shall fare the better: but if thou the light be darkness, alas! how great will the darkness be! What is man, whose breath is in his nostrils, that thou shouldest thus be afraid of him?

Oh! what is honour and life here? Bubbles. What is glory in this world, but shame? Why art thou afraid to carry Christ's cross? Wilt thou come into his kingdom, and not drink of his cup? Dost thou not know Rome to be Babylon? Dost thou not know, that as the old Babylon had the children of Judah in captivity, so hath this Rome the true Judah, that is, the confessors of Christ? Dost thou not know, that, as destruction happened unto it, so shall it do unto this? And trowest thou that God will not deliver his people, now when the time is come, as he did then? Hath not God commanded his people to come out from her? And wilt thou give example to the whole realm to run unto her? Hast thou forgotten the woe that Christ threateneth to offence-givers? Wilt thou not remember that it were better that a millstone were hanged about thy

neck, and thou thrown into the sea, than that thou shouldst offend the little ones ?

And, alas ! how hast thou offended ? Yea, and how dost thou still offend ? Wilt thou consider things according to the outward show ? Was not the synagogue more seemly and like to be the true church, than the simple flock of Christ's disciples ? Hath not the whore of Babylon more costly array, and rich apparel externally to set forth herself, than the homely housewife of Christ ? Where is the beauty of the King's daughter, the church of Christ ? Without or within ? Doth not David say, within ? Oh ! remember, that as they are happy which are not offended at Christ, so are they happy which are not offended at his poor church. Can the Pope and his prelates mean honestly, which make so much of the wife and so little of the husband ? The church they magnify, but Christ they contemn. If this church were an honest woman (that is, Christ's wife), except they would make much of her husband, Christ and his word, she would not be made much of them.

When Christ and his Apostles were upon earth, who was more like to be the true church, they, or the prelates, bishops, and synagogue ? If a man should have followed custom, unity, antiquity, or the more part, should not Christ and his company have been cast out of the doors ? Therefore bade Christ search the Scriptures. And, good mother, shall the servant be above his master ? Shall we look for other entertainment at the hands of the world, than Christ and his dear disciples found ? Who was taken in Noah's time for the church ? Poor Noah and his family, or others ? Who was taken for God's church in Sodom ? Lot, or others ? And doth not Christ say, As it was then, so shall it go now towards the coming of the Son of Man ? What meaneth Christ when he saith, Iniquity shall have the upper hand ? Doth not he tell

that charity shall wax cold? And who seeth not a wonderful great lack of charity in those, which would now be taken for Christ's church? All that fear God in this realm truly can tell more of this than I can write.

Therefore, dear mother, receive some admonition of one of thy poor children, now going to be burned, for the testimony of Jesus. Come again to God's truth; come out of Babylon; confess Christ and his true doctrine; repent that which is past; make amends by declaring thy repentance by the fruits. Remember the readings and the preachings of God's prophet, the true preacher, Martin Bucer. Call to mind the threatenings of God, now something seen by thy children Leaver and others. Let the exile of Leaver, Pilkington, Grindall, Haddon, Horne, Scorte, Ponet, &c. something awake thee. Let the imprisonment of thy dear sons, Cranmer, Ridlèy, and Latimer, move thee. Consider the martyrdom of thy chickens, Rogers, Saunders, Taylor. And now cast not away the poor admonition of me, going to be burned also, and to receive the like crown of glory with my fellows. Take to heart God's calling by us. Be not as Pharaoh was, for then will it happen unto thee as it did unto him. What is that? Hardness of heart. And what then? Destruction eternally, both of body and soul. Ah! therefore, good mother, awake, awake, repent, repent, bustle thyself, and make haste to turn to the Lord, for else it shall be more easy for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for thee. Oh! harden not your hearts; oh! stop not your ears to-day in hearing God's voice, though it be by a most unworthy messenger. Oh! fear the Lord, for his anger is begun to kindle. Even now the axe is laid to the root of the tree.

You know I prophesied truly to you before the sweat came, what would come, if you repented not

your carnal gospelling. And now I tell you, before I depart hence, that the ears of men will tingle to hear the vengeance of God that will fall upon you all, both town and university, if you repent not, if you leave not your idolatry, if you turn not speedily to the Lord, if you still be ashamed of Christ's truth which you know.

Oh! Perne, repent; oh! Thomson, repent; oh! you doctors, bachelors, and masters, repent! oh! mayor, aldermen, and town-dwellers, repent, repent, repent, that you may escape the near vengeance of the Lord. Rend your hearts, and come apace, calling on the Lord. Let us all say, We have all sinned, we have done wickedly, we have not hearkened to thy voice, O Lord. Deal not with us after our deserts, but be merciful to our iniquities, for they are great. Oh! pardon our offences. In thine anger, remember thy mercy. Turn us unto thee, O Lord God of Hosts, for the glory of thy name's sake. Spare us, and be merciful unto us. Let not wicked people say, Where is now their God? Oh! for thine own sake, for thy name's sake, deal mercifully with us. Turn thyself unto us, and us unto thee, and we shall praise thy name for ever.

If in this sort (my dearly beloved) in heart and mouth we come unto our Father, and prostrate ourselves before the throne of his grace, then surely, surely we shall find mercy. Then shall the Lord look inerrily upon us, for his mercy's sake in Christ; then shall we hear him speak peace unto his people; for he is gracious and merciful, of great pity and compassion; he cannot be chiding for ever; his anger cannot last long to the penitent; though we weep in the morning, yet at night we shall have our sorrow to cease; for he is exorable, and hath no pleasure in the death of a sinner, he rather would our conversion and turning.

Oh! turn ye now and convert, yet once again I humbly beseech you, and then the kingdom of heaven shall draw nigh. The eye hath not seen, the ear hath not heard, nor is the heart of man able to conceive the joys prepared for us, if we repent, amend our lives, and heartily turn to the Lord. But if ye repent not, but be as you were, and go on forwards with the wicked, following the fashion of the world, the Lord will lead you on with wicked doers, you shall perish in your wickedness, your blood will be upon your own heads, your part shall be with hypocrites, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth; ye shall be cast from the face of the Lord for ever and ever. Eternal shame, sorrow, woe, and misery, shall be both in body and soul, to you, world without end. Oh! therefore, right dear to me in the Lord, turn you, turn you, repent you, amend, amend your lives, depart from evil, do good, follow peace, and pursue it. Come out from Babylon, cast off the works of darkness, put on Christ, confess his truth, be not ashamed of his Gospel, prepare yourselves to the cross, drink of God's cup before it come to the dregs, and then shall I with you, and for you, rejoice in the day of judgment, which is at hand, and therefore prepare yourselves thereto I heartily beseech you; and thus I take my farewell with you in this present life, mine own dear hearts in the Lord. The Lord of mercy be with us all, and give us a joyful and sure meeting in his kingdom. Amen. Amen. Out of prison the 11th of February, anno 1555.

Your own in the Lord for ever,

JOHN BRADFORD.

To Lancashire and Cheshire,

To all those that profess the name and true religion of our Saviour Christ, in Lancashire and Cheshire, and specially abiding in Manchester and thereabout, John Bradford, a most unworthy servant of the Lord, now not only in bonds, but also condemned for the same true religion, wisheth mercy and grace, peace and increase of all godliness, from God, the Father of all pity, through the deserts of our Lord Jesus Christ, by the working of the most mighty and lively Spirit, the Comforter, for ever. Amen.

I heard it reported credibly, my dearly beloved in the Lord, that my heavenly Father hath thought it good to provide, that, as I have preached his true doctrine and Gospel among you by word, so I shall testify and confirm the same by deed, that is, I shall with you leave my life, which by his providence I first received there (for in Manchester was I born), for a seal to the doctrine I have taught with you and among you; so that if from henceforth you waver in the same, you have none excuse at all. I know the enemies of Christ which exercise this cruelty upon me (I speak in respect of mine offence, which is none to themwards) think, by killing of me amongst you, to affright you and others, lest they should attempt to teach Christ truly, or believe his doctrine hereafter. But I doubt not but my heavenly Father will by my death more confirm you in his truth for ever. And therefore I greatly rejoice to see Satan and his soldiers supplanted in their own wisdom, which is plain foolishness among the wise indeed, that is, among such as have heard God's word, and do follow it; for they only are counted wise of the wisdom of God our Saviour. Indeed, if I should simply consider my life, with that which

ought to have been, and as God in his law requireth, then could I not but cry as I do, Righteous art thou, O Lord, and all thy judgments are true. For I have much grieved thee, and transgressed thy holy precepts, not only before my professing the Gospel, but since also : yea, since my coming into prison, I do not excuse, but accuse myself before God and all his church, that I have grievously offended my Lord God. I have not loved his Gospel as I should have done. I have sought myself, and not simply and only his glory and my brethren's commodity. I have been too unthankful, secure, carnal, hypocritical, vain-glorious, &c. All which my evils, the Lord of mercy pardon me for his Christ's sake, as I hope and certainly believe he hath done for his great mercy in Christ our Redeemer. But when I consider the cause of my condemnation, I cannot but lament, that I do no more rejoice than I do, for it is God's verity and truth ; so that the condemnation is not a condemnation of Bradford simply, but rather a condemnation of Christ and of his truth. Bradford is nothing else but an instrument, in whom Christ and his doctrine is condemned. And therefore, my dearly beloved, rejoice, rejoice, and give thanks with me and for me, that ever God did vouchsafe so great a benefit to our country, as to choose the most unworthy (I mean myself) to be one in whom it would please him to suffer any kind of affliction ; much more this violent kind of death, which I perceive is prepared for me with you, for his sake. All glory and praise be given unto God our Father, for his great and exceeding mercy towards me, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

But perchance you will say unto me, What is the cause for the which you are condemned ? we hear say, that you deny all presence of Christ in his holy supper, and so make it a bare sign and common

bread, and nothing else. My dearly beloved, what is said of me, and what will be, I cannot tell. It is told me that Pendleton is gone down to preach with you, not as he once recanted (for you all know he hath preached contrary to that he was wont to preach, afore I came among you), but to recant that which he hath recanted. How he will speak of me, and report before I come and when I am come, and when I am burned, I much pass not; for he that is so uncertain and will speak so often against himself, I cannot think he will speak well of me, except it make for his purpose and profit; but of this enough.

Indeed the chief thing which I am condemned for as an heretic, is because I deny in the sacrament of the altar (which is not Christ's supper, but a plain perverting of it, being used as the Papists now use it) to be a real, natural, and corporal presence of Christ's body and blood, under the forms and accidents of bread and wine; that is, because I deny transubstantiation, which is the darling of the devil and daughter and heir to Antichrist's religion, whereby the mass is maintained, Christ's supper perverted, his sacrifice and cross imperfected, his priesthood destroyed, the ministry taken away, repentance repelled, and all true godliness abandoned in the supper of our Lord, or sacrament of Christ's body and blood. I confess and believe, that there is a true and very presence of the whole Christ, God and man, to the faith of the receiver (but not of the stander-by and looker-on), as there is a very true presence of bread and wine to the senses of him that is partaker thereof. This faith, this doctrine, which consenteth with the word of God and with the true testimony of Christ's church (which the popish church doth persecute), will I not forsake, and therefore am I condemned as an heretic, and shall be burned. But, my dearly

beloved, this truth which I have taught, and you have received, I believed and do believe, and therein give my life, I hope in God shall never be burned, bound, nor overcome, but shall triumph, have victory and be at liberty, maugre the head of all God's adversaries; for there is no counsel against the Lord, nor can any device of man be able to defeat the verity, in any other than such as be children of unbelief, which have no love to the truth, and therefore are given up to believe lies. From which plague the Lord of mercy deliver you and all the realm, my dear hearts in the Lord, I humbly beseech his mercy. Amen.

And to the end you might be delivered from this plague (right dear to me in the Lord), I shall, for my farewell with you for ever in this present life, heartily desire you all, in the bowels and blood of our most merciful Saviour Jesus Christ, to attend unto these things which I now shall shortly write unto you, out of the holy Scriptures of the Lord.

You know an heavy plague (or rather plagues) of God is fallen upon us, in taking away our good king and true religion, God's true prophets and ministers, &c. and setting over us such as seek not the Lord after knowledge, those whose endeavours God prospereth wonderfully to the trial of many, that his people may both better know themselves, and be known. Now the cause hereof is our iniquities and grievous sins. We did not know the time of our visitation; we were unthankful unto God, we condemned the Gospel, and carnally abused it to serve our hypocrisy, our vain-glory, our viciousness, avarice, idleness, security, &c. Long did the Lord linger and tarry to have shewed mercy upon us, but we were ever the longer the worse; therefore most justly hath God dealt with us, and dealeth with us, yea, yet we may see that his justice is tempered with

much mercy, whereto let us attribute that we are not utterly consumed ; for if the Lord should deal with us after our deserts, alas ! how could we abide it ? In his anger therefore, seeing he doth remember his mercy undeserved (yea, undesired on our behalf), let us take occasion the more speedily to go out to meet him, not with force of arms (for we are not so able to withstand him, much less to prevail against him), but to beseech him to be merciful unto us, and according to his wonted mercy to deal with us.

Let us arise with David, and say, Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord ! for in thy sight no flesh living shall be justified. Let us send ambassadors, with the Centurion, and say, Lord, we are not worthy to come ourselves unto thee ; speak the word, and we shall have peace. Let us penitently, with the Publican, look down on the earth, knock our hard hearts to burst them, and cry out, O God ! be merciful unto us wretched sinners. Let us, with the lost son, return and say, O father ! we have sinned against heaven and earth, and before thee ; we are unworthy to be called thy children. Let us, I say, do on this sort, that is, heartily repent us of our former evil life, and unthankful gospelling past, convert and turn to God with our whole hearts, hoping in his great mercy through Christ, and heartily calling upon his holy name ; and then undoubtedly we shall find and feel otherwise, than yet we feel both inwardly and outwardly. Inwardly we shall feel peace of conscience between God and us, which peace passes all understanding ; and outwardly we shall feel much mitigation of these miseries, if not an utter taking of them away.

Therefore, my dearly beloved in the Lord, I your poorest brother, now departing to the Lord, for my farewell for this present life, pray you, beseech you, and even from the very bottom of my heart, for all

the mercies of God in Christ shewed unto you, most earnestly beg and crave of you out of prison (as often out of your pulpits I have done), that you will repent you, leave your wicked and evil life, be sorry for your offences, and turn to the Lord, whose arms are wide open to receive and embrace you; whose stretched-out hand to strike to death stayeth, that he may shew mercy upon you, for he is the Lord of mercy, and God of all comfort; he will not the death of the sinner, but rather that ye should return, convert, and amend; he hath no pleasure in the destruction of man; his long suffering draweth to repentance before the time of vengeance and the day of wrath, which is at hand, doth come.

Now is the axe laid to the root of the tree, utterly to destroy the impenitent; now is the fire gone out before the face of the Lord, and who is able to quench it? Oh! therefore, repent you, repent you; it is enough to have lived as we have done, it is enough to have played the wanton Gospellers, the proud Protestants, hypocritical and false Christians, as, alas! we have done. Now the Lord speaketh to us in mercy and grace: oh! turn before he speaketh in wrath. Yet is there mercy with the Lord, and plenteous redemption. Yet he hath not forgotten to shew mercy to them that call upon him. Oh! then call upon him while he may be found, for he is rich in mercy, and plentiful to all them that call upon him; so that he that calleth on the name of the Lord shall be saved. If your sins be as red as scarlet, the Lord saith, he will make them as white as snow: he hath sworn, and never will repent him thereof, that he will never remember our iniquities: but as he is good, faithful, and true, so will he be our God, and we shall be his people; his law will he write in our hearts, and ingraft in our minds, and never will he have in mind our unrighteousness. Therefore,

my dear hearts in the Lord, turn you, turn you to the Lord your Father, to the Lord your Saviour, to the Lord your Comforter. Oh! why do ye stop your ears and harden your hearts to-day, when you hear his voice by me your poorest brother? Oh! forget not how that the Lord hath shewed himself true, and me his true preacher, by bringing to pass these plagues, which at my mouth you oft heard before they came to pass; especially when I entreated of Noah's flood, and when I preached of the 22d chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel, on St. Stephen's day, the last time that I was with you; and now by me the Lord sendeth you word (dear countrymen), that if you will go on forwards in your impenitency, carnality, hypocrisy, idolatry, covetousness, swearing, gluttony, drunkenness, whoredom, &c. (wherewith alas, alas! our country floweth); if (I say) you will not turn and leave off, seeing me now burned among you, to assure you on all sides how God seeketh you, and is sorry to do you hurt, to plague you, to destroy you, to take vengeance upon you; oh! your blood will be upon your own heads; you have been warned and warned again by me in preaching, by me in burning.

As I said therefore, I say again, my dear hearts, and dearlings in the Lord, turn you, turn you, repent you; cease from doing evil, study to do well. Away with idolatry, fly the Romish God and service, leave off from swearing, cut off carnality, abandon avarice, drive away drunkenness, fly from fornication and flattery, murder and malice; destroy deceitfulness, and cast away all the works of darkness; put on pity and godliness, serve God after his word, and not after custom; use your tongues to glorify God by prayer, thanksgiving, and confession of his truth, &c. Be spiritual, and by the spirit mortify carnal affections; be sober, holy, true, loving, gentle, mer-

ciful, and then shall the Lord's wrath cease, not for this our doings' sake, but for his mercy's sake. Go to, therefore (good countrymen); take this counsel of the Lord by me, now sent unto you, as the Lord's counsel and not as mine, that in the day of judgment I may rejoice with you and for you, the which thing I heartily desire; and not to be a witness against you. My blood will cry for vengeance, as against the Papists, God's enemies (whom I beseech God, if it be his will, heartily to forgive, yea even them which put me to death, and are the causers thereof, for they know not what they do); so will my blood cry for vengeance against you (my dearly beloved in the Lord), if ye repent not, amend not, and turn unto the Lord.

Turn unto the Lord, yet once more, I heartily beseech thee, thou Manchester, thou Ashton-under-Line, thou Bolton, Bury, Wigan, Liverpool, Motrin, Steppor, Winsley, Eccles, Priestwich, Middleton, Radcliff, and thou city of Westchester, where I have truly taught and preached the word of God. Turn, I say unto you all, and to all the inhabitants thereabouts, unto the Lord our God, and he will turn unto you, he will say unto his angel, "It is enough, put up the sword." The which thing that he will do, I humbly beseech his goodness, for the precious blood sake of his dear Son our Saviour Jesus Christ. Ah! good brethren, take in good part these my last words unto every one of you. Pardon me mine offences and negligences in behaviour amongst you. The Lord of mercy pardon us all our offences, for our Saviour Jesus Christ's sake. Amen. Out of prison, ready to come to you, the eleventh of February, anno 1555.

To the Town of Walden.

To the faithful, and such as profess the true doctrine of our Saviour Jesus Christ, dwelling at Walden, and thereabouts: John Bradford, a most unworthy servant of the Lord, now in bands, and condemned for the same true doctrine, wisheth grace, mercy, and peace, with the increase of all godliness, in knowledge and living, from God the Father of all comfort, through the deserts of our alone and full Redeemer Jesus Christ, by the mighty working of the most holy Spirit, the Comforter, for ever. Amen.

When I remember, how that, by the providence and grace of God, I have been a man, by whom it hath pleased him, through my ministry, to call you to repentance and amendment of life, something effectually, as it seemed, and to sow amongst you his true doctrine and religion; lest that by my affliction and storms now arisen to try the faithful, and to conform them like to the image of the Son of God, into whose company we are called, you might be faint-hearted, I could not, but out of prison, secretly (for my keepers may not know that I have pen and ink), write unto you a signification of the desire I have, that you should not only be more confirmed in the doctrine I have taught amongst you, which I take on my death, as I shall answer at the day of doom, I am persuaded to be God's assured, infallible, and plain truth; but also should, after your vocation, aver the same by confession, profession, and living, I have not taught you (my dearly beloved in the Lord) fables, tales, or untruths; no, I have taught you the verity, as now by my blood gladly (praised be God therefor!) I do seal the same.

Indeed, to confess the truth unto you, and to all the church of Christ, I do not think of myself, but

that I have most justly deserved not only this kind, but also all kinds of death, and that eternally, for mine hypocrisy, vain-glory, uncleanness, self-love, covetousness, idleness, unthankfulness, and carnal professing of God's holy Gospel, living therein not so purely, lovingly, and painfully as I should have done; the Lord of mercy for the blood sake of Christ pardon me, as I hope, yea, I certainly believe, he hath done for his holy name sake, through Christ. But, my dearly beloved, you and all the whole world may see and easily perceive, that the prelates persecute in me another thing than mine iniquities, even Christ himself, Christ's verity and truth, because I cannot, dare not, nor will not, confess transubstantiation, and how that wicked men, yea, that mice and dogs, eating the sacrament (which they term of the altar, thereby overthrowing Christ's holy supper utterly), do eat Christ's natural and real body born of the Virgin Mary.

To believe and confess as God's word teacheth, the primitive Church believed, and all the catholic and good holy fathers taught, 500 years at the least after Christ, that in the supper of the Lord (which the mass overthroweth, as it doth Christ's priesthood, sacrifice, death, and passion, the ministry of his word, true faith, repentance, and all godliness), whole Christ, God and man, is present by grace to the faith of the receivers, but not of the standers-by and lookers-on, as bread and wine is to their senses, will not serve; and therefore I am condemned, and shall be burned out of hand as an heretic. Wherefore I heartily thank my Lord God, that will and doth vouchsafe me worthy to be an instrument, in whom he himself doth suffer; for you see my affliction and death is not simply because I have deserved no less, but much more at his hands and justice, but rather because I confess his verity and truth, and am not

afraid through his gift that to do, that you also might be confirmed in his truth; therefore, my dearly beloved, I heartily do pray you, and so many as unfeignedly love me in God, to give, with me and for me, most hearty thanks to our heavenly Father, through our sweet Saviour Jesus Christ, for this his exceeding great mercy towards me, and you also, that your faith waver not from the doctrine I have taught, and ye have received; for what can you desire more to assure your consciences of the verity taught by your preachers than their own lives?

Go to therefore, my dear hearts in the Lord; waver not in Christ's religion, truly taught you and set forth in King Edward's days. Never shall the enemies be able to burn it, to prison it, and keep it in bonds; us they may prison, they may bind and burn, as they do and will do so long as shall please the Lord; but our cause, religion, and doctrine, which we confess, they shall never be able to vanquish and put away: their idolatry and popish religion shall never be built in the consciences of men that love God's truth; as for those that love not God's truth, that have no pleasure to walk in the ways of the Lord, in those, I say, the devil shall prevail, for God will give them strong illusion to believe lies. Therefore, dear brethren and sisters in the Lord, I humbly beseech you and pray you, in the bowels and blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, now going to the death for the testimony of Jesus, as oftentimes I have done before this present, out of your pulpit, that you would love the Lord's truth; love (I say), to love it, and frame your lives thereafter. Alas! you know the cause of all these plagues fallen upon us, and of the success which God's adversaries have daily, is for our not loving God's word.

You know how that we were but gossellers in lips, and not in life; we were carnal, concupiscen-

tious, idle, unthankful, unclean, covetous, arrogant, dissemblers, crafty, subtle, malicious, false, backbiters, &c. and even gluttoned with God's word, yea, we loathed it, as did the Israelites the manna in the wilderness; and therefore, as to them the Lord's wrath waxed hot, so doth it unto us; so that there is no remedy, but that (for it is better late to turn than never to turn) we confess our faults, even from the bottom of our hearts, and with hearty repentance (which God works in us all for his mercy's sake) we run unto the Lord our God, which is exorable, merciful, and sorry for the evil poured out upon us, and cry out unto him with Daniel, saying, We have sinned, we have sinned grievously, O Lord God, against thy majesty; we have heaped iniquity upon iniquity; the measure of our transgressions floweth over: so that justly is thy vengeance and wrath fallen upon us, for we are very miserable: we have contemned thy long suffering, we have not hearkened to thy voice, when thou hast called us by preachers, we hardened our hearts, and therefore now deserve that thou send thy curse hereupon, to harden our hearts also, that we should henceforth have eyes and see not, ears and hear not, hearts and understand not, lest we should convert and be saved. Oh! be merciful unto us, spare us, good Lord, and all thy people whom thou hast dearly bought; let not thine enemies triumph altogether and always against thee, for then will they be puffed up. Look down, and behold the pitiful complaints of the poor; let the sorrowful sighing of the simple come in thy sight, and be not angry with us for ever. Turn us, O Lord God of Hosts, unto thee, turn thee unto us, that thou mayest be justified in thy sweet sentences, and overcome when thou art judged, as now thou art of our adversaries: for they say, Where is their God? can God deliver them now? can their Gos-

pel serve them? O Lord! how long, for the glory of thy name, and for thy honour's sake, in the bowels and blood of Jesus Christ, we humbly beseech thee, come and help us, for we are very miserable.

On this sort I say, dearly beloved, let us publicly and privately bewail our sins, but so that hereto we join ceasing from wilfulness and sin of purpose; for else the Lord heareth not our prayers, as David saith: and in St. John it is written, the impenitent sinners God heareth not. How impenitent are they, which purpose not to amend their lives! as for example, not only such which follow still their pleasures, uncleanness, and carnality, but those also which for fear or favour of men do against their conscience consent to the Romish rags, and resort to the rotten religion, communicating in service and ceremonies with the Papists; thereby declaring themselves to love more the world than God, to fear man more than Christ, to dread more the loss of temporal things than of spiritual; in whom it is evident the love of God abideth not: for he that loveth the world hath not God's love abiding in him, saith St. John; therefore, my dear hearts, and dear again in the Lord, remember what you have professed, Christ's religion and name, and the renouncing of the devil, sin, and the world.

Remember, before ye learned A B C, your lesson was Christ's cross: forget not that Christ will have no disciples, but such as will promise to deny themselves, and take up their cross (mark, take it up), and follow him, and not the multitude, custom, &c. Consider, for God's sake, that if we gather not with Christ, we scatter abroad. What should it profit a man to win the whole world, and lose his own soul? We must not forget that this life is a wilderness, and not a paradise; here is not

our home ; we are now in warfare ; we must needs fight, or else be taken prisoners. Of all things we have in this life, we shall carry nothing with us ; if Christ be our Captain, we must follow him as soldiers ; if we keep company with him in affliction, we shall be sure of his society in glory ; if we forsake not him, he will never forsake us ; if we confess him, he will confess us ; but if we deny him, he will deny us ; if we be ashamed of him, he will be ashamed of us. Wherefore, as he forsook his Father, and heaven, and all things, to come to us, so let us forsake all things and come to him, being sure and most certain, that we shall not lose thereby. Your children shall find and feel it double, yea, treble, whatsoever you lose for the Lord's sake ; you shall find and feel peace of conscience, and friendship with God, which is more worth than all the goods of the world.

My dearly beloved, therefore, for the Lord's sake, consider these things which I now write unto you of love, for my last farewell for ever in this present life. Turn to the Lord, repent you of your evil and unthankful life, declare repentance by the fruits ; take time while ye have it ; come to the Lord while he calleth you ; run into his lap while his arms be open to embrace you ; seek him while he may be found ; call upon him while time is convenient ; forsake and fly from all evil, both in religion, and in the rest of your life and conversation. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and praise God in the day of his visitation. Oh ! come again, come again, you strange children, and I will receive you, saith the Lord. Convert and turn to me, and I will turn unto you. Why will ye needs perish ? As sure as I live (swaereth the Lord), I will not your death ; turn therefore unto me. Can a woman forget the child of her womb ? If she

should, yet I will not forget you, saith the Lord your God. I am he, I am he, which put away your sins for mine own sake.

Oh then, dear friends, turn, I say, unto your dearest Father; cast not these sweet and loving words to the ground and at your tail, for the Lord watcheth on his word to perform it, which is in two sorts: to them that lay it up in their hearts, and believe it, will he pay all, and eternal joy and comfort; but to them that cast it at their backs, and will forget it, to them (I say) will he pour out indignation and eternal shame. Wherefore I heartily yet once more beseech you, and pray you, and every of you, not to contemn this poor and simple exhortation, which now out of prison I make unto you, or rather the Lord by me. Loath would I be a witness against you in the last day, as of truth I must be, if ye repent not, if ye love not God's Gospel, yea, if ye love it not.

Therefore (to conclude) repent, love God's Gospel, live in it, make it all your conversation; so shall God's name be praised, his plagues mitigated, his people comforted, and his enemies ashamed. Grant all this, thou gracious Lord God, to every one of us, for thy dear Son's sake, Jesus Christ: to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be eternal glory, for ever and ever. Amen. The 12th of February, anno 1555.

By the bondsman of the Lord, &c.

Your afflicted poor brother,

JOHN BRADFORD.

*To my loving Brethren, B. C. &c. their Wives,
and whole Families, J. BRADFORD.*

I beseech the everliving God to grant you all, my good brethren and sisters, the comfort of the Holy

Spirit, and the continual sense of his mercy in Christ our Lord, now and for ever. Amen. The world (my brethren) seemeth to have the upper hand, iniquity overfloweth, the truth and verity seemeth to be oppressed, and they which take part therewith are unjustly entreated; as they which love the truth lament to see and hear, as they do. The cause of all this is God's anger, and mercy; his anger, because we have grievously sinned against him; his mercy, because he here punishes us, and as a father nurtureth us. We have been unthankful for his word; we have contemned his kindness; we have been negligent in prayer; we have been so carnal, covetous, licentious, &c. we have not hastened to heaven-ward, but rather to hell-ward; we were fallen almost into an open contempt of God, and all his good ordinances; so that of his justice he could no longer forbear, but make us feel his anger, as now he hath done, in taking his word and true service from us, and permitting Satan to serve us with antichristian religion, and that in such sort, that if we will not yield to it, and seem to allow it in deed and outward fact, our bodies are like to be laid in prison, and our goods given, we cannot tell to whom.

This should we look upon as a sign of God's anger, procured by our sins, which, my good brethren, every of us should now call to our memories oftentimes, so particularly as we can, that we might heartily lament them, repent them, hate them, ask earnestly mercy for them, and submit to bear ourselves in this life any kind of punishment which God will lay upon us for them. This should we do in consideration of God's anger in this time. Now his mercy in this time of wrath is seen, and should be seen in us, my dearly beloved, in this, that God doth vouchsafe to punish us in this present life. If he should not have punished us, do not you think

that we would have continued in the evils we were in? Yes, verily, we would have been worse, and have gone forwards in hardening our hearts, by impenitency, and negligence of God and true godliness; and then, if death had come, should we not have perished, both soul and body, in eternal fire and perdition? Alas! what misery should we have fallen into, if God should have suffered us to have gone on forward in our evils! No greater sign of damnation there is, than to live in evil and sin, unpunished of God, as now the Papists (my dearly beloved) are cast into Jezebel's bed of security, which of all plagues is the most grievous plague that can be; they are bastards, and not sons, for they are not under God's rod of correction.

A great mercy it is therefore that God doth punish us: for if he loved us not, he would not punish us: now doth he chastise us, that we should not be damned with the world. Now doth he nurture us, because he favoureth us; now may we think ourselves God's house and children, because he beginneth his chastising at us: now calleth he us to remember our sins past. Wherefore? that we might repent, and ask mercy. And why? that he might forgive us, pardon us, justify us, and make us his children, and so begin to make us here like Christ, that we might be like unto him elsewhere, even in heaven, where already we are set by faith with Christ. And at his coming, in very deed we thall then most joyfully enjoy, when our sinful and vile bodies shall be made like to Christ's glorious body, according to the power whereby he is able to make all things subject to himself.

Therefore, my brethren, let us in respect hereof not lament, but laud God, not be sorry, but be merry, not weep, but rejoice and be glad, that God doth vouchsafe to offer us his cross, thereby to come

to him to endless joys and comforts: for if we suffer, we shall reign; if we confess him before men, he will confess us before his Father in heaven; if we be not ashamed of his Gospel now, he will not be ashamed of us in the last day, but will be glorified in us, crowning us with crowns of glory and endless felicity. For blessed are they that suffer persecution for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Be glad (saith Peter), for the Spirit of God resteth upon you. And after that you are a little afflicted, God will comfort, strengthen, and confirm you. And therefore, my good brethren, be not discouraged for cross, for prison, or loss of goods, for confession of Christ's Gospel and truth which ye have believed, and lively was taught amongst you in the days of our late good King, and most holy Prince King Edward. This is most certain, if you lose any thing for Christ's sake, and for contemning the antichristian service set up again amongst us: as you for your parts, even in prison, shall find God's great and rich mercy far passing all worldly wealth; so shall your wives and children, in this present life, find and feel God's providence more plentifully than tongue can tell: for he will shew merciful kindness on thousands of them that love him. The good man's seed shall not go a-begging his bread. You are good men, so many as suffer for Christ's sake.

I trust you all, my dearly beloved, will consider this with yourselves, and in the cross see God's mercy, which is more sweet and to be set by than life itself, much more than any muck or pelf of this world. This mercy of God should make you merry and cheerful, for the afflictions of this life are not to be compared to the joys of the life prepared for you. You know the way to heaven is not the wide way of the world, which windeth to the devil, but it

is a strait way, which few walk in. For few live godly in Christ Jesus; few regard the life to come; few remember the day of judgment; few remember how Christ will deny them before his Father, that do deny him here; few consider that Christ will be ashamed of them in the last day, which are ashamed of his truth and true service; few cast their accounts what will be laid to their charge in the day of vengeance; few regard the condemnation of their own consciences, in doing that which inwardly they disallow; few love God better than their goods.

But I trust yet, you are of this few, my dearly beloved; I trust you be of that little flock, which shall inherit the kingdom of heaven; I trust you are the mourners and lamenters which shall be comforted with comfort, which never shall be taken from you, if you now repent your former evils, if now you strive against the evils that are in you, if now you continue to call upon God, if now you defile not your bodies with any idolatrous service, used in the antichristian churches; if you molest not the good Spirit of God, which is given you as a gage of eternal redemption, a counsellor and master to lead you into all truth; which good Spirit I beseech the Father of mercy to give to us all, for his dear Son's sake, Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom I commend you all, and to the word of his grace, which is able to help you all, and save you all, that believe it, follow it, and serve God thereafter.

And of this I would ye were all certain, that all the hairs of your heads are numbered, so that not one of them shall perish, neither shall any man or devil be able to *attempt* any thing, much less to *do* any thing to you, or any of you, before your heavenly Father, which loveth you most tenderly, shall give them leave; and when he hath given them leave, they shall go no farther than he will, nor keep you

in trouble any longer than he will. Therefore cast on him all your care, for he is careful for you. Only study to please him, and to keep your consciences clean, and your bodies pure from the idolatrous service, which now every where is used, and God will marvellously and mercifully defend and comfort you; which thing he will do for his holy name's sake in Christ our Lord. Amen.

*To his dearly beloved in Christ, ERKINALDE RAWLINS
and his Wife.*

God, our dear and most merciful Father, through Christ, be with you, my good brother and sister, as with his children for ever; and in all things so guide you with his holy Spirit, the leader of his people, as may be to his glory, and your own everlasting joy and comfort in him. Amen. Because I have oftentimes received from either of you comfort corporal (for the which I beseech the Lord as to make me thankful, so to recompense you both now and eternally), I cannot but go about (Lord, help hereto for thy mercy's sake!) to write something for your comfort spiritually.

My dearly beloved, look not upon these days and the afflictions of the same here with us, simply as they seem unto you, that is, as dismal days, and days of God's vengeance, but rather as lucky days, and days of God's fatherly kindness towards you, and such as you be, that is, towards such as repent their sins and evil life past, and earnestly purpose to amend, walking not after the will of the world, and most part of men, for the preservation of their self, which, will they, nill they, shall leave sooner or later, and to whom, or how it shall be used, they know not. Indeed to such as walk in their wickedness, and wind on with the world, this time is a time of wrath and vengeance; and their beginning of

sorrow is but now, because they contemn the physic of their Father, which by this purging time, and cleansing days, would work their weal, which they will not: and because they will not have God's blessing, which both ways he hath offered unto them, by prosperity and adversity; therefore it shall be kept far enough from them, as, when the sick man will no kind of physic at the hands of the physician, he is left alone, and so the malady increaseth, and destroyeth him at the length. To such men indeed, these days are and should be doleful days, and days of woe and weeping, because their damnation draweth nigh. But unto such as be penitent, and are desirous to live after the Lord's will (among whom I do not only count you, but, as far as a man judge, I know ye are), unto such I say this time is and should be comfortable. For, first, now your Father chastiseth you and me for our sins; for the which if he would have destroyed us, then would he have letten us alone, and left us to ourselves, in nothing to take to heart his fatherly visitation, which here it pleaseth him to work presently, because elsewhere he will not remember our transgressions, as Paul writeth; he chastiseth us in this world, lest with the world we should perish. Therefore (my dear hearts) call to mind your sins, to lament them, and to ask mercy for them in his sight, and withal undoubtedly believe to obtain pardon, and assured forgiveness of the same, for twice the Lord punisheth not for one thing.

So that, I say, first we have cause to rejoice for these days, because our Father suffereth us not to lie in Jezebel's bed, sleeping in our own sins and security; but, as mindful of us, doth correct us as his children, whereby we may be certain that we be no bastards but children; for he chastiseth every child whom he receiveth; so that they which are not par-

takers of his chastising, or that contemn it, declare themselves to be bastards and not children, as I know ye are, which as ye are chastised, so do ye take it to heart accordingly. And therefore be glad, my dear hearts, and folks, knowing certainly, even by these visitations of the Lord, that ye are his dear elect children, whose faults your Father doth visit with the rod of correction, but his mercy will he never take away from us. Amen.

Secondly, ye have cause to rejoice for these days; because they are days of trial, wherein not only ye yourselves, but also the world, shall know, that ye be none of his, but the Lord's dearlings. Before these days came, Lord God, how many thought of themselves they had been in God's bosom, and so were taken, and would be taken of the world? But now we see whose they are; for to whom we obey, his servants we are. If we obey the world (which God forbid, and hitherto ye have not done it), then are we the world's; but if we obey God, then are we God's; which thing (I mean that ye are God's), these days have declared both to you, to me, and to all other that know you, better than ever we knew it; therefore ye have no cause to sorrow, but rather to sing, in seeing yourselves to be God's babes, and in seeing that all God's children do so count you.

What though the world repine thereat? what though he kick? what though he seek to trouble and molest you? My dear hearts, he doth but his kind. He cannot love the Lord, which liveth not in the Lord; he cannot brook the child, that hateth the father; he cannot mind the servant, that careth not for the master: if ye were of the world, the world would love you; ye should dwell quietly; there would be no grief, no molestation, if the devil dwelt in you (which the Lord

forbid) ; he would not stir up his knights to besiege your house, to snatch your goods, or suffer his fiends to enter into your hogs ; but because Christ dwelleth in you (as he doth by faith), therefore stirreth he up his first begotten son, the world, to seek how to disquiet you, to rob you, to spoil you, to destroy you ; and perchance, your dear Father, to try and to make known unto you, and to the world, that ye are destinate to another dwelling than here on earth, to another city than man's eyes have seen at any time, hath given or will give power to Satan, and to the world, to take from you the things which he hath lent you ; and, by taking away, to try your fidelity, obedience, and love towards him (for ye may not love them above him), as by giving that ye have, and keeping it, he hath declared his love towards you.

Satan perchance telleth God (as he did of Job), that ye love God for your goods' sake. What now then, if the Lord, to try you, with Job, shall give him power on your goods and body accordingly ; should ye be dismayed ? should ye despair ? should ye be faint-hearted ? should ye not rather rejoice, as did the Apostles, that they were counted worthy to suffer any thing for the Lord's sake ? Oh ! forget not the end that happened to Job, for as it happened to him, so shall it happen unto you ; for God is the same God, and cannot long forget to shew mercy to them that look and long for it, as I know ye do, and I pray you so to do still ; for the Lord loveth you, and never can nor will forget to shew and pour out his mercy upon you. After a little while that he hath afflicted and tried you (saith Peter), he will visit, comfort, and confirm you. As to Jacob wrestling with the Angel, at the length morning came, and the sun arose ; so, dear hearts, doubtless it will happen unto you. Howbeit, do ye as Job and Jacob

did: that is, order and dispose your things, that God hath lent you, as ye may, and while ye have time, who knoweth whether God hath given you power thus long even to that end.

Go to, therefore, dispose your goods, prepare yourselves to trial, that either ye may stand to it, like God's champions, or else, if ye feel such infirmity in yourselves, that be not able, give place to violence, and go where you may with free and safe conscience, serve the Lord. Think not this counsel to come by chance or fortune, but to come from the Lord. Other oracles we may not look for now. As God told Joseph in a dream by an angel, that he should flee, so if you feel such infirmity in yourselves, as should turn to God's dishonour, and your own destruction withal, know that at this present I am as God's angel, to admonish you, to take time while ye have it, and to see that in no case God's name by you might be dishonoured. Joseph might have objected the omission of his vocation, as perchance ye will do; but, dear hearts, let vocations, and all things else, give place to God's name, and the sanctifying thereof.

This I speak, not as though I would not have you rather to tarry and to stand to it, but I speak it in respect of your infirmity, which if you feel to be so great in you, that ye are not certain of this hope, that God will never tempt you above your ability, flee and get you hence, and know that thereby God will have you tried, to yourselves and to others; for by it you shall know how to take this world, and that your home here is no home, but that ye look for another, and so give occasion to others, less to love this world, and perchance to some to doubt of their religion; wherein, though they be earnest, yet would they not lose so much as ye do for your reli-

gion, which ye do confirm to me and others by your giving place to violence.

Last of all, ye have cause to rejoyce over these our days, because they be days of confirmation, in the which and by which God our heavenly Father maketh us like unto Christ's image here, that we may be like unto him elsewhere. For if that we suffer with him, then we shall reign also with him; if we be buried with him, then we shall rise with him again; if that we company with him in all troubles and afflictions, then we shall rejoyce with him in glory; if we now sow with him in tears, we shall reap with him in gladness; if we confess him before men, he will confess us before his Father in heaven; if we take his part, he will take ours; if we lose aught for his name's sake, he will give us all things for his truth's sake. So that we ought to rejoyce and be glad, for it is not given to every one to suffer loss of country, life, goods, house, &c. for the Lord's sake. What can God the Father do more unto us, than to call us into the camp with his Son? what may Christ our Saviour do more for us, than to make us his warriors? what can the Holy Ghost do to us above this, to mark us with the cognizance of the Lord of Hosts?

The cognizance of the Lord standeth not in forked caps, tippets, shaven crowns, or such other baggage, and antichristian pelf, but in suffering for the Lord's sake. The world shall hate you, saith Christ. Lo! there is the cognizance and badge of God's children: the world shall hate you. Rejoyce, therefore, my dearly beloved; rejoyce that God doth thus vouchsafe to begin to conform you, and to make you like to Christ. By the trial of these days ye are occasioned more to repent, more to pray, more to contemn this world, more to desire life everlasting, more to be holy (for holy is the end wherefore God doth afflict us), and so to come to God's com-

pany ; which thing, because we cannot do, as long as this body is as it is, therefore by the door of death we must enter, with Christ, into eternal life, and immortality of soul and body : which God of his mercy send shortly, for our Saviour Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

To Mistress A. WARCUP.

The everlasting peace of Christ be more and more lively felt in our hearts, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, now and for ever. Amen.

Although I know it be more than needeth to write any thing unto you (good sister), being, as I doubt not you be, diligently exercised in reading of the Scriptures, in meditating of the same, and in hearty prayer to God for the help of his holy Spirit, to have the sense and feeling, especially of the comforts you read in God's sweet book, yet having such opportunity, and knowing not whether hereafter I shall ever have the like (as this bringer can declare), I thought good, in few words, to take *my* farewell in writing, because otherwise I cannot. And now methinks I have done it : for what else can I, or should I say unto you (my dearly beloved in the Lord), but farewell ? Farewell, dear sister ! farewell ; howbeit, in the Lord, our Lord (I say), farewell. In him shall you farewell, and so much the better, by how much in yourself you fare evil, and shall fare evil.

When I speak of yourself, I mean also this world, this life, and all things properly pertaining to this life : in them, as you look not for your welfare, so be not dismayed, when accordingly you shall not feel it. To the Lord our God, to the Lamb our Christ, which hath borne our sins on his back, and is our Mediator for ever, do I send you. In him look for welfare, and that without all wavering, because of his own goodness and truth, which our

evils and untruth cannot take away. Not that, therefore, I would have you to flatter yourself in any evil or unbelief; but that I would comfort you, that they should not dismay you. Yours is our Christ, wholly; yours I say he is, with all that ever he hath. Is not this welfare, trow you? Mountains shall move, and the earth shall fall, before you find it otherwise, say that liar Satan what he list.

Therefore, good sister, farewell, and be merry in the Lord; be merry, I say, for you have good cause. If your welfare, joy, and salvation, hanged upon any other thing than only God's mercy and truth, then might you well be sad, heavy, and stand in a doubt: but in that it hangeth only upon these two; tell Satan he lieth, when he would have to stand in a mammering, by causing you to cast your eye (which only in this case should be set on Christ your sweet Saviour) on yourself. In some part, indeed, look on yourself, on your faith, on your love, obedience, &c. to wake you up from security, to stir you up to diligence in doing the things appertaining to your vocation; but when you would be at peace with God, and have true consolation in your conscience, altogether look upon the goodness of God in Christ; think on this commandment, which precedeth all other, that you must have no other gods but the Lord Jehovah, which is your Lord and God; the which he could not be if that he did not pardon your sins in very deed. Remember that Christ commandeth you to call him Father for the same intent. And hereto call to mind all the benefits of God hitherto shewed unto you, and so shall you feel, in very deed, that which I wish unto you and pray you to wish unto me. Farewell, or welfare, in the Lord Jesus; with whom may he grant us shortly to meet, as his children, for his name and mercy's sake, to our eternal welfare. Amen.

To mine own dear Brother, Master LAURENCE SAUNDERS, Prisoner in the Marshalsea.

My good brother, I beseech our good and gracious Father always to continue his gracious favour and love towards us, and by us, as by instruments of his grace, to work his glory and the confusion of his adversaries. Out of the mouths of infants and babes he will shew forth his praise to destroy the enemy, &c.

I have perused your letters for myself, and have read them to others; for answer whereof, if I should write what Doctor Taylor and Master Philpot do think, then must I say that they think the salt sent us by your friend is unseasonable; and indeed I think they both will declare it heartily, if they should come before men. As for me, if you would know what I think (my good and most dear brother Laurence), because I am so sinful and so conspurcate (the Lord knoweth I lie not) with many grievous sins (which I hope are washed away), I neither can nor would be consulted withal, but as a Cypher in Agrime. Howbeit, to tell you how and what I mind, take this for a sum: I pray God in no case I may seek myself, and indeed (I thank God therefor) I purpose it not: that which remaineth I commit to my Lord God; and I trust in him that he will do according to this: Cast thy care on the Lord, &c. Cast all your care upon him, &c. Reveal unto the Lord thy way, and trust, &c. Who that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about. I did not, nor do not know, but by your letters, that tomorrow we shall come in the presence of each other. Mine own heart, stick still to, It shall be given you, &c.; for the Lord is faithful; he will in temptation make a way, that ye may be able to bear it. The Lord knoweth how to rid out of temptation the godly, &c. Oh! would God I were godly! The

Lord knoweth how to deliver out of temptation such as trust in him, &c. I cannot think that they will offer any kind of indifferent or mean conditions; for if we will not adore the beast, we never shall be delivered, but against their will, think I. God our Father and gracious Lord make perfect the good he hath begun in us! He will do it, my brother, my dear brother, whom I have in my inward bowels to live and die with. Oh! if I were with you! Pray for me, mine own heart-root in the Lord,

For ever your own,

JOHN BRADFORD.

Another Letter to Master LAURENCE SAUNDERS.

God's sweet peace in Christ be with you, my good brother in the Lord Jesus, and with all your captives. Amen.

I was better this morning, from musing on that which I was purposed to have thought on, by reason of you, against whom I saw myself guilty of negligence, even in this point, that I would not write, I should say that I had not written unto as yet; therefore out of hand, in manner I prepared myself to purge myself hereof; not that I will go about to excuse my fault (for that were more to load me), but my asking both God and you pardon, to get it no more laid to my charge. Now when I was thus purposing, and partly doing, cometh there one with a letter from you; for the which as I have cause to thank God and you (howbeit not so that you should think I give not the whole to God), so I see myself more blameworthy for this long holding my peace. Howbeit (good brother), in this I have given a demonstration to you, to behold my negligence in all other things, and especially in praying for you, and for the church of God; which for my sins and hypocrisy (hypocrisy, indeed!—even in this writing

God deliver me from it!) have deserved to be punished. Just is God, for we have deserved all kind of plagues at his hands; but yet merciful is he, that will on this wise chastise us with this world, that we should not be condemned with the world; he might otherwise have punished us; I mean he might have for other causes cast us in prison, me especially, then for his Gospel and word's sake; praised, therefore, be his name, which voucheth us worthy this honour. Ah, good God! forgive us our sins, and work by this thy fatherly correction on us, on me especially, effectually to love thee and thy Christ; and with joyfulness to the end to carry thy cross, through thick and thin. Always set before our eyes, not this gallows on earth, if we will stick to thee, but the gallows in hell, if we deny thee, and swerve from that we have professed.

Ah, good brother! if I could always have God, his majesty, mercy, heaven, hell, &c. before mine eyes, then should I, as Paul writeth of Moses, Heb. xi. He endured (saith he), as he that saw Him which is invisible. Pray for me, as I know you do, and give thanks also; for in the Lord I trust I shall not waver. If I walk by the valley of the shadow of death, I will not fear, for thou art with me, O Lord. I think we shall be shortly called forth, and I think their sheet-anchor will be, to have us to subscribe; the which thing if we do, though with this condition (so far as the thing subscribed to, repugneth not against God's word), yet this will be offensive: therefore let us all confess we are no changelings; but are the same we were in religion, and therefore cannot subscribe, except we will dissemble both with God, ourselves, and the world. These things I write unto you, dear brother in the Lord: now I will read your epistle. Ah, brother! that I had the practical understanding with you

in that Vine, which you describe! Pray the Lord that I may so think indeed. God make me thankful for you! All our fellow-prisoners salute you, and give thanks to God for you. The same do you for us, and pray that, &c.

Your brother in the Lord Jesus, to live and die
with you,

JOHN BRADFORD.

*To my dear Fathers, D. CRANMER, D. RIDLEY, and
D. LATIMER.*

Jesus Emmanuel. My dear fathers in the Lord, I beseech God our sweet Father, through Christ, to make perfect the good he hath begun in us all. Amen.

I had thought that every of your staves had stood next the door, but now it is otherwise perceived. Our dear brother Rogers hath broken the ice valiantly, as this day, I think, or to-morrow at the uttermost, hearty Hooper, sincere Saunders, and trusty Taylor, end their course, and receive their crown. The next an I, which hourly look for the porter to open me the gates after them, to enter into the desired rest. God forgive me mine unthankfulness for this exceeding great mercy, that amongst so many thousands it pleaseth his mercy to choose me to be one in whom he will suffer. For although it be most true that I justly suffer (for I have been a great hypocrite, and a grievous sinner—the Lord pardon me! yea, he hath done it; he hath done it indeed); yet, what evil hath he done? Christ, whom the prelates persecute; his verity, which they hate in me, hath done no evil, nor deserveth death. Therefore ought I most heartily to rejoice of this indignation, and tender kindness of the Lord towards me, which useth the remedy for my

sin, as a testimonial of his testament; to his glory, to my everlasting comfort, to the edifying of his church, and to the overthrowing of antichrist and his kingdom. Oh, what am I, Lord! that thou shouldst thus magnify me, so vile a man and miser, as always I have been? Is this thy wont, to send for such a wretch, and an hypocrite, as I have been, in a fiery chariot, as thou didst for Elias? Oh, dear fathers! be thankful for me, and pray for me, that I still may be found worthy in whom the Lord would sanctify his holy name. And for your part, make you ready: for we are but your gentleman-ushers. The marriage of the Lamb is prepared; come unto the marriage. I now go to leave my flesh there, where I received it. I shall be conveyed thither as Ignatius was at Rome; by whose evil I hope to be made better; God grant if it be his will that I ask, it may make them better by me. Amen.

For my farewell, therefore, I write and send this unto you, trusting shortly to see you, where we shall never be separated; in the mean season, I will not cease, as I have done, to commend you to our Father of heaven, and that you would so do by me, I must heartily pray every one of you; you know now I have most need; but faithful is God, which will not suffer us to be tempted above our strength. He never did it hitherto, nor now, and I am assured he will never. Amen. He is on my right hand, therefore I shall not fall. Wherefore my heart shall rejoice; for he shall not leave my soul in hell, neither shall suffer me, his holy one, by his grace in Christ, to see corruption. Out of prison, in haste, looking for the tormentor. The 8th of February 1555.

JOHN BRADFORD.

To the Right Honourable Lord RUSSEL, now Earl of BEDFORD, being then in Trouble for the Verity of God's Gospel.

The everlasting and most gracious God and Father of our Saviour Jesus Christ, bless your good Lordship with all manner of heavenly blessings, in the same Christ, our only comfort and hope. Amen.

Praised be God our Father, which hath vouched you worthy, as of faith in his Christ, so of his cross for the same. Magnified be his holy name, who, as he hath delivered you from one cross, so he hath made you willing, I trust, and ready to bear another, when he shall see it his time to lay it upon you; for these are the most singular gifts of God, given as to few, so to none else but to those few which are most dear in his sight. Faith is reckoned, and worthily, amongst the greatest gifts of God; yea, it is the greatest itself that we may enjoy; for by it, as we be justified, and made God's children, so are we temples and possessors of the Holy Spirit; yea, of Christ also, Eph. iv. and of the Father himself, John, xiv.: by faith we drive the devil away, 1 Peter, v.; we overcome the world, 1 John, v.; and are already citizens of heaven, and fellows with God's dear saints. But who is able to reckon the riches that this faith bringeth with her, unto the soul she sitteth upon? No man or angel. And therefore, as I said, of all God's gifts she may be set in the top, and have the upmost seat. The which thing if men considered (in that she cometh alone from God's own mercy-seat by the hearing, not of mass, matins, dirges, or such dross, but of the word of God, in such a tongue as we can and do understand), as they would be diligent, and take great heed for doing or see-

ing any thing which might cast her down (for then they fall also), so would they, with no less care, read and hear God's holy word, joining thereto most earnest and often prayer, as well for the more and better understanding, as for the loing, living, and confessing of the same, maugre the head of the devil, the world, our flesh, reason, goods, possessions, carnal friends, wife, children, and very life, here; if they should pull us back to hearken to their voice and counsel for more quiet, sure and longer use of them.

Now, notwithstanding this excellency of faith, in that we read the Apostle to match therewith, yea, as it were, to prefer suffering persecution for Christ's sake, I trow no man will be so fond as to think otherwise, but that I and all God's children have cause to glorify and praise God, which hath vouched us worthy so great a blessing. For though the reason or wisdom of the world think of the cross according to their reach, and according to their present sense, and therefore flieth from it, as from a most grievous ignominy and shame; yet God's scholars have learned otherwise to think of the cross, that is, the frame-house in which God frameth his children like to his son Christ; the furnace that fineth God's gold; the highway to heaven; the suit and livery that God's servants are served withal; the earnest and beginning of all consolation and glory; for they (I mean God's scholars, as your Lordship is, I trust) do enter into God's sanctuary lest their feet slip. They look not, as beasts do, on things present only, but on things to come, and so have they as present to faith, the judgment and glorious coming of Christ Jesus; as the wicked have now, their worldly wealth, wherein they wallow, and will wallow till they tumble headlong into hell, where are torments too terrible and endless. Now

they follow the fiend, as the bear doth the train of honey, and the sow the swillings, till they be brought into the slaughter-house, and then they know that their prosperity hath brought them to perdition. Then cry they, Woe, woe! we went the wrong way; we counted these men (I mean such as you be, that suffer for God's sake loss of goods, friends, and life, whom they shall see endued with rich robes of righteousness, crowns of most pure precious gold, and palms of conquest in the goodly glorious palace of the Lamb, where is eternal joy, felicity, &c.); we counted, will they then say, these men but fools and madmen. We took their condition to be but curiosity, but then will it be too late; then the time will be turned, laughing shall be turned into weeping, and weeping into rejoicing. Read Wisdom, ii. iii. iv. v.

Therefore, as before I have said, great cause have I to thank God, which hath vouched you worthy of this most bountiful blessing, much more then you have cause, my good Lord, so to be, I mean thankful; for look upon your vocation; I pray you tell me how many noblemen, earl's sons, lords, knights, and men of estimation, hath God in this realm of England dealt thus withal. I dare say you think not that you have deserved this. Only God's mercy in his Christ hath wrought this in you, as he did in Jeremiah's time, on Abimelech, in Ahab's time, on Abdias, in Christ's time, on Joseph of Arimathea, in the Apostles' time, on Sergius Paulus, and the Queen Candace's chamberlain. Only now be thankful and continue, continue, continue, my good Lord, continue to confess Christ. Be not ashamed of him before men, for then will not he be ashamed of you. Now will he try you; stick fast unto him, and he will stick fast by you; he will be with you in trouble, and deliver

you. But then you must cry unto him, for so it proceedeth; He cried unto me, and I heard him; I was with him in trouble, &c. Psalm xci.

Remember Lot's wife which looked back. Remember Francis Spira. Remember that none is crowned, but he that striveth lawfully. Remember that all you have is at Christ's commandment. Remember he lost more for you, than you can lose for him. Remember you lose not that which is lost for his sake; for you shall find much more here and elsewhere. Remember you shall die; and when, and where, and how, ye cannot tell. Remember the death of sinners is most terrible. Remember the death of God's saints is most precious in his sight. Remember the multitude goeth the wide way, which windeth to woe. Remember, the strait gate which leadeth to glory, hath but few travellers; remember, Christ biddeth you strive to enter in thereat. Remember, he that trusteth in the Lord, shall receive strength to stand against all the assaults of his enemies. Be certain all the hairs of your head are numbered. Be certain your good Father hath appointed bounds, over the which the devil dares not look. Commit yourself to him; he is, hath been, and will be, your keeper. Cast your care on him, and he will care for you. Let Christ be your scope and mark to prick at; let him be your pattern to work by; let him be your ensample to follow: give him, as your heart, so your hand; as your mind, so your tongue; as your faith, so your feet: and let his word be your candle to go before you, in all matters of religion. Blessed is he that walketh not to these popish prayers, nor standeth at them, nor sitteth at them. Glorify God both in soul and body. He that gathereth not with Christ, scattereth abroad. Use prayer, look for God's help, which is at hand, to them that ask, and hope there-

after assuredly. In which prayer, I heartily desire your Lordship to remember us, who, as we are going with you right gladly (God therefore be praised), so we look to go before you, hoping that you will follow, if God so will, according to your daily prayer; Thy will be done on earth, &c. The good Spirit of God always guide your Lordship unto the end. Amen.

Your Lordship's own for ever,

JOHN BRADFORD.

To Master WARCUP and his Wife, Mistress WILKINSON, and others of his godly Friends, with their Families.

The same peace our Saviour Christ left with his people, which is not without war with the world, Almighty God work plentifully in your hearts now and for ever. Amen.

The time I perceive is come, wherein the Lord's ground will be known; I mean, it will now shortly appear who have received God's Gospel into their hearts indeed, to the taking of good root therein; for such will not, for a little heat or sun-burning, wither, but stiffly will stand and grow on, maugre the malice of all burning showers and tempests. And for as much as, my beloved in the Lord, I am persuaded of you that ye be indeed the children of God, God's good ground which groweth, and will grow on, by God's grace, bringing forth fruit to God's glory, after your vocations, as occasions shall be offered, burn the sun never so hot; therefore I cannot but so signify unto you, and heartily pray you, and every one of you accordingly, to go on forwards after your master, Christ; not sticking at the foul way and stormy weather, which you are come into, and are like so to do; of this being

most certain, that the end of your journey shall be pleasant and joyful, in such a perpetual rest and blissfulness, as cannot but swallow up the showers that ye now feel, and are soused in, if ye often set it before your eyes, after Paul's counsel in the latter end of the fourth, and beginning of the fifth chapter of the second Epistle to the Corinthians. Read it, I pray you, and remember it often, as a restorative to refresh you lest ye faint in the way.

And besides this, set before you also, that though the weather be foul, and storms grow apace, yet go not ye alone, but other your brothers and sisters tread the same path, as St. Peter telleth us, and therefore company should cause you to be the more courageous and cheerful. But if you had no company at all to go presently with you, I pray you tell me, if even from the beginning the best of God's friends have found any fairer weather and way to the place whither ye are going, I mean heaven, than ye now find, and are like to do, except ye will with the worldlings, which have their portion in this life, tarry still by the way, till the storms be overpast, and then either night will so approach that ye cannot travel, either the doors will be sparred before ye come, and so ye then lodge without in wonderful evil lodgings. Read Revelat. xxii. Begin at Abel, and come from him to Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, the Patriarchs, Moses, David, Daniel, and all the saints of the Old Testament, and tell me whether ever any of them found any fairer way than ye now find.

If the Old Testament will not serve, I pray you come to the New, and begin with Mary and Joseph, and come from them to Zechariah, Elizabeth, John Baptist, and every one of the Apostles and Evangelists, and search whether they all found any other

way unto the city we travel towards, than by many tribulations.

Besides these, if ye should call to remembrance the primitive church, Lord God, ye should see many to have given cheerfully their bodies to most grievous torments, rather than they would be stopped in their journey; that there is no day in the year, but (I dare say) a thousand was the fewest, that with great joy lost their homes here, but in the city they went unto have found other manner of homes than man's mind is capable to conceive.

But if none of these were, if ye had no company now to go with you, as ye have me, your poor brother and bondman of the Lord, with many other, I trust in God, if you had none other of the Fathers, Patriarchs, Kings, Prophets, Apostles, Evangelists, Martyrs, and other holy Saints and children of God, that in their journey to heaven-ward found, as ye now find, and are like to find, if you go on forward, as I trust ye will; yet ye have your Master and your Captain, Jesus Christ, the dear darling and only begotten and beloved Son of God, in whom was all the Father's pleasure, joy, and delectation; ye have him to go before you, no fairer way, but much fouler, into this our city of Jerusalem. I need not (I trust) to rehearse what manner of way he found. Begin at his birth, and till ye come at his burial, ye shall find that every foot and stride of his journey was no better, but much worse, than yours is now.

Wherefore (my dearly beloved in the Lord), be not so dainty as to look for that at God's hands, your dear Father, which the Fathers, Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Evangelists, Martyrs, Saints, and his own Son Jesus Christ, did not find. Hitherto we have had fair way (I trow) and fair weather also: now because we have loitered by the way, and not made the speed we should have done, our loving Lord and sweet

Father hath overcast the weather, and stirred up storms and tempests, that we might with more haste run out our race before night come, and the doors be sparred. The devil standeth now at every inn-door in his city and country of this world, crying unto us to tarry and lodge in this or that place, till the storms be overpast; not that he would not have us wet to the skin, but that the time might overpass us, to our utter destruction. Therefore beware of his enticements. Cast not your eyes on things that be present, how this man doth, and that man doth, but cast your eyes on the gleve ye run at, or else ye will lose the game.

Ye know that he which runneth at the gleve, doth not look on others that stand by, and go this way or that way, but altogether he looketh at the gleve, and on them that run with him, that those which be behind overtake him not, and that he may overtake them that be before: even so should we do, leaving off looking on those which will not run the race to heaven's bliss, by the path of persecution with us, and cast our eyes on the end of our race, and on them that go before us, that we may overtake them, and on them which come after us, that we may provoke them to come faster after.

He that shooteth, will not cast his eyes in his shooting on them that stand by, or ride by the way (I trow), but rather at the mark he shooteth at, for else he were like to win the wrong way: even so, my dearly beloved, let your eyes be set on the mark you shoot at, even Christ Jesus, who for the joy set before him did joyfully carry his cross, contemning the shame, and therefore he now sitteth on the right hand of the throne of God. Let us follow him; for this did he, that we should not be faint-hearted; for we may be most assured, that if we suffer with him, we shall undoubtedly reign with him; but if

we deny him, surely he will deny us. For he that is ashamed of me, saith Christ, and of my Gospel, in this faithless generation, I will be ashamed of him before the angels of God in heaven. Oh! how heavy a sentence is this to all such as know the mass to be an abominable idol, full of idolatry, blasphemy, and sacrilege, against God and his Christ (as undoubtedly it is), and yet for fear of men, for loss of life or goods, yea, some for advantage or gain, will honest it with their presence, dissembling both with God and man, as their own heart and conscience doth accuse them! Better it were that such had never known the truth, than thus wittingly, and for fear or favour of man, whose breath is in his nostrils, to dissemble it, or rather (as indeed it is) to deny it. The end of such is like to be worse than their beginning. Such had need to take heed to the two terrible places to the Hebrews, in the 6th and 10th chapters, lest by so doing they fall therein. Let them beware they play no willy-beguile with themselves, as some do, I fear me, which go to mass, and because they worship not, nor kneel not, nor knock not, as others do, but sit still in their pews, therefore they think they rather do good to others than hurt.

But, alas! if these men would look into their own consciences, there should they see they are very dissemblers, and in seeking to deceive others (for by this means the magistrates think them of their sort), they deceive themselves. They think at the elevation-time, all men's eyes are set upon them to mark how they do. They think others, hearing of such men going to mass, do see or inquire of their behaviour there. Oh! if there were in those men that are so present at the mass, either love to God or to their brethren, then would they, for the one or both, openly take God's part, and admonish the people of

their idolatry. They fear man more than Him which hath power to cast both soul and body into hell fire : they halt on both knees : they serve two masters. God have mercy upon such, and open their eyes with his eye-salve, that they may see that they which take no part with God are against God ; and that they which gather not with Christ, do scatter abroad. Oh ! that they would read what St. John saith will be done to the fearful ! The counsel given to the church at Laodicea is good counsel for such. Rev. iii. xxi.

But to return to you again (dearly beloved) : be not ashamed of God's Gospel. It is the power of God to salvation to all those that do believe it. Be therefore partakers of the afflictions, as God shall make you able, knowing for certain that he will never tempt you farther than he will make you able to bear ; and think it no small grace of God to suffer persecution for God's truth ; for the Spirit of God resteth upon you, and ye are happy, as one day ye shall see. Read 2 Thessalonians, i. Hebrews, xii. As the fire hurteth not gold, but maketh it finer, so shall ye be more pure by suffering with Christ. 1 Pet. i. The flail and wind hurteth not the wheat, but cleanseth it from the chaff ; and ye (dearly beloved) are God's wheat ; fear not therefore the flail ; fear not the fanning wind ; fear not the millstone ; fear not the oven : for all these make you more meet for the Lord's own tooth. Soap, though it be black, soileth not the cloth, but rather at the length maketh it more clean ; so doth the black cross help us to more whiteness, if God strike with his battledore. Because ye are God's sheep, prepare yourselves for the slaughter, always knowing that in the sight of the Lord our death shall be precious. The souls under the altar look for us to fill up their number : happy are we if God have so appointed us. Howsoever it

be (dearly beloved), cast yourselves wholly upon the Lord, with whom all the hairs of your head are numbered, so that not one of them shall perish. Will we, nill we, we must drink God's cup, if he hath appointed it for us. Drink it willingly then, and at the first, when it is full, lest peradventure, if we linger, we shall drink at the length of the dregs with the wicked, if at the beginning we drink not with his children; for with them his judgment becometh; and when he hath wrought his will on Mount Sion, then will he visit the nations round about.

Submit yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God. No man shall touch you without his knowledge. When they touch you therefore, know it is your weal. God thereby will work to make you like unto Christ here, that ye may be also like unto him elsewhere. Acknowledge your unthankfulness and sin, and bless God that correcteth you in the world, because you shall not be damned with the world. Otherwise might he correct us, than in making us to suffer for righteousness sake, but this he doth because we are not of the world. Call upon his name through Christ for his help, as he commandeth us. Believe that he is merciful to you, heareth you, and helpeth you. I am with him in trouble, and will deliver him, saith he. Know that God hath appointed bounds, over the which the devil and all the world shall not pass. If all things seem to be against us, yet say with Job, If he will kill me, I will hope in him. Read the 91st Psalm, and pray for me, your poor brother and fellow-sufferer for God's Gospel sake (his name therefore be praised): and of his mercy he make me and you worthy to suffer with good conscience for his name's sake. Die once we must, and when we

know not : happy are they whom God giveth to pay nature's debt, I mean, to die for his sake.

Here is not our home : therefore let us accordingly consider things, always having before our eyes the heavenly Jerusalem, Heb. xii. Rev. xxi. and xxii. the way thither to be by persecutions ; the dear friends of God, how they have gone it after the example of our Saviour Jesus Christ, whose footsteps let us follow, even to the gallows, if God so will, not doubting, but that as he within three days rose again immortal, even so we shall do in our time, that is, when the trump shall blow, and the angel shall shout, and the Son of Man shall appear in the clouds, with innumerable saints and angels, in majesty and great glory : then shall the dead arise, and we shall be caught up into the clouds to meet the Lord, and so be always with him. Comfort yourselves with these words, and pray for me, for God's sake. 19 December 1553.

JOHN BRADFORD.

To Sir JAMES HALES, Knt. then Prisoner in the Compter in Bread Street.

The God of mercy, and Father of all comfort, plentifully pour out upon you, and in you, his mercy ; and with his consolation comfort and strengthen you to the end, for his and our Christ's sake.

Although, right worshipful Sir, many causes might move me to be content with crying for you to your God and my God, that he would give you grace to persevere well, as he hath right notably begun, to the great glory of his name, and comfort of all such as fear him ; as lack of learning, of familiarity, yea acquaintance (for I think I am unknown to you, both by face and name), and other such-like things ; yet I

cannot content myself, but presume something to scribble unto you; not that I think my scribbling can do you good, but that I might declare my compassion, love, and affection I bear towards your mastership, which is contented, yea desirous with us poor misers, to confess Christ's Gospel in these perilous times and days of trial. O Lord God! how good art thou, which dost thus glean out grapes, I mean children for thyself, and brethren for Christ! Look, good Master Hales, on your vocation; not many judges, not many knights, not many landed men, not many rich men and wealthy, to live as you are, hath God chosen to suffer for his sake, as he hath now done you. Certainly I dare say you think not so of yourself, as though God were bound to prefer you, or had need of you; but rather attribute this, as all good things, unto his free mercy in Christ. Again, I dare say that you, being a wise man, do judge of things wisely; that is, concerning this your cross, you judge of it not after the world and people, nor after the judgment of reason and worldly wisdom, which is foolishness to faith, nor after the present sense, to which it seemeth not to be joyous but grievous, as Paul writeth: but after the word of God, which teacheth your cross to be, in respect of yourself, between God and you, God's chastening and your Father's correction, nurture, school, trial, pathway to heaven, glory, and felicity, and the furnace to consume the dross, and mortify the reliques of old Adam, which yet remain: yea, even the frame-house to fashion you like to the dearest saints of God here, yea to Christ the Son of God, that elsewhere you might be like unto him.

Now concerning your cross, in respect of the world and you, God's word teacheth it to be a testimonial of God's truth, of his providence, of his power, of his justice, of his wisdom, of his anger

against sin, of his goodness, of his judgment of your faith and religion, so that by it you are to the world a witness of God, one of his tests that he is true : he ruleth all things, he is just, wise, and at length will judge the world, and cast the wicked into perdition, but the godly he will take and receive unto his eternal habitation. I know you judge of things after faith's fetch, and the effects or ends of things ; and so you see an eternal weight of glory which this cross shall bring unto you, while you look not on things which are seen, but on the things which are not seen. Let the worldlings weigh things, and look upon the affairs of men with their worldly and corporal eyes, as did many in subscription of the King's last will ; and therefore they did that for the which they beshrewed themselves. But let us look on things with other manner of eyes, as, God be praised ye did, in not doing that which you were desired and driven at to have done. You then beheld things not as a man, but as a man of God ; and so you do now in religion, at the least hitherto you have done, and that you might do so still, I humbly beseech and pray you say, with David, " Mine eyes fail for thy word, saying, When wilt thou comfort me ?" Though you be as a bottle in the smoke (for I hear you want health), yet do not forget the statutes of the Lord ; but cry out, " How many are the days of thy servant ? when wilt thou execute judgment on them that persecute me ?" and be certain the Lord will surely come and not stay : though he tarry, wait for him ; for he is but a little while in his anger, but in his favour is life : weeping may abide at evening, but joy cometh in the morning. Follow, therefore, Isaiah's counsel : Hide thyself for a very little while, until his indignation pass over, which is not so indeed but to our sense ; and therefore, in the six-and-twentieth chapter of Isaiah, God

saith of his church and people, that as he keepeth night and day, so there is no anger in me, saith he.

The mother sometimes beateth the child, but yet her heart melteth upon it even in the very beating; and therefore she casteth the rod into the fire, and calleth the child, giveth it an apple, and dandleth it most motherly; and, to say the truth, the love of mothers to their children is but a trace to train us to behold the love of God towards us: and therefore, saith he, Can a mother forget the child of her womb? as who should say, No: but if she should so do, yet will I not forget thee, saith the Lord of Hosts. Ah! comfortable saying! I will not forget thee, saith the Lord. Indeed the children of God think oftentimes that God hath forgotten them, and therefore they cry, "Hide not thy face from me; leave me not, O Lord," &c. Whereas in very truth it is not so, but to their present sense; and therefore David said, "I said, in my agony, I was clean cast away from thy face." But was it so? Nay, verily: read his Psalms, and you shall see. So writeth he also in other places very often, especially in the person of Christ; as when he saith, "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" He saith not, Why dost thou forsake me? or Why wilt thou forsake me? but, Why hast thou forsaken me? Where, indeed, God had not left him, but that it was so to his sense, and that this Psalm telleth full well; which Psalm I pray you now and then read; it is the twenty-second, and thereto join the thirtieth, and the hundred and sixteenth, with divers others. The same we read in the prophet Isaiah, the fortieth chapter, where he reproveth Israel for saying, God had forgotten them; saith he, Knowest thou not, hast thou not heard, they that trust in the Lord shall renew their strength? And in his four-and-fiftieth chapter, Fear

not, &c. for a little while I have forsaken thee, but with great compassion will I gather thee; for a moment in mine anger I hid my face from thee for a little season, but in everlasting mercy have I had compassion on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer: for this unto me as the waters of Noah; for, as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so have I sworn that I would not be angry with thee, nor rebuke thee: for the mountains shall remove, and hills shall fall down, but my mercy shall not depart from thee; neither shall the covenant of my peace fall away, saith the Lord, that hath compassion on thee.

But the Scriptures are full of such sweet places to them, that will bear the wrath of the Lord, and wait for his health and help. As of all temptations this is the greatest, that God hath forgotten, or will not help us through the pikes, as they say; so of all services of God, this liketh him the best; to hope assuredly on him, and for his help always, which is an helper in tribulations, and doth more gloriously shew his power, by such as be weak, and feel themselves so: for the weaker we are, the more strong we are in him. Thus the eyes of the Lord be on them that tremble and fear; he will accomplish their desire; he is with them in their trouble; he will deliver them: before they cry, he heareth them, as all the Scriptures teach us. To the reading whereof, and hearty prayer, I heartily commend you, beseeching Almighty God, that of his eternal mercies he would make perfect the good he hath begun in you, and strengthen you to the end, that you might have no less hope, but much more of his help, to your comfort, now against your enemies, than already he hath given you against N. for not subscribing to the King's will.

Be certain, be certain, good Master Hales, that all

the hairs of your head your dear Father hath numbered, so that one of them shall not perish; your name is written in the book of life; therefore upon God cast all your care, which will comfort you with his eternal consolations, and make you able to go through the fire (if need be), which is nothing to be compared to the fire wherein our enemies shall fall, and lie for ever, from which the Lord deliver us, though it be through temporal fire, which must be construed, according to the end and profit that cometh after it; so shall it then not much fear us to suffer for our master Christ's cause; the which the Lord grant us, for his mercies' sake. Amen. From the King's Bench.

Your humble,

JOHN BRADFORD.

*To my very Friend in the Lord, Doctor HILL,
Physician.*

The God of mercy and Father of all comfort, at this present and for ever, ingraft in your heart the sense of his mercy in Christ, and the continuance of his consolation, which cannot but enable you to carry with joy whatsoever he shall lay upon you. Amen.

Hitherto I could have no such liberty as to write unto you, as I think you know; but now, in that, through God's providence, I have no such restraint, I cannot but something write, as well to purge me of this suspicion of unthankfulness towards you, as also to signify my carefulness for you in these perilous days, lest you should wax cold in God's cause (which God forbid), or suffer the light of the Lord once kindled in your heart, to be quenched, and so become as you were before, after the example of the world, and many others, which would have been accounted otherwise in our days, and yet still beguile

themselves, still would be so accounted; although by their outward life they declare the contrary, in that they think it enough to keep the heart pure, notwithstanding that the outward man doth curry favour.

In which doings, as they deny God to be jealous, and therefore requireth the whole man, as well body as soul, being both created as to immortality and society with him, so redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ, and now sanctified by the Holy Spirit, to be the temple of God, and member of his Son (as they say), by their parting stake, to give God the heart, and the world the body; they deny God to be jealous (for else they would give him both, as the wife would do to her husband, whether he be jealous or no, if she be honest), so they play the dissemblers with the church of God by their fact, offending the godly, whom either they provoke to fall with them, or make more careless and conscienceless, if they be fallen, and occasioning the wicked and obstinate to triumph against God, and the more vehemently to prosecute their malice against such as will not defile themselves in body or soul, with the Romish rags now received amongst us; because of this, I mean, lest you, my dear master and brother in the Lord, should do as many of our gospellers do, for fear of man whose breath is in his nostrils, and hath power but of the body, not fearing the Lord, which hath power both of soul and body, and not only temporally, but also eternally, I could not but write something unto you, as well because duty deserveth it (for many benefits I have received of God by your hands, for the which he reward you, for I cannot), as also because charity and love compelleth me; not that I think you have any need (for as I may rather learn of you, so I doubt not but you have hitherto kept yourself up-

right from halting), but that I might both quiet my conscience calling upon me hereabout, and signify unto you by something my carefulness for your soul, as painfully and often you have for my body.

Therefore I pray you call to mind that there be but two masters, two kinds of people, two ways and two mansion-places: the masters be Christ and Satan; the people be servitors to either of these: the ways be strait and wide; the mansions, heaven and hell. Again, consider that this world is the place of trial of God's people and the devil's servants; for as the one will follow his master, whatsoever cometh of it, so will the other: for a time it is hard to discern who pertaineth to God, and who to the devil: as in the calm and peace who is a good shipman and warrior, and who is not; but when the storm ariseth the expert mariner is known, and as in war the good soldier is seen, so in affliction and the cross, God's children are easily known from Satan's servants; for then, as the good servant will follow his master, so will the godly follow their Captain, come what will come: whereas the wicked and hypocrites bid adieu, and desire less of Christ's acquaintance; for which cause the cross is called the probation and trial; because it trieth who will go with God, and who will forsake him: and now in England we see how small a company Christ hath in comparison of Satan's soldiers. Let no man deceive himself; for he that gathereth not with Christ, scattereth abroad. No man can serve two masters; the Lord abhorreth double hearts. The lukewarm, that is, such as are both hot and cold, he spitteth out of his mouth; none that halt on both knees doth God take for his servants. The way of Christ is the strait way, and so strait, that, as a few find it, and few walk in it, so no man can halt in it but must need go upright:

for as the straitness will suffer no reeling to this side or that side ; so, if any halt, he is like to fall off the bridge into the pit of eternal perdition.

Strive therefore, good Master Doctor, now you have found it, to enter into it ; and if you should be called and pulled back, look not on this side or that side, or behind you, as Lot's wife did, but straight forwards, on the end which is set before you (though it be to come), as even now present, like as you do, and will your patients to do in purgation, and other your ministrations, to consider the effect that will ensue, wherethrough the bitterness and loathsomeness of the purgation is so overcome, and the painfulness in abiding of that is ministered, is so eased, that it maketh the patient wilfully and joyfully to receive that which is to be received, although it be never so unpleasant ; so (I say) set before you the end of this strait way, and then doubtless, as Paul saith, " it shall bring with it an eternal weight of glory," whilst we look not on the thing which is seen, for that is temporal, but on the thing which is not seen, which is eternal. So doth the husbandman, in ploughing and tilling, set before him the harvest-time ; so doth the fisher consider the draught of his net, rather than the casting in ; so doth the merchant the return of the merchandise ; and so should we in these stormy days set before us, not the loss of our goods, liberty, and very life, but the reaping-time, the coming of our Saviour Christ to judgment ; the fire that shall burn the wicked and disobedient to God's Gospel ; the blast of the trump, the exceeding glory prepared for us in heaven eternally ; such as the eye hath not seen, the ear hath not heard, nor the heart of man can conceive. The more we lose here, the greater joy we shall have there ; the more we suffer, the greater triumph ; for complete dross we shall find in-

corruptible treasures; for gold, glory; for silver, solace without end; for riches, robes royal; for earthly houses, eternal palaces; mirth without measure, pleasure without pain; felicity endless. We shall have God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. O happy place! Oh that this day would come! then shall the end of the wicked be lamentable; then shall they receive the just reward of God's vengeance, then shall they cry, "Woe! woe! that ever they did as they have done!" Read Wisdom, ii. iii. iv. v.: read Matthew, xxv.: read 1 Corinthians, xv. 2 Corinthians, v.; and by faith (which God increase in us!) consider the thing there set forth: and for your comfort read Hebrews, xi. to see what faith hath done; always considering the way to heaven to be by many tribulations; and that all they which will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution. You know that this is our alphabet. He that will be my disciple, saith Christ, must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow *me*; not this Bishop, nor that Doctor; not this Emperor, nor that King; but *me*, saith Christ; for he that loveth father, mother, wife, children, or very life, better than me, is not worthy of me. Remember, that same Lord saith, He that will save his life, shall lose it. Comfort yourself with this, that as the devils had no power over the porkets, or over Job's goods, without God's leave, so shall they have none over you. Remember also, that all the hairs of your head are numbered with God. The devil may make one believe, he will drown him, as the sea in his surges threateneth to the land; but as the Lord hath appointed bounds for the one, over the which he cannot pass, so hath he done for the other. On God therefore cast your care; love him and serve him after his word; fear him, trust in him; hope at his hand for all help, and always pray, looking for

the cross; and whensoever it cometh, be assured the Lord, as he is faithful, so he will never tempt you further than he will make you able to bear, but in the midst of the temptation will make such an evasion as shall be most to his glory, and your eternal comfort. God, for his mercy in Christ, with his Holy Spirit endue you, comfort you, under the wings of his mercy shadow you, and as his dear child guide you for evermore; to whose merciful tuition, as I do with my hearty prayer commit you; so I doubt not but you pray for me, and so I besecch you to do still. My brother P. telleth me, you would have the last part of Saint Jerom's works, to have the use thereof for a fortnight; I cannot for these three days well forbear it, but yet on Thursday next I will send it you, if God let me not; and use me, and that I have, as your own. The Lord for his mercy in Christ, direct our ways to his glory.—Out of prison, by yours to command,

JOHN BRADFORD.

To Mistress M. H. a godly Gentlewoman, comforting her in that common Heaviness and godly Sorrow, which the Feeling and Sense of Sin worketh in God's Children.

I humbly and heartily pray the everlasting God, and Father of mercy, to bless and keep your heart and mind in the knowledge and love of his truth, and of his Christ, through the inspiration and working of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Although I have no doubt but that you prosper, and go forward daily in the way of godliness, more and more drawing towards perfection, and have no need of any thing that I can write; yet because my desire is, that you might be more fervent, and persevere to the end, I could not but write something unto you, beseeching you both often and diligently

to call unto your mind as a mean to stir you hereunto, yea, as a thing which God most straitly requireth you to believe, that you are beloved of God, and that he is your dear Father, in, through, and for Christ and his death's sake. This love and tender kindness of God towards us in Christ, is abundantly herein declared, in that he hath to the godly work of creation of this world, made us after his image; redeemed us, being lost; called us into his church; sealed us with his mark and sign manual of baptism; kept and conserved us all the days of our life; fed, nourished, defended, and most fatherly chastised us; and now hath kindled in our hearts the sparkles of his fear, faith, love, and knowledge of his Christ and truth; and therefore we lament, because we lament no more our unthankfulness, our frailness, our diffidence and wavering in things wherein we should be most certain.

All these things we should use as means to confirm our faith of this, that God is our God and Father; and to assure us that he loveth us as our Father in Christ; to this end (I say) we should use the things before touched, especially in that, of all things, God requireth this faith and fatherly persuasion of his fatherly goodness, as his chiefest service; for before he ask any thing of us, he saith, "I am the Lord thy God:" giving himself, and then all he hath, to us to be our own. And this he doth in respect of himself, of his own mercy and truth, and not in respect of us, for then were grace no grace. In consideration whereof, when he saith, "Thou shalt have none other gods but me: Thou shalt love me with all thy heart," &c.; though of duty we are bound to accomplish all that he requireth, and are culpable and guilty if we do not the same; yet he requireth not these things further of us, than to make us more in love, and more certain

of this his covenant, that he is our Lord God. In certainty whereof, as he hath given this whole world to serve to our need and commodity, so hath he given his Son Christ Jesus, and in Christ Jesus himself, to be a pledge and gage, whereof the Holy Ghost doth now and then give us some taste and sweet smell to our eternal joy.

Therefore (as I said), because God is our Father in Christ, and requirèth of you straitly to believe it, give yourself to obedience, although you do it not with such feeling as you desire. First, must faith go before, and then feeling will follow; if our imperfection, frailty, and many evils, should be occasions whereby Satan would have us to doubt, as much as we can, let us abhor that suggestion, as of all others most pernicious, for so indeed it is; for when we stand in a doubt whether God be our Father, we cannot be thankful to God; we cannot heartily pray or think any thing we do acceptable to God; we cannot love our neighbours, and give ourselves to care for them, and do for them as we should do; and therefore Satan is most subtle hereabouts, knowing full well, that if we doubt of God's eternal mercies towards us through Christ, we cannot please God, or do any thing as we should do to man; continually casteth he into our memories our imperfections, frailty, falls, and offences, that we should doubt of God's mercy and favour towards us.

Therefore (my good sister) we must not be sluggish herein; but, as Satan laboureth to loosen our faith, so must we labour to fasten it, by thinking on the promises and covenant of God in Christ's blood; namely, that God is our God, with all that ever he hath; which covenant dependeth and hangeth upon God's own goodness, mercy, and truth only, and not on our obedience or worthiness in any point, for then should we never be certain. Indeed, God requireth of us obedience and worthiness, but

not that thereby we might be his children, and he our Father; but because he is our Father and we his children, through his own goodness in Christ, therefore requireth he faith and obedience. Now, if we want this obedience and worthiness which he requireth, should we doubt whether he be our Father. Nay, that were to make our obedience and worthiness the cause, and so to put Christ out of place, for whose sake God is our Father; but rather because he is our Father and we feel ourseleves to want such things as he requireth, we should be stirred up to a shamefacedness and blushing, because we are not as we should be, and thereupon should we take occasion to go to our Father in prayer on this manner:

Dear Father, thou of thine own mercy in Jesus Christ hast chosen me to be thy child, and therefore thou wouldst I should be brought into thy church and faithful company of thy children, wherein thou hast kept me hitherto; thy name therefore be praised. Now I see myself to want faith, hope, love, &c. which thy children have, and thou requirest of me; where, though the devil would have me to doubt, yea, utterly to despair of thy fatherly goodness, favour, and mercy; therefore I come to thee as to my merciful Father, through thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and pray thee to keep me, good Lord, keep me and give me faith, hope, love, &c.; and grant that thy holy Spirit may be with me for ever, and more and more to assure me that thou art my Father; that this merciful covenant that thou madest with me in respect of thy grace and for Christ, and not in respect of any my worthiness, is always to me, &c.

On this sort (I say) you must pray and use your cogitations when Satan would have you to doubt of salvation; he doth all he can to prevail herein; do you all you can to prevail herein against him; though

you feel not as you would, yet doubt not, but hope beyond all hope, as Abraham did; for always as (I said) goeth faith before feeling. As certain as God is almighty; as certain as God is merciful; as certain as God is true; as certain as Jesus Christ was crucified, is risen, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father; as certain as this is God's commandment, I am the Lord thy God, &c.; so certain ought you to be that God is your Father. As you are bound to have no other gods but him, so are ye no less bound to believe that God is your God. What profit should it be to you to believe this to be true; I am the Lord thy God, to others, if you should not believe that this is true to yourself? The devil believeth on this sort; and whatsoever it be that would move you to doubt of this, whether God be your God through Christ, that same cometh undoubtedly of the devil. Wherefore did God make you, but because he loved you? Might not he have made you blind, dumb, deaf, lame, frantic, &c.? Might not he have made you a Jew, a Turk, a Papist, &c. and why hath he not done so? Verily, because he loved you. And why did he love you? What was there in you to move him to love you? Surely nothing moved him to love you, and therefore to make you, and so hitherto to keep you, but his own goodness in Christ. Now then, in that his goodness in Christ still remaineth as much as it was, that is, even as great as himself, for it cannot be lessened; how should it be, but that he is your God and Father? Believe this, believe this, my good sister, for God is no changeling; them whom he loveth, he loveth to the end.

Cast, therefore, yourself wholly upon him, and think, without all wavering, that you are God's child; that you are a citizen of heaven; that you are the daughter of God, the temple of the Holy Ghost, &c. If hereof you be assured, as you ought

to be, then shall your conscience be quieted ; then shall you lament more and more that you want many things which God loveth ; then shall you labour to be holy in soul and body ; then shall you go about, that God's glory may shine in all your words and works ; then shall you not be afraid what man can do unto you ; then shall you have wisdom to answer your adversaries, as shall serve to their shame and your comfort ; then shall you be certain that no man can touch one hair of your head, farther than shall please your good Father to your everlasting joy ; then shall you be most certain that God, as your good Father, will be more careful for your children, and make better provision for them, if all you have were gone, than you can ; then shall you (being assured of God's favour towards you) give over yourself wholly to help and care for others that be in need ; then shall you contemn this life, and desire to be at home with your good and sweet Father ; then shall you labour to mortify all things that would spot either soul or body. All these things spring out of this certain persuasion and faith, that God is our Father, and we are his children by Christ Jesus. All things should help our faith herein, but Satan goeth about in all things to hinder us.

Therefore let us use earnest and hearty prayer ; let us often remember this covenant : " I am the Lord thy God." Let us look upon Christ and his precious blood, shed for the obsignation and confirmation of his covenant ; let us remember all the free promises of the Gospel ; let us set before us God's benefits generally, in making this world, in ruling it, in governing it, in calling and keeping his church, &c. ; let us set before us God's benefits, particularly, how he hath made his creatures after his image, how he made us of perfect limbs, forms, beauty, memory, &c. ; how he hath made us Chris-

tians, and given us a right judgment in his religion ; how he hath, ever since we were born, blessed, kept, nourished, and defended us ; how he hath often beaten, chastised, and fatherly corrected us ; how he hath spared us, and doth now spare us, giving us time, space, place, grace. This if you do, and use earnest prayer, and so flee from all things which might wound your conscience, giving yourself to diligence in your vocation, you shall find at length (which God grant to me with you !) a sure certainty of salvation, without all such doubt as may trouble the peace of conscience, to your eternal joy and comfort. Amen. Amen.

Yours to use in Christ,
JOHN BRADFORD.

Another Letter, full of godly Comfort, written to the same Person.

The good Spirit of God, which guideth his children, be with you, my good sister in the Lord, for ever. Amen.

Although, as I to you, so you unto me in prison are unknown ; yet to Him, whom we desire to please, we are not only in persons, but also in hearts known and thoroughly seen ; and therefore, as for his sake you would by that you sent of me, be perceived how that in God you bear to me a good will ; so that I to you might be seen in God to bear you the like, I send to you these few words in writing, wishing that in all your doings and speech, yea even in your very thoughts, you would labour to feel, that they are all present and open before the sight of God, be they good or bad. This cogitation often had in mind, and prayer made to God for the working of his Spirit, thereby, as a mean, you shall at the length feel more comfort and commodity, than any man can know, but such as be exercised therein. How-

beit, this is to be added, that in thinking yourself, and all that you have and do, to be in the sight of God; this (I say) is to be added, that you think his sight is the sight not only of a Lord, but rather of a Father, which tendereth more your infirmities, than you can tender the infirmities of any of your children. Yea, when in yourself you see a motherly affection to your little one that is weak, let the same be unto you a trace to train you to see the unspeakable kind affection of God your Father towards you.

And therefore upon the consideration of your infirmities and natural evils, which continually cleave unto us, take occasion to go to God as your Father through Christ, and before his merciful heart lay open your infirmities and evils, with desire of pardon and help, after his good will and pleasure, but in his time, and not when you will, and by what means he will, not by that way you would; in the mean season, hang on hope of his fatherly goodness, and surely you shall never be ashamed. For if a woman, that is natural, cannot finally forget the child of her womb, be sure God, which is a Father supernatural, cannot, nor will not, forget you. Yea, if a woman could be so forgetful, yet God himself saith, he will not be so.

This opinion, yea rather certain persuasion, of God our Father through Christ, see that you cherish; and by all means, as well by diligent consideration of his benefits, as of his loving corrections, whether they be inward or outward, see that you nourish; knowing for certain, that as the devil goeth about nothing so much as to bring you in a doubt whether you be God's child or no, so whatsoever shall move you to admit that dubitation, be assured the same to come from the devil; if you feel in yourself not only the want of good things, but also

plenty of evil, do not therefore doubt whether you be God's child in Christ, or no.

For if for your goodness or illness sake, which you feel or feel not, ye should believe or doubt, then should you make Christ Jesus, for whose sake only God is your Father, either nothing, or else but half Christ.

But rather take occasion of your wants in good, and of your plenty in evil, to go to God as to your Father; and to pray to him, that inasmuch as he commandeth you to believe that he is your God and Father, so he would give you his good Spirit, that you might feel the same, and live as his child, to his glory; and cease not upon such prayers, to look for comfort in God's good time, still hoping the best, and rejecting all dubitation, and so all evil works, words, and cogitations, as the Lord shall enable you by his good Spirit and grace; which I beseech him to give unto you, my good sister, for ever. And further I pray you, that as he hath made you to be an helper unto your husband, so you would endeavour yourself therein to shew the same, as well in soul as body, and beg grace of God, that your endeavour may be effectual to both your comforts in Christ. Amen.

JOHN BRADFORD.

To my well-beloved in the Lord, W. P.

Grace and peace from God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Dear brother, God most justly hath cast me down into a dungeon, but much better than I deserve; wherein I see no man but my keeper, nor can see any except they come to me. Something in the earth my lodging is, which is an example and memorial of my earthly affections, which God, I trust, will mortify; and of my sepulchre, whereunto I trust

my Lord God will bring me in peace, in his good time. In the mean season, he gives me patience, lively hope, and his good Spirit. I pray you, pray for me, for the prayer of the godly, if it be fervent, worketh much with God: I thank God my common disease doth less trouble me, than when I was abroad, which doth teach me the merciful providence of God toward me. Use true and hearty prayer, and you shall perceive God at length will declare himself to see, where now many think he sleepeth. Out of the Tower by the Lord's prisoner,

JOHN BRADFORD.

A Letter which he wrote to a faithful Woman in her Heaviness and Trouble, most comfortable for all those to read that are afflicted and broken-hearted for their Sins.

God, our good Father, for his mercy's sake in Christ, with his eternal consolation so comfort you, as I desire to be comforted of him, in my most need. Yea, he will comfort you (my dear sister); only cast your care upon him, and he never can nor will forsake you: for his calling and gifts be such, that he can never repent him of them. Whom he loveth, he loveth to the end; none of his chosen can perish, of which number I know you are, my dearly beloved sister: God increase the faith thereof daily more and more in you: he give unto you to hang wholly on him, and on his providence and protection. For whoso dwelleth under that secret thing and help of the Lord, he shall be cock-sure for evermore. He that *dwelleth*, I say; for if we be flitters, and not dwellers, as was Lot a flitter from Zoar, where God promised him protection, if he had dwelled there still, we shall remove to our loss, as he did to the mountains.

Dwell therefore, that is, trust, and that finally, unto the end, in the Lord (my dear sister), and you shall be as Mount Sion. As mountains compass Jerusalem, so doth the Lord all his people. How then can he forget you, which are as the apple of his eye, for his dear Son's sake? Ah, dear heart! that I were now but one half hour with you, to be a Simon to help to carry your cross with you. God send you some good Simon to be with you and help you.

You complain in your letters of the blindness of your mind, and the troubles you feel. My dearly beloved, God make you thankful for that which God hath given unto you: he open your eyes to see what and how great benefits you have received; that you may be less covetous, or rather impatient, for so (I fear me) it should be called, and more thankful. Have you not received at his hands sight to see your blindness, and thereto a desirous and seeking heart, to see where he lieth in the mid-day, as his dear spouse speaketh of herself in the Canticles? Oh! Joyce, my good Joyce, what a gift is this! Many have some sight, but none this sobbing and sighing, none this seeking which you have, I know, but such as he hath married unto him in his mercies. You are not content to kiss his feet with the Magdalén, but you would be kissed even with the kiss of his mouth. Cant. i. You would see his face with Moses, forgetting how he biddeth us seek his face. Psalm xxvii. Yea, and that for ever. Psalm cv. which signifieth no such sight as you desire to see in this present life, which would see God now face to face; whereas he cannot be seen but covered under something, yea, something in that which is (as you would say) clean contrary to God, as to see his mercy in his anger. In bringing us to hell, faith seeth him bring us to heaven; in darkness, it beholdeth brightness; in hiding his face from us, it

beholdeth his merry countenance. How did Job see God, but as (you would say) under Satan's cloak? For who cast the fire from heaven upon his goods? Who overthrew his house, and stirred up men to take away his cattle, but Satan? And yet Job pierced through all these, and saw God's works, saying, "The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away," &c.

In reading of the Psalms, how often do you see that David in the shadow of death saw God's sweet love? And so, my dearly beloved, I see that you in your darkness and dimness, by faith do see clarity and brightness: by faith, I say, because faith is of things absent, of things hoped for, of things which I appeal to your conscience, whether you desire not. And can you desire any thing which you know not? And is there of heavenly things any other true knowledge than by faith?

Therefore, my dear heart, be thankful, for (before God I write it) you have great cause. Ah, my Joyce! how happy is the stay wherein you are! Verrily, you are even in the blessed state of God's children; for they mourn, and do not you so? And that not for worldly weal, but for spiritual riches, faith, hope, charity, &c. Do you not hunger and thirst for righteousness? And I pray you, saith not Christ, who cannot lie, that happy are such? How could God wipe away the tears from your eyes in heaven, if now on earth you shed no tears? How could heaven be a place of rest, if on earth ye find it? How could you desire to be at home, if in your journey you found no grief? How could you so often call upon God, and talk with him, as I know you do, if your enemy should sleep all day long? How should you elsewhere be made like unto Christ, I mean in joy, if in sorrow you sobbed not with him? If you will have joy and felicity, you must first needs feel sor-

row and misery. If you will go to heaven, you must sail by hell. If you will embrace Christ in his robes, you must not think scorn of him in his rags. If you will sit at Christ's table in his kingdom, you must first abide with him in his temptation. If you will drink of his cup of glory, forsake not his cup of ignominy.

Can the head corner-stone be rejected, and the more base stones in God's building be in this world set by? You are one of his lively stones; be content therefore to be hewn and snagged at, that you might be made more meet to be joined to your fellows which suffer with you, Satan's snatches, the world's wounds, contempt of conscience, and threats of the flesh, wherethrough they are enforced to cry, Oh! wretches that we are, who shall deliver us? You are of God's corn, fear not therefore the flail, the fan, millstone, nor oven. You are one of Christ's lambs, look therefore to be fleeced, haled at, and even slain.

If you were a market sheep, you should go in more fat and grassy pasture: if you were for the fair, you should be stall-fed, and want no weal; but because you are of God's own occupying, therefore you must pasture on the bare common; abiding the storms and tempests that will fall. Happy, and twice happy are you, my dear sister, that God now haleth you whither you would not, that you might come whither you would. Suffer a little, and be still. Let Satan rage against you, let the world cry out, let your conscience accuse you, let the law load you and press you down, yet shall they not prevail, for Christ is Emanuel, that is, God with you: If God be with us, who can be against us? The Lord is with you; your Father cannot forget you; your spouse loveth you. If the waves and surges arise, cry with Peter, Lord, I perish! and he will put out his hand and help you: cast out your anchor of hope,

and it will not cease for all the stormy surges, till it take hold on the rock of God's truth and mercy.

I think not that He, which hath given you so many things corporally, as inductions of spiritual and heavenly mercies, and that without your deserts or desire, can deny you any spiritual comfort desiring it. For if he give to desire, he will give you to have and enjoy the thing desired. The desire to have and the going about to ask, ought to certify your conscience, that they be his earnest of the thing which you are asking; he will give you, yea before you ask, and whilst you are about to ask, he will grant the same; as Isaiah saith, to his glory and your eternal consolation. He that spared not his own Son for you, will not nor cannot think any thing too good for you, my heartily beloved.

If he had not chosen you, as most certainly he hath, he would not have so called you; he would never have justified you; he would never have so glorified you with his gracious gifts, which I know, praised be his name therefor; he would never have so exercised your faith with temptations, as he hath done and doth, if (I say) he had not chosen you. If he have chosen you (as doubtless, dear heart, he hath done in Christ, for in you I have seen his earnest, and before me and to you you could not deny it, I know both where and when); if, I say, he have chosen you, then neither can you, nor ever shall you, perish. For if you fall, he putteth under his hand; you shall not lie still, so careful is Christ your keeper over you; never was mother so mindful over her child as he is over you, and hath not he always been so?

Speak, woman, when did he finally forget you, and will he now, trow you, in your most need do otherwise, you calling upon him, and desiring to please him? Ah! my Joyce, think you God to be

mutable? Is he a changeling? Doth not he love to the end them whom he loveth? Are not his gifts and callings such that he cannot repent him of them? For else, were he no God. If you should perish, then wanted he power; for I am certain his will towards you is not to be doubted of. Hath not the Spirit, which is the spirit of truth, told you so? And will you now hearken with Eve to the lying spirit, which would have you not to despair (no, he goeth more craftily to work, howbeit to that end if you should give ear unto it, which God forbid); but to doubt and stand in a mammering, and so should you never truly love God, but serve him of a servile fear, lest he should cast you off for your unworthiness and unthankfulness; as though your thankfulness or worthiness were any cause with God why he hath chosen you, or will finally keep you.

Ah! mine own dear heart, Christ only, Christ only, and his mercy and truth. In him is the cause of your election. This Christ, this mercy, this truth of God, remaineth for ever, is certain for ever, I say, for ever. If an angel from heaven should tell you contrary, accursed be he. Your thankfulness and worthiness are fruits and effects of your election; they are no causes; these fruits and effects shall be so much more fruitful and effectual, by how much you waver not.

Therefore, my dearly beloved, arise, and remember from whence you are fallen; you have a Shepherd which neither slumbereth nor sleepeth; no man nor devil can pull you out of his hands; night and day he commandeth his angels to keep you. Have you forgotten that I read to you out of the 23d Psalm, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I can want nothing?" Do you not know that God spared Noah in the ark on the outside, so that he could not get out? So hath he done to you (my good sister), so

hath he done to you : ten thousand shall fall on your right hand, and twenty thousand on your left hand, yet no evil shall touch you ; say boldly therefore, Many a time, from my youth up, they have fought against me, but they have not prevailed ; no, nor never shall prevail ; for the Lord is round about his people ; and who are the people of God, but such as hope in him ? Happy are they that hope in the Lord ; and you are one of those, my dear heart ; for I am assured you have hoped in the Lord ; I have your words to shew most manifestly ; and I know they were written unfeignedly ; I need not to say, that even before God you have simply confessed to me, and that oftentimes no less. And once if you had this hope, as you doubtless had it, though now you feel it not, yet shall you feel it again ; for the anger of the Lord lasteth but a moment, but his mercy lasteth for ever. Tell me, my dear heart, who hath so weakened you—surely not a persuasion which came from Him that called you. For why should you waver ? Why should you waver, and be so heavy-hearted ? Whom look you on ? On yourself ? on your worthiness ? on your thankfulnees ? on that which God requireth of you, as faith, hope, love, fear, joy, &c. ? Then can you not but waver indeed ; for what have you as God requireth ? Believe you, hope you, love you, &c. as much as you should do ? No, no, nor ever can in this life. Ah ! my dearly beloved, have you so soon forgotten that which should ever be had in memory—namely, that when you would and should be certain and quiet in conscience, then should your faith burst throughout all things, not only that you have in you, or else are in heaven, earth, or hell, until it come to Christ crucified, and the eternal sweet mercies and goodness of God in Christ ? Here, here is the resting-place, here is your spouse's bed ; creep into it, and in your

arms of faith embrace him, bewail your weakness, your unworthiness, your diffidence, &c. and you shall see he will turn to you. What said I you shall see? Nay, I should have said, you shall feel he will turn to you. You know that Moses, when he went to the mount to talk with God, he entered into a dark cloud, and Elias had his face covered when God passed by: both these dear friends of God heard of God, but they saw him not; but you would be preferred before them. See now, my dear heart, how covetous you are. Ah! be thankful, be thankful; but, God be praised, your covetousness is Moses' covetousness. Well, with him, you shall be satisfied: but when? Forsooth, when he shall appear. Here is not the time of seeing, but, as it were, in a glass. Isaac was deceived, because he was not content with hearing only.

Therefore, to make an end of these many words, wherewith I fear me, I do but trouble you from better exercises:—Inasmuch as you are indeed the child of God, elect in Christ before the beginning of all times; inasmuch as you are given into the custody of Christ, as one of God's most precious jewels; inasmuch as Christ is faithful, and hitherto hath all power, so that you shall never perish, no, one hair of your head shall not be lost; I beseech you, I pray you, I desire you, I crave at your hands, with all my very heart, I ask of you with hand, pen, tongue, and mind, in Christ, though Christ, for Christ, for his name, blood, mercies, power, and truth's sake, my most entirely beloved sister, that you admit no doubting of God's final mercies towards you, howsoever you feel yourself; but complain to God, and crave of him, as of your tender and dear Father, all things, and in that time which shall be most opportune you shall find and feel, far above that your heart, or the

heart of any creature can conceive, to your eternal joy. Amen, Amen, Amen.

The good Spirit of God always keep us, as his dear children: he comfort you, as I desire to be comforted, my dearly beloved, for evermore. Amen.

I break up thus abruptly, because our common prayer-time calleth me. The peace of Christ dwell in both our hearts for evermore. Amen.

As to the report of W. P. if it be as you hear, you must prepare to hear it. It is written on heaven's door: *Do well, and hear evil.* Be content therefore to hear whatsoever the enemy shall imagine to blot you withal. God's holy Spirit always comfort and keep you. Amen, Amen. This 8th of August, by him that in the Lord desireth you as well and much felicity as to his own heart,

JOHN BRADFORD.

Here followeth another letter of his, written to the good Lady Vane, wherein he resolveth certain questions which she demanded. This Lady Vane was a special nurse, and a great supporter to her power of the godly saints, which were imprisoned in Queen Mary's time. Unto whom divers letters I have, both of Master Philpot, Careles, Fraherne, Thomas Rose, and of others more; wherein they render unto her most grafeul thanks, for her exceeding goodness extended towards them, with their singular commendation and testimony also of her Christian zeal towards God's afflicted prisoners, and to the verity of his Gospel. She departed of late at Holborn, anno 1568, whose end was more like a sleep, than any death; so quietly and meekly she deceased and departed hence in the Lord. Amongst other which wrote unto her, Master Bradford sent also these letters to the said Lady, the tenour whereof here followeth.

To my good Lady VANE.

The true sense and sweet feeling of God's eternal mercies in Christ Jesus be ever more and more lively wrought in your heart by the Holy Ghost. Amen.

I most heartily thank you, good Madam, for your comfortable letters; and whereas you would be advertised what were best to be done on your behalf, concerning your three questions; the truth is, that the questions are never well seen nor answered, until the thing whereof they arise be well considered; I mean, until it be seen how great an evil the thing is. If it be once indeed in your heart perceived, upon probable and pithy places, gathered out of God's book, that there was never thing upon the earth so great and so much an adversary to God's true service, to Christ's death, passion, priesthood, sacrifice, and kingdom, to the ministry of God's word and sacraments, to the church of God, to repentance, faith, and all true godliness of life, as that is whereof the questions arise (as most assuredly it is indeed), then cannot a Christian heart but so much the more abhor it, and all things that in any point might seem to allow it, or any thing pertaining to the same, by how much it hath the name of God's service.

Again, your Ladyship doth know, that as all is to be discommended and avoided, which is followed or fled from in respect of ourselves, in respect of avoiding Christ's cross; so the end of all our doings should be to God-wards, to his glory, to our neighbours, to edification, and good example, whereof none can be given, in allowing any of the three questions by you propounded. But because this which I write now is brief, and needeth the more consideration or explication, as I doubt not of the one in you, so from me, by God's grace, you shall receive the other

shortly. For I have already written a little book of it, which I will send unto you, in the which you shall have your questions fully answered and satisfied, and therefore I omit to write any more hereabout presently; beseeching God, our good Father, to guide you, as his dear child, with his Spirit of wisdom, power, and comfort, unto eternal life, that you may be strong, and rejoice in him, and with his church to carry Christ's cross, if he shall so think it need (1 Pet. i.); which is a thing to be desired, wished, and embraced, if we looked on things after the judgment of God's word, and tried them by that touchstone.

If you be accustomed to think on the brevity, vanity, and misery of this life, and on the eternity, truth, and felicity of everlasting life; if you look on things after their ends, and not after their present appearance only; if you use yourself to set God's presence, power, and mercy always before your eyes, to see them as God, by every creature, would you should; I doubt not but you shall find such strength and comfort in the Lord, as you shall not be shaken with all the power of Satan. God's mercy in Christ be with you, and his good Spirit guide you for ever. Amen.

Another Letter to the Lady VANE.

As to mine own soul, I wish your Ladyship grace and mercy, from God our dear Father in Christ, our Lord and Saviour.

I thank God, that something he hath eased you, and mitigated his fatherly correction in us both. I would to God he had done so much in the behalf of the grief of the body to you, as he hath done to me. For as for the soul, I trust you feel that, which I pray God increase in you; I mean his fatherly love, and grant that I may with you feel the same in such degree as may please him; I will not say as you feel,

lest I should seem to ask too much at one time. God doth often much more plentifully visit with the sense of his mercy them that humble themselves under his mighty hand, and are sore exercised (as you long have been), than others, which to the face of the world have a more show and appearance.

Therefore I wish as I do, and that not only for mine own commodity, but also that I might occasion you to the consideration of the goodness of God; which I by your letters do well espy; which is indeed the highway whereby as God increaseth his gifts, so sheweth he more lively his salvation. Psalm l. and cvii. I have received God's blessing from you, the which I have partly distributed unto my three fellow-prisoners, Master Farrar, Master Taylor, Master Philpot; and the residue I will bestow upon four poor souls, which are imprisoned in the common gaol for religion also. As for mine own part, if I had need I would have served my turn also; but because I had not; nor (I thank God) have not, I have been and will be your almoner, in such sort as I have already advertised you. God reward you, and give you to find it spiritually and corporally. Because otherwise I cannot talk with you, therefore on this sort, as occasion and opportunity will serve, I am ready to shew my good-will and desire of your help and furtherance in the Lord unto everlasting life, whereunto God bring us shortly for his mercy's sake. Amen.

Good Madam, be thankful to God, as I hope you be; be earnest in prayer, continue in reading and hearing God's word; and if God's further cross come, as therein God doth serve his providence (for else it shall not come unto you); so be certain the same shall turn to your eternal joy and comfort. Amen:

JOHN BRADFORD.

To my dear Friends and Brethren, R. and E. with their Wives and Families.

The comfort of Christ, felt commonly of his children in their cross for his sake, the everlasting God work in both your hearts, my good brethren, and in the hearts of both of your yoke-fellows, especially of good Mary, my good sister in the Lord. Amen.

If I had not something heard of the hazard which you are in for the Gospel's sake; if you continue the confession and profession thereof, as I trust you do, and will do, and that unto the end, God enabling you, as he will doubtless for his mercy's sake, if you hope in him (for this bindeth him, as David in Christ's person witnesseth, Our fathers hoped in thee, and thou deliveredst them, &c. Psalm xxii.), yet by conjectures, as I could not but suppose (though not so certainly) the time of your suffering and probation to be at hand. For now is the power of darkness fully come upon this realm, most justly for our sins, and abusing the light lent us of the Lord, to the setting forth of ourselves more than God's glory; that as well we might be brought unto the better knowledge of our evils, and so heartily repent (which God grant us to do), as also we might have more feeling and sense of our sweet Saviour Jesus Christ, by the humbling and dejecting of us, thereby to make us, as more desirous of him, so him more sweet and pleasant unto us; the which thing the good Spirit of God work sensibly in all our hearts for God's holy name's sake.

For this cause, I thought it my duty, being now where I have some liberty to write (the Lord be praised), and hearing of you as I hear, to do that which I should have done, if I had heard nothing at all; that is, to desire you to be of good cheer and comfort in the Lord (although in the world you see cause rather to the contrary); and to go on forwards

in the way of God, whereunto you are entered, considering that the same cannot but so much more and more wax strait to the outward man, by how much you draw nearer to the end of it: even as in the travail of a woman, the nearer she draweth to her delivery, the more her pains increase; so it goeth with us in the Lord's way, the nearer we draw to our deliverance by death, to eternal felicity.

Example whercof we have, I will not say in the holy Prophets and Apostles of God, which, when they were young, girded themselves, and went in manner whither they would, but when they waxed old, they went girded of others, whither they would not, concerning the outward man; but rather and most lively, in our Saviour Jesus Christ, whose life and way was much more painful to him towards the end, than it was at the beginning. And no marvel; for Satan can something abide a man to begin well, and set forwards; but rather than he should go on to the end, he will vomit his gorge, and cast out floods to overflow him, before he will suffer that to come to pass.

Therefore, as we should not be dismayed now at this world, as though some strange thing were happened unto us, in that it is but as it was wont to be to the godly, in that the devil declareth himself after his old wont, in that we have professed no less, but forsake the world and the devil, as God's very enemies; in that we learned no less at the first, when we came to God's school, than to deny ourselves, and take up our cross and follow our Master, which leadeth us none other way than he himself hath gone before us; as (I say) we should not be dismayed, so we should with patience and joy go forwards, if we set before us, as present, the time to come; like as the wife in her travail doth the deliverance of her child; and as the saints of God did, but especially our

Saviour and pattern, Jesus Christ; for the Apostle saith, he set before him the joy and glory to come, and therefore contemned the shame and sorrow of the cross; so if we did, we should find at the length as they found. For whom would it grieve, which hath a long journey, to go through a piece of foul way, if he knew that, after that, the way should be most pleasant, yea, the journey should be ended, and he at his resting-place most happy? Who will be afraid or loath to leave a little pelf for a little time, if he knew he should shortly after receive most plentiful riches? Who will be unwilling for a little while to forsake his wife, children, or friends, &c. when he knoweth he shall shortly after be associated unto them inseparably, even after his own heart's desire? Who will be sorry to forsake his life, which cannot but be most certain of eternal life? Who loveth the shadow better than the body? Who can love this life, but they that regard not the life to come? Who can desire the dross of this world, but such as be ignorant of the treasures of the everlasting joy in heaven? I mean, who are afraid to die, but such as hope not to live eternally? Christ hath promised pleasures, riches, joy, felicity, and all good things, to them that for his sake lose any thing, or suffer any sorrow. And is he not true? How can he but be true? For guile was never found in his mouth.

Alas! then, why are we so slack and slow, yea, hard of heart, to believe him, promising us thus plentifully eternal blissfulness; and are so ready to believe the world, promising us many things, and paying us nothing? If we will curry favour now, and halt on both parts, then it promiseth us peace, quietness, and many other things else. But how doth it pay this gear? Or, if it will pay it, with what quietness of conscience? Or, if so, how long, I pray you? Do not we see before our eyes, men to die

shamefully, I mean as rebels and other malefactors, which refuse to die for God's cause? What way is so sure a way to heaven, as to suffer in Christ's cause? If there be any way on horseback to heaven, surely this is the way; by many troubles (saith the Apostle) we must enter into heaven. All that will live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution. For the world cannot love them that are of God; the devil cannot love his enemies; the world will love none but his own; you are Christ's, therefore look for no love here. Should we look for fire to quench our thirst? And as soon shall God's true servants find peace and favour in antichrist's regiment. Therefore, my dearly beloved, be stout in the Lord, and in the power of his might; put on you his armour; stand in the liberty of Christ, which you have learned; rejoice that you may be counted worthy to suffer any thing for God's cause; to all men this is not given. Your reward is great in heaven, though in earth ye find nothing. The journey is almost past; you are almost in the haven; hale on apace, I beseech you, and merrily hoist up your sails. Cast yourselves on Christ, who careth for you; keep company with him now still to the end; he is faithful, and will never leave you, nor tempt you further than he will make you able to bear; yea, in the midst of the temptation he will make an outscape. Now pray unto him heartily, be thankful of his indignation, rejoice in hope of the health you shall receive, and be mindful of us which are in this wayward; and by God's grace trust in Christ to be made able to break the ice before you, that you, following, may find the way more easy. God grant it may be so. Amen. Amen. Out of prison by your brother in Christ,

JOHN BRADFORD;

words, and works, to thy glory and our everlasting joy and peace for ever. Amen.

In my last letter you might perceive my conjecturing to be no less toward you, than now I have learned; but (my dearly beloved) I have learned none other thing, than before I have told you would come to pass, if ye cast not away that which ye have learned. I do appeal to both your consciences, whether herein I speak truth, as well of my telling (though not so often as I might and should, God forgive me), as also of your learning. Now God will try you, to make others to learn by you, that which ye have learned by others, and by them which suffered this day, ye might learn (if already ye had not learned), that life and honour are not to be set by, more than God's commandment. They in no point, for all that ever their ghostly fathers could do, having Doctor Death to take their part, would consent, or seem to consent, to the popish mass and papistical God, otherwise than in the days of our late King they had received; and this their faith they have confessed with their deaths, to their great and all our comforts, if we follow them, but to our confusion, if we start back from the same. Wherefore, I beseech you to consider it, as well to praise God for them, as to go the same way with them, if God so will.

Consider not the things of this life, which is a very prison to all God's children, but the things of everlasting life, which is our very home. But to the beholding of this gear, ye must open the eyes of your mind, of faith I should have said, as Moses did, which set more by trouble with God's people, than by the riches of Egypt and Pharaoh's court. Your house, home, and goods, yea life, and all that ever ye have, God hath given you as love-tokens, to admonish you of his love, and to win your love

to him again. Now will he try your love, whether ye set more by him, than by his tokens or no. If ye for his tokens' sake, that is, for your home, house, goods, yea life, will go with the world, lest ye should lose them, then be assured your love, as he cannot but espy it to be a strumpet's love, so will he cast it away with the world. Remember that he which will save his life shall lose it, if Christ be true; but he which adventureth, yea, loseth his life for the Gospel's sake, the same shall be sure to find it eternally. Do not ye know, that the way to salvation is not the broad way, which many run in, but the strait way, which few now walk in?

Before persecution came, men might partly have stood in a doubt, by the outward estate of the world with us (although by God's word it was plain), whether was the high way (for there were as many that pretended the Gospel as Popery), but now the sun is risen, and the wind bloweth, so that the corn which hath not taken fast root, cannot nor will not abide; and therefore easily ye may see the strait way, by the small number that passeth through it. Who will now adventure their goods and life for Christ's sake, which yet gave his life for our sakes? We are now become Gergesites, that would rather lose Christ than our pockets. A faithful wife is never tried so to be, but when she rejecteth and withstandeth wooers. A faithful Christian is then found so to be, when his faith is assaulted.

If we be not able, I mean, if we will not forsake this world for God's glory and Gospel sake, trow ye that God will make us able, or give us a will to forsake it for nature's sake? Die ye must once, and leave all ye have (God knoweth how soon and when), will ye, or will ye not; and seeing perforce you must do this, will ye not willingly now do it for God's sake?

If ye go to mass, and do as the most part doth, then may ye live at rest and quietly; but if ye deny to go to it, then shall ye go to prison, lose your goods, leave your children comfortless, yea, lose your life also; but (my dearly beloved) open the eyes of your faith, and see how short a thing this life is, even a very shadow and smoke. Again, see how intolerable the punishment of hell-fire is, and that endless. Last of all, look on the joys incomprehensible, which God hath prepared for all them, world without end, which lose either lands or goods for his name's sake. And then do ye reason thus: If we go to mass, the greatest enemy that Christ hath, though for a little time we shall live in quiet, and leave to our children that they may live by hereafter, yet shall we displease God, fall into his hands (which is horrible to hypocrites), and be in wonderful hazard of falling from eternal joy into eternal misery, first of soul, and then of body, with the devil and all idolaters.

Again, we shall want peace of conscience, which surmounteth all the riches of the world; and for our children, who knoweth whether God will visit our idolatry on them in this life? yea, our house and goods are in danger of losing, as our lives be, through many casualties; and when God is angry with us, he can send always when he will, one mean or another to take all from us, for our sins, and to cast us into care, for our own sakes, which will not come into some little trouble for his sake.

On this sort reason with yourselves, and then doubtless God will work otherwise with you, and in you, than ye are aware of. Where now ye think yourselves unable to abide persecution, be most assured, if so be ye purpose not to forsake God, that God will make you so able to bear his cross, that therein you shall rejoice. Faithful is God (saith

Paul), which will not tempt you further than he will make you able to bear, yea, he will give you an out-scape in the cross, which shall be to your comfort. Think how great a benefit it is, if God will vouch you worthy this honour, to suffer loss of any thing for his sake. He might justly cast most grievous plagues upon you, and yet now he will correct you with that rod, whereby you shall be made like to his Christ, that for ever ye may reign with him. Suffer yourselves therefore now to be made like to Christ, for else ye shall never be made like unto him. The devil would gladly have you now to overthrow that, which godly ye have of long time professed. Oh! how would he triumph, if he could win his purpose! Oh! how would the Papists triumph against God's Gospel in you! Oh! how would you confirm them in their wicked Popery! Oh! how would the poor children of God be discomforted, if now you should go to mass, and other idolatrous service, and do as the world doth!

Hath God delivered you from the sweat, to serve him so? Hath God miraculously restored you to health from your grievous agues, for such a purpose? Hath God given you such blessings in this world, and good things all the days of your life hitherto, and now of equity will ye not receive at his hands, and for his sake, some evil? God forbid! I hope better of you. Use prayer, and cast your care upon God; commit your children into his hand; give to God your goods, bodies, and lives, as he hath given them, or rather lent them unto you. Say with Job, God hath given, and God hath taken away, his name be praised for ever. Cast your care upon him, I say, for he is careful for you; and take it amongst the greatest blessings of God, to suffer for his sake: I trust he hath kept you hitherto to that end.

To Mistress WILKINSON.

Almighty God, our most loving Father, increase in your heart (my good mother and dear mistress in the Lord) his true knowledge and love in Christ, to the encouraging and comforting of your faith in these stormy days, as necessary unto us, so profitable, if we persist unto the end; which thing God grant to us. Amen.

My right dearly beloved, I know not what other thing to write unto you, than to desire you to be thankful unto the Lord, in that, amongst the not many of your calling and state, it pleaseth him to give you his rare blessing, I mean, to keep you from all the filth, wherewith our country is horribly defiled. This blessing assuredly is rare, as you see: but now, if he shall bless you with another blessing, which is more rare, I mean to call you forth as a martyr and a witness against this filth, I hope you will become doubly thankful; for a greater token commonly we have not, to judge of our election and salvation, next to Christ and faith in him, than the cross, especially when it is so glorious as on this sort to suffer any thing, but chiefly loss of this life, which indeed is never found till it be so lost: except the grain of wheat fall and be dead, it remaineth fruitless.

You know how that he which was wrapped into the third heaven, and did know what he wrote, doth say, that as the corn liveth not, except it be dead, and cast into the earth, so truly our bodies. 1 Cor. xv. And therefore the cross should so little fear us, that even death itself should altogether be desired of us, as the tailor which putteth off our rags, and arrayeth us with the royal robes of immortality, incorruption, and glory. Great shame it should be for us, that all the whole creatures of God should desire, yea,

groan in their kind, for our liberty, and we ourselves to loath it, as doubtless we do, if for the cross, yea, for death itself, we with joy swallow not up all sorrow, that might let us from following the Lord's calling, and obeying the Lord's providence; whereby doubtless all crosses, and death itself, doth come, and not by hap or chance. In consideration whereof, right dear mother, that this providence stretcheth itself so unto us, and for us, that even the hairs of our head are numbered with God, not one of them to fall to our hurt, surely we declare ourselves very faint in faith, if we receive not such comfort, that we can willingly offer ourselves to the Lord, and cast our whole care upon his back, honouring him with this honour, that he is, and ever will be, careful for us, and all we have, as for his dear children. Be therefore of good cheer, even in the midst of these miseries, be thankful to the Lord, and prepare yourself for a further trial; which if God send you, as I hope, so do you believe, that God therein will help and comfort you, and make you able to bear whatsoever shall happen. And thus much, having this opportunity, I thought good to write, praying God our Father to recompense into your bosom all the good that ever you have done, to me especially, and to many others, both in this time of trouble and always heretofore.

Your own in the Lord,

JOHN BRADFORD.

Another Letter, written to certain godly Persons, encouraging them to prepare themselves with Patience to the Cross.

Gracious God, and most merciful Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, thy dearly beloved Son, grant us thy mercy, grace, wisdom, and Holy Spirit, to counsel, comfort, and guide us in all our cogitations

his people greater riches than the riches of Egypt! Oh! let us pray that God would open our eyes to see his hid manna, heavenly Jerusalem, the congregation of the first-born, the melody of the saints, the tabernacle of God dwelling with men; then should we run, and become violent men, and so take the kingdom of heaven, as it were, by force. God our Father give us for his Christ's sake to see a little what and how great joy he hath prepared for us, he hath called us unto, and most assuredly giveth us for his own goodness and truth's sake. Amen. My dearly beloved, repent, be sober, and watch in prayer; be obedient, and, after your vocations, shew your obedience to the higher powers, in all things that are not against God's word, therein acknowledge the sovereign power of the Lord; howbeit, so that ye be no rebels, or rebellers, for no cause; but because with good conscience you cannot obey, be patient sufferers, and the glory and good Spirit of God shall dwell upon us. I pray you remember us your afflicted brethren, being in the Lord's bonds for the testimony of Christ, and abiding the gracious hour of our dear and most merciful Father. The Lord, for Christ's sake, give us merry hearts to drink heartily of his sweet cup, which daily we groan and sigh for, lamenting that the time is thus prolonged. The Lord Jesus give us grace to be thankful, and to abide patiently the provident hour of his most gracious will. Amen. Amen. From the Compter in the Poultry.

Yours in Christ,

JOHN BRADFORD.

To my good Brother, JOHN CARELES, Prisoner in the King's Bench.

The Father of mercy, and God of all comfort, visit us with his eternal consolation, ac-

ording to his great mercies in Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

My very dear brother, if I shall report the truth unto you, I cannot but signify that since I came into prison I never received so much consolation as I did by your last letter, the name of God be most heartily praised therefor. But if I shall report the truth unto you, and, as I have begun, speak still the verity; I must confess, that for mine unthankfulness to youwards, and to God especially, I have more need of God's merciful tidings, than I had ever heretofore. Ah! that Satan envieth us so greatly! Ah! that our Lord would tread his head under our feet shortly! Ah! that I might for ever both myself beware, and be a godly example to you and others to beware, of unthankfulness! Good brother Careles, we had more need to take heed after a lightening of a foil than before. God therefore is to be praised even when he hideth, and that not of long, a cheerful countenance from us, lest we, being not expert how to use it as we should do, do hurt more ourselves thereby, so great is our ignorance and corruption. This, my good brother, and right dear to my very heart, I write unto you, as to one whom in the Lord I embrace, and I thank God that you do me in like manner. God our Father more and more give us both his good Spirit, that as by faith we may feel ourselves united unto him in Christ, so by love we may feel ourselves linked in the same Christ one to another, I to you, and you to me, we to all the children of God, and all the children of God to us. Amen. Amen. Commend me to your good brother Skelthrop, for whom I heartily praise my God, which hath given him to see his truth at the length, and to give place to it. I doubt not but he will be so heedful in all his conversation, that his old acquaintance may ever thereby think themselves astray. Woe and

And I beseech thee, O merciful Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, that thou wouldst be merciful unto us, comfort us with thy grace, and strengthen us in thy truth, that in heart we may believe, and in tongue boldly confess, thy Gospel, to thy glory and our eternal salvation. Amen. Pray for me, and I by God's grace will do the same for you.

JOHN BRADFORD.

An Admonition to certain Professors of the Gospel, to beware they fall not from it, in consenting to the Romish Religion, by the Example of other halting and double-faced Gospellers.

The peace of Christ, which is the true effect of God's Gospel believed (my dearly beloved), be more and more plentifully perceived of you, through the grace of our dear Father, by the mighty working of the holy Spirit our Comforter. Amen.

Though I have many letters presently to hinder me from writing unto you, yet being desired, I could not but something signify my ready good will in this behalf, so much as I may, when I cannot so much as I would.

You hear and see how Satan bestirreth him, raging as a roaring lion to devour us. You see and feel partly what storms he hath raised up to drown the poor boat of Christ, I mean his church. You see how terribly he traineth his soldiers to give a fierce onset on the wayward of God's battle. You see how he hath received power of God, to molest God's children, and to begin at his house. By reason whereof, consider two things; one, the cause on our behalf; the other, what will be the sequel on strangers.

For the first, if we be not blind, we cannot but well see, that our sins are the cause of all this mi-

sery; our sins, I say, which I would that every one of us should apply to ourselves after the example of Jonas and David, turning over the wallet, that other men's offences might lie behind, and our own before. Not that I would excuse other men, which exteriorly have walked much more grossly than many of you have done; but that I would provoke you all as myself to more hearty repentance and prayer. Let us more and more increase to know and lament our doubting of God, of his presence, power, anger, mercy, &c. Let us better feel and hate our self-love, security, negligence, unthankfulness, unbelief, impatience, &c. and then doubtless the cross shall be less fearful, yea, it shall be comfortable, and Christ most dear and pleasant; death then shall be desired, as the dispatcher of us out of all misery, and entrance into eternal felicity and joy unspeakable; the which is so much the more longed for, by how much we feel indeed the serpent's bites wherewith he woundeth our heels, that is, our outward Adam and senses. If we had, I say, a lively and true feeling of his poison, we could not but so rejoice over our Captain, that hath bruised his head, so be desirous to follow his example, that is, to give our lives with him, and for him, and so to fill up his passions, that he might conquer and overcome in us and by us, to his glory and comfort of his children.

Now the second (I mean the sequel, or that which will follow on the strangers), my dearly beloved, let us well look upon. For if so be that God justly do give Satan and his seed to vex and molest Christ and his penitent people; oh! what and how justly may he and will he give to Satan to entreat the wretchless and impenitent sinners? If judgment begin thus at God's house, what will follow on them that are without, if they repent not? Certainly for them are reserved the dregs of God's cup, that is,

brimstone, fire, and tempest intolerable. Now are they unwilling to drink of God's cup of afflictions, which he offereth common with his Son Christ our Lord, lest they should lose their pigs with the Gergesites. They are unwilling to come into the way that bringeth to heaven, even afflictions; they in their hearts cry, Let us cast his yoke from us; they walk two ways, that is, they seek to serve God and Mammon, which is impossible; they will not come nigh the strait way that bringeth to life; they open their eyes to behold present things only; they judge of religion after reason, and not after God's word; they follow the more part, and not the better; they profess God with their mouths, but in their hearts deny him, or else they would sanctify him by serving him more than men; they part stake with God, which would have all, giving part to the world, to the Romish rout, and antichristian idolatry, now set abroad amongst us publicly; they will have Christ, but none of his cross, which will not be; they will be counted to live godly in Christ, but yet they will suffer no persecution; they love this world where-through the love of God is driven forth of them; they savour of those things that be of men, and not that be of God; chiefly they love God in their lips, but in their hearts, yea, and in their deeds deny him, as well by not repenting their evils past, as by continuing in evil still, by doing as the world, the flesh, and the devil willeth, and yet still perchance they will pray, or rather prate, Thy will be done in earth, which is generally that every one should take up his cross, and follow Christ. But this is a hard saying: Who is able to abide it? Therefore Christ must be prayed to depart, lest all the pigs be drowned. The devil shall have his dwelling again in themselves, rather than in their pigs, and therefore to the devil they shall go, and dwell with him in eternal perdi-

tion and damnation, even in hell-fire a torment endless, and above all cogitations incomprehensible, if they repent not.

Wherefore by them (my dearly beloved) be admonished to remember your profession, how that in baptism you made a solemn vow to forsake the devil, the world, &c. You promised to fight under Christ's standard; you learned Christ's cross afore you begun with A, B, C. Go to then, pay your vow to the Lord; fight like men, and valiant men, under Christ's standard; take up your cross, and follow your Master, as your brethren, Master Hooper, Rogers, Taylor, and Saunders have done, and as now your brethren, Master Cranmer, Latimer, Ridley, Farrar, Bradford, Hawkes, &c. be ready to do. The ice is broken before you, therefore be not afraid, but be content to die for the Lord. You have no cause to waver, or doubt of the doctrine thus declared by the blood of the pastors. Remember that Christ saith, He that will save his life, shall lose it. And what should it profit you to win the whole world, much less a little quietness, your goods, &c. and to lose your own souls? Render to the Lord that he hath lent you, by such means as he would have you render it, and not as you would. Forget not, Christ's disciples must deny themselves, as well concerning their will, as concerning their wisdom. Have in mind, that as it is no small mercy to believe in the Lord, so it is no small kindness of God towards you to suffer any thing, much more death, for the Lord. If they be blessed that die in the Lord, how shall they be that die for the Lord? Oh! what a blessing is it to have death due for our sins, diverted into a demonstration and testification of the Lord's truth! Oh! that we had a little of Moses' faith, to look upon the end of the cross, to look upon the reward, to see continually with Christ and

woe again should be unto us, if we by our example should make men to stumble at the truth. Forget not salutations in Christ, as you shall think good, to Treve and his fellows. The Lord hath his time (I hope) for them also, although we perchance think otherwise. A drop maketh the stone hollow, not with once, but with often dropping; so if with hearty prayer for them and good example, you still drop upon them as you can, you shall see God's work at the length. I beseech God to make perfect all the good he hath begun in us all. Amen. I desire you all to pray for me, the most unworthy prisoner of the Lord,

Your brother,

JOHN BRADFORD.

To Master JOHN HALL and his Wife, Prisoners in Newgate, for the Testimony of the Gospel.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, be with you both, my dearly beloved, as with his dear children for ever, and so he bless you with his holy Spirit, that you may in this your cross (for his cause doubtless) rejoice, and gladly take it up to bear it so long as he shall think good. I have heard (my good brother and sister) how that God hath brought you both into this school house (whereas you were both purposed by his leave to have played the truants), that thereby you might see his carefulness and love toward you. For if it be a token of a loving and careful father for his children, to prevent the purpose, and disappoint the intent of his children, purposing to depart a while from the school, for fear of beating (which thing they would not do if they did as much consider the commodity of learning which there they might get): how should you take this work of the Lord preventing your pur-

pose, but as an evident sign of love and fatherly carefulness that he beareth towards you? If he should have winked at your wills, then would you have escaped beating, I mean the cross; but then should you have lost the commodity of learning that which your Father will now have you to learn and feel, and therefore hath he sent to you his cross. He (I say) hath brought you where you be; and though your reason and wit tell you, it is by chance or fortune, or otherwise, yet (my dearly beloved) know for certain, that whatsoever was the *mean*, God your Father was the *worker* hereof, and that for your weal, although otherwise your old Adam doth tell you, and you feel; yet I say of truth, that your duty is to think of this cross, that, as it is of God's sending, and cometh from him, so, although your deserts be otherwise, it is of love and fatherly affection for your weal and commodity's sake.

What commodity is hereby, you will perchance object. You are now kept in close prison, you will say; your family and children be without good overseers; your substance diminisheth by these means; your poverty will approach; and perchance more perils also, yea, and loss of life too. These are no commodities, but discommodities, and that no small ones; so that justly you would be glad to know what commodity can come to you by this cross, whereby come so great discommodities.

To these things I answer, that indeed it is true you say of your bodies, families, children, substance, poverty, life, &c.; which things if you would consider awhile with inward eyes, as you behold them with outward, then perhaps you should find more ease. Do not you now by the inward sense perceive that you must part from all these and all other commodities in the world? Tell me then, have not you this commodity by your cross, to learn to loath

and leave the world, and to long for and desire another world, where is perpetuity? You ought, of your own head and free-will, to have (according to your profession in baptism) forsaken the world and all earthly things, using the world as though you used it not; your heart set only upon your hoard in heaven, or else you could never be Christ's true disciples, that is, to be saved, and be where he is. And trow you (my good hearts in the Lord), trow you I say, that this is no commodity, by this cross to be compelled hereto, that you might assuredly enjoy with the Lord endless glory? How now doth God, as it were, fatherly pull you by the ears, to remember your former offences concerning these things and all other things, that repentance and remission might ensue? How doth God now compel you to call upon him, and to be earnest in prayer? Are these no commodities? Doth not the Scripture say, that God doth correct us in this world, because we shall not be damned with the world? that God chasteneth every one whom he loveth? that the end of this correction shall be joy and holiness? Doth not the Scripture say, that they are happy that suffer for righteousness sake, as you now do? that the glory and spirit of God is upon them? that, as you are now made like unto Christ in suffering, so shall you be made like him in reigning? Doth not the Scripture say, that you are now going the high and right way to heaven? that your suffering is Christ's suffering? My dearly beloved, what greater commodities than these can a godly heart desire?

Therefore-ye are commanded to rejoyce and be glad when ye suffer as now ye do: for through the goodness of God great shall be your reward: where? Forsooth, on earth first your children; for now they are in God's mere and immediate protection. Never was father so careful for his children, as God is for

yours presently. God's blessing, which is more worth than all the world, you leave indeed to your children. Though all your providence for them should be pulled away, yet God is not poor; he hath promised to provide for them most fatherly. Cast thy burden upon me, saith he, and I will bear it. (Psalm lv.) Do you therefore cast them and commend them unto God your Father, and doubt not that he will die in your debt. He never was found unfaithful, and he will not now begin with you. The good man's seed shall not go a-begging his bread; for he will shew mercy upon thousands of the posterity of them that fear him; therefore (as I said) God's reward first upon earth shall be felt by your children, even corporally, and so also upon you, if God see it more for your commodity; at the least inwardly you shall feel it by quietness and comfort of conscience; and secondly, after this life, you shall find it so plentifully, as the eye hath not seen, the ear hath not heard, the heart cannot conceive how great and glorious God's reward will be upon your bodies, much more upon your souls. God open your eyes to see and feel this indeed: Then shall we think the cross, which is a mean hereto, to be commodious: then shall we thank God that he would chastise us: then shall we say with David, Happy am I, that thou hast punished me; for before I went astray, but now I keep thy laws.

This that we may do indeed (my dearly beloved), let us first know that our cross cometh from God: secondly, that it cometh from God as a Father, that is, to our weal and good; therefore let us thirdly call to mind our sins, and ask pardon; whereto let us fourthly look for help certainly at God's hand in his good time: help, I say, such as shall make most to God's glory, and to the comfort and commodity of our souls and bodies eternally. This if we cer-

tainly conceive, then will there issue out of us hearty thanksgiving, which God requireth as a most precious sacrifice. That we may all through Christ suffer this, let us use earnest prayer to our God and dear Father, who bless us, keep us, and comfort us, under his sweet cross for ever. Amen. Amen.

My dear hearts, if I could any way comfort you, you should be sure thereof, though my life lay thereon; but now I must do as I may, because I cannot as I would. Oh! that it would please our dear Father shortly to bring us where we should never depart, but enjoy continually the blessed fruition of his heavenly presence. Pray, pray; that it may speedily come to pass, pray. To-morrow I will send to you to know your estate; send me word what are the chiefest things they charge you withal.

From the Compter.

By your brother in the Lord,

JOHN BRADFORD.

To Mistress HALL, Prisoner in Newgate, and ready to make Answer before her Adversaries.

Our most merciful God and Father, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, be merciful unto us, and make perfect the good he hath begun in us unto the end. Amen.

My dear sister, rejoice in the Lord, rejoice; be glad, I say, be merry and thankful, not only because Christ so commandeth us, but also because our state wherein we are presently, requireth no less, for we are the Lord's witnesses. God the Father hath vouchsafed to choose us amongst many, to witness and testify that Christ his Son is King, and that his word is true. Christ our Saviour, for his love sake towards us, will have us to bear record that he is no usurper nor deceiver of his people, but God's

Ambassador, Prophet, and Messiah; so that of all dignities upon earth, this is the highest. Greater honour had not his Prophets, Apostles, nor dearest friends, than to bear witness with Christ, as we now do. The world, following the counsel of their sire Satan, would gladly condemn Christ and his verity; but, lo! the Lord has chosen us to be his champions to let this. As stout soldiers, therefore, let us stand to our Master, who is with us, and standeth on our right hand, that we shall not be much moved, if we hope and hang on his mercy; he is so faithful and true, that he will never tempt us further than he will make us able to bear. Therefore be not careful (for I hear say this day you shall be called forth) what you shall answer. The Lord, which is true and cannot lie, hath promised, and will never fail nor forget it, that you shall have both what and how to answer, so as shall make his shameless adversaries ashamed. Hang therefore on this promise of God, who is a helper at a pinch, and a most present remedy to them that hope in him. Never was it heard of, or shall be, that any hoping in the Lord was put to foil.

Therefore as I said, I say again, dear sister, be not only not careful for your answering, but also be joyful for your cause. Confess Christ, and be not ashamed, and he will confess you, and never be ashamed of you. Though loss of goods and life be like to ensue, yet, if Christ be true (as he is most true), it is otherwise indeed: for he that loseth his life, saith he, winneth it, but he that saveth it, loseth it. Our sins have deserved many deaths. Now if God so deal with us that he will make our deserved death a demonstration of his grace, a testimonial of his verity, a confirmation of his people, and overthrow of his adversaries, what great cause have we to be thankful? Be thankful therefore, good sister; rejoice and be merry in the Lord; be stout in his cause and

quarrel, be not faint-hearted, but run out your race, and set your Captain, Christ, before your eyes. Behold, how great your reward is. See the great glory and the eternity of felicity prepared for you. Strive and fight lawfully, that you may get the crown. Run to get the game; you are almost at your journey's end; I doubt not but our Father will with us send to you also, as he did to Elijah, a fiery chariot, to convey us into his kingdom. Let us therefore not be dismayed to leave our cloak behind us, that is, our bodies to ashes. God will one day restore them to us like to the body of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, whose coming is now at hand; let us look for it, and lift up our heads, for our redemption draweth nigh. Amen. Amen. The Lord of mercy grant us his mercy. Amen. I pray you, pray for me, and so desire my brethren which be with you. God's peace be with us all. Amen. Blessed be the dead that die in the Lord; then how much more they that die for the Lord.

Your brother in bonds,

JOHN BRADFORD.

To a Woman that desired to know his Mind, whether she, refraining from the Mass, might be present at the Popish Matins, or no.

I beseech Almighty God, our heavenly Father, to be merciful unto us, and to increase in you, my good sister, the knowledge and love of his truth, and at this present give me grace so to write to you something of the same, as may make to his glory and our own comfort and confirmation in him, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. Whether you may come with safe conscience to the church now that is, to the service used commonly, in part, as at matins, or at an even-song, or no, is your desire to have

me to write something for your further stay. My dearly beloved, although your benefits towards me might perchance make you to think, that in respect thereof I would bear with that which else were not to be borne withal; yet by God's grace I am purposed, simply and without all such respect in this matter, to speak to you the truth according to my conscience, as I may be able to stand unto, when I shall come before the Lord.

First, therefore, go about to learn perfectly the first lesson to be learned of all that profess Christ, that is, to deny yourself, and in nothing to seek yourself:

Secondly, learn after this, to begin at the next lesson to it, which is, to seek God in all things you do, and leave undone.

Thirdly, know that then you seek God, when in his service you follow his word, and not man's fancies, custom, multitude, &c. and when with your brother you follow the rule of charity, that is, to do as you would be done by. In these is a sum of all the counsel I can give you, if that hitherto I admonish you of the service now used, which is not according to God's word, but rather against God's word directly, and in manner wholly: so that your going to the service is a declaration that you have not learned the first lesson, nor never can learn it so long as you go thither; therefore the second lesson you shall utterly lose, if you cease not the seeking of yourself, that is, if for company, custom, father or friend, life or goods, you seem to allow that which God disalloweth; and this that you the better may perceive, I purpose, by God's grace, briefly to shew,

First, the matins and even-song is in a tongue forbidden publicly to be used in the congregation that perceiveth not the tongue. Read how Paul af-

firmeth it, to pray in an unknown tongue, to be against God's commandment. This one (I trow) were enough, if nothing else were; for how can God's glory be sought, where his word and commandment is wilfully broken? How can charity to man stand, when charity to God, which is obedience to his word, is overthrown?

Again, both in matins and even-song is idolatry maintained for God's service; for there is invocation and prayer made to saints departed this life, which robbeth God of that glory which he will give to none other. Moreover, this service and the setters forth of it condemn the English service as heresy, thereby falling into God's curse, which is threatened to all such as call good evil, and evil good; whereof they shall be partakers that do communicate with them. Besides this, this Latin service is a plain mark of antichrist's catholic synagogue; so that the communicants and approvers of it thereby declare themselves to be members of the same synagogue, and so cut off from Christ and his church, whose exterior mark is the true administration of God's word and sacraments.

Furthermore, the example of your going thither to allow the religion of antichrist (as doubtless you do indeed, howsoever in heart you think), occasioneth the obstinate to be utterly intractable, the weak Papist to be more obstinate, the strong gospellers to be sore weakened, and the weak gospellers to be utterly overthrown: which things, how great offences they be, no pen is able to utter by letters. All these evils you shall be guilty of, that company with those in religion exteriorly, from whom you are admonished to fly. If Christ be Christ, follow him: gather with him, lest you scatter abroad; serve God, not only in spirit, but also in body. Make not your body, now a member of Christ, a member of anti-

christ. Come out from among them, saith the Lord, and touch no unclean thing. Confess Christ and his truth, not only in heart, but also in tongue, yea, in very deed, which few gospellers do. Indeed they deny him, and therefore had need to tremble, lest that Christ deny them in the last day; the which day, if it were set before our eyes often, then would the pleasures and treasures of this world be but trifles.

Therefore, good sister, often have it before your eyes, daily set yourself and your doings as before the judgment-seat of Christ now, that hereafter ye be not called into judgment. Think that it will little profit you to win the whole world, and to lose your own soul. Mark Christ's lessons well, He that will save his life, shall lose it; the Father of heaven commandeth you to hear Christ, and he saith, Follow me: this can you not do, and follow idolatry or idolaters. Fly from such, saith the Scripture.

This God grant to you, to me, and to all God's children. Amen. Thus in haste I have accomplished your request. God grant, that as you have done me much good bodily, so this may be a little mean to do you some good spiritually. Amen. If time would serve, I would have written more at large. The 2d of March, anno 1555.

JOHN BRADFORD.

*To the worshipful, and, in God, my most dear
Friend, the Lady VANE.*

The good Spirit of God our Father be more and more plentifully perceived of your good Ladyship, through the mediation and merits of our dear Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

Although your benefits towards me have deserved at my hands the service I can do for you, yet (right

worshipful and dearly beloved in the Lord) the true fear of God, and love of his truth, which I perceive to be in you, specially and above all other things, do bind me hereunto. This bearer hath told me that your desire is to have something sent to you, concerning the usurped authority of the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome (which is undoubtedly that great antichrist, of whom the Apostles do so much admonish us), that you may have as well something the more to stay you on, as also wherewith to answer the adversaries, because you may perchance therein be something opposed. To satisfy this your desire, I will briefly go about, and so, that I will, By God's grace, fully set forth the same, to enarm you to withstand the assaults of the Papists herein, if you mark well, and read over again that which I now write.

The Papists do place in pre-eminence over the whole church the Pope, thereby unplacing Christ, which is the head of the church, that giveth life to the whole body, and by his Spirit doth make lively every member of the same. This they do without all Scriptures. For where they bring in this spoken to Peter, Feed my sheep, I would gladly know whether this was not commanded unto others also. As for that (which perchance they will urge) that he spake to Peter by name, if they had any learning, they would easily perceive, how that it was not for any such cause as they pretend, but rather by a threefold commandment, to restore him to the honour of an Apostle, which he had lost by his threefold denial. And how dare they interpret this word, My sheep, my lambs, to be the universal church of Christ? I trow, a man might easily, by the like reason, prove that Peter himself had resigned that, which Christ had given to him, in exhorting his fellow-pastors to feed the flock of Christ. Is not this

pretty stuff—because Christ saith to Peter, Feed my sheep, therefore he ought to rule the universal and whole church of Christ? If Peter do truly write unto others, that they should do the like, that is, feed Christ's flock, either he translateth his right and authority committed to him, upon them, or else he doth participate or communicate with them; so that foolishly they go about to establish that which hath no ground. Peter indeed was a shepherd of the sheep, but such a one as bestowed his labour on them so far, as he could stretch himself by his ministry. But the Papists prate, that he had full power over all churches; wherein they may see Paul to improve them, for else he had done unjustly in denying him the superior place. Howbeit, whoever yet read that Peter did take any thing upon him over churches committed unto other men? Was not he sent of the church, and sent of one not having rule over the rest? I grant that he was an excellent instrument of God, and for the excellency of his gifts, whensoever they met together, place therefore was commonly given unto him. But what is this to the purpose, to make him ruler and head over all the whole church, because he was so over a small congregation?

But be it so that Peter had as much given to him as they do affirm; who yet will grant that Peter had a patrimony given for his heirs? He hath left (say the Papists) to his successors the self-same right which he received. O Lord God! then must his successor be a Satan, for he received that title of Christ himself. I would glad have the Papists to shew me one place of succession mentioned in the Scriptures. I am sure, that when Paul purposely painteth out the whole ministration of the church, he neither maketh one head, nor any inheritable primacy, and yet he is altogether in commendation

of unity. After he hath made mention of one God the Father, of one Christ, of one Spirit, of one body of the church, of one faith, and of one baptism, then he describeth the mean and manner how unity is to be kept, namely, because unto every pastor is grace given after the measure wherewith Christ hath endued them. Where, I pray you, is now any title of *fulness of power*? When he calleth home every one unto a certain measure, why did he not forthwith say one Pope? which thing he could not have forgotten, if the thing had been as the Papists make it.

But let us grant, that perpetuity of the primacy in the church was established in Peter, I would gladly learn why the seat of the primacy should be rather at Rome, than elsewhere. Marry, say they, because Peter's chair was at Rome. This is even like to this, that because Moses the greatest prophet, and Aaron the first priest, exercised their offices unto their death in the desert, therefore the most principal place of the Jewish church should be in the wilderness. But grant them their reason, that it is good, what should Antioch claim? For Peter's chair was there also; wherein Paul gave him a check, which was unseemly and unmannerly done of Paul, that would not give place unto his president and better.

No, say the Papists, Rome must have this authority, because Peter died there; but what if a man should, by probable conjecture, shew that it is but a fable, which is feigned of Peter's bishopric at Rome? Read how Paul doth salute very many private persons, when he writeth to the Romans. Three years after his Epistle made, he was brought to Rome prisoner. Luke telleth, that he was received of the brethren. And yet in all these is no mention at all of Peter, which then by their stories was at Rome; belike he was proud, as the Pope and prelates be, or else he would

have visited Paul ; Paul being in prison at Rome, did write divers Epistles, in which he expresseth the names of many, which were, in comparison of Peter, but rascal personages ; but of Peter he speaketh never a word. Surely, if Peter had been there, 'this silence of him had been suspicious. In the second Epistle to Timothy, Paul complaineth that no man was with him in his defence, but all had left him. If Peter had been then at Rome, as they write, then either Paul had belied him, or Peter had played his Peter's part. (Luke, xxiii.) In another place, how doth he blame all that were with him, only Timothy excepted ! Therefore we may well doubt whether Peter was at Rome, Bishop, as they prate ; for all this time and long before, they say, that Peter was Bishop there.

But I will not stir up coals in this matter. If Rome be the chief seat, because Peter died there, why should not Antioch be the second ? Why should not James and John, which were taken with Peter to be as pillars ; why, I say, should not their seats have honour next to Peter's seat ? Is not this gear preposterous, that Alexandria, where Mark (which was but one of the disciples) was Bishop, should be preferred before Ephesus, where John the Evangelist taught, and was Bishop, and before Jerusalem, where not only James taught, and died Bishop, but also Christ Jesus, our Lord and High Priest for ever, by whom, being Master, I hope honour should be given to his chair, more than to the chair of his chaplains ?

I need to speak nothing, how that Paul telleth Peter's apostleship to concern rather circumcision, or the Jews, and therefore properly pertaineth not to us, neither do I need to bring in Gregorius, the first Bishop of Rome, which was about the year of our Lord 600, who plainly in his works doth write, that this title of primacy, and to be head over all churches

under Christ, is a title meet and agreeing only to antichrist; and therefore he calleth it a profane, a mischievous, and a horrible title. Whom should we believe now, if we will neither believe Apostle nor Pope?

If I should go about to tell how this name was first gotten by Phocas, I should be too long; I purpose, God willing, to set it forth at large in a work which I have begun of antichrist, if God for his mercy's sake give me life to finish it; for this present therefore I shall desire your Ladyship to take this in good part. If they will needs have the Bishop of Rome to be acknowledged for the head of the church, then will I urge them that they shall give us a Bishop. But they obtrude unto us a butcher rather, or a bite-sheep, than a Bishop. They brag of Peter's succession, of Christ's vicar; this is always in their mouth. But, alas! how can we call him Christ's vicar, that resisteth Christ, oppugneth his verity, persecuteth his people, and, like a prelate, preferreth himself above God and man? How or wherein doth the Pope and Christ agree? How supplieth he Peter's ministry, that boasteth of his succession?

Therefore to begin withal, which I will use presently for a conclusion, if the Papists will have the Bishop of Rome supreme head of the church of Christ in earth, they must, afore they attain this, give us a Bishop in deed, and not in name; for whosoever he be that will make this the bond of unity, whatsoever the Bishop of Rome be, surely this must needs follow, that they do nothing else, but teach a most wicked defection and departing from Christ.

But of this, if God lend me life, I purpose to speak more at large hereafter. Now will I betake your Ladyship unto the tuition of God our Father, and Christ our only Head, Pastor, and Keeper, to whom see that you cleave by true faith, which

dependeth only on the word of God; which if you do follow as a lantern to your feet, and a light to your steps, you shall then avoid darkness, and the dangerous deeps whereinto the Papists are fallen by the judgment of God, and seek to bring us into the same dungeon with them, that, the blind following the blind, they both may fall into the ditch; out of the which God deliver them according to his good will, and preserve us for his name's sake, that we, being in his light, may continue therein, and walk in it whilst it is day; so shall the night never overpress us, we going from light to light, from virtue to virtue, from faith to faith, from glory to glory, by the governance of God's good Spirit, which God our Father give us all for ever. Amen.

Your brother in bonds, for the testimony of
Jesus Christ,

JOHN BRADFORD.

A Letter to Master RICHARD HOPKINS, then Sheriff of Coventry, and Prisoner in the Fleet, for the faithful and constant Confessing of God's holy Gospel.

Dearly beloved in the Lord, I wish unto you, as unto mine own brother, yea, as to mine own heart root, God's mercy, and the feeling of the same plentifully in Christ, our sweet Saviour, who gave himself a ransom for our sins, and price for our redemption, praised therefor be his holy name for ever and ever. Amen.

I will not go about to excuse myself for not sending unto you hitherto, suffering for the Lord's sake, as you do, to the comfort of me and all that love you in the truth; but rather accuse myself both before God and you, desiring of you forgiveness, and with me to pray to God for pardon of this my unkind

forgetting you, and all other my sins, which I beseech the Lord in his mercy to do away, for his Christ's sake. Amen.

Now to make amend to you-ward, I would be glad if I could; but because I cannot, I shall heartily desire you to accept that will, and this which I shall now write unto you thereafter; I mean, after my will, and not after the deed, to accept and take it. At this present, my dear heart in the Lord, you are in a blessed state, although it seem otherwise to you, or rather unto your old Adam, the which I dare now be so bold as to discern from you, because you would have him not only discerned, but also utterly destroyed. For if God be true, then is his word true.

Now his word pronounceth of your estate, that it is happy, therefore it must needs be so. To prove this, I think it need not; for you know that the Holy Ghost saith, that they are happy which suffer for righteousness sake, and that God's glory and Spirit resteth on them which suffer for conscience to God. Now this you cannot but know, that this your suffering is for righteousness sake, and for conscience to God-wards, for else you might be out of trouble, even out of hand. I know in very deed that you have felt and do feel your unthankfulness to God, and other sins, to witness to you, that you have deserved this imprisonment and lack of liberty, betwixt God and yourself; and I would, you so would confess unto God in your prayers, with petition for pardon and thanksgiving, for his correcting you here. But you know that the magistrates do not persecute in you your sins, your unthankfulness, &c. but they persecute in you Christ himself, his righteousness, his verity; and therefore happy be you that have found such favour with God your Father, to account you worthy to suffer for his sake in the sight of man:

surely you shall rejoice therefor one day with a joy unspeakable in the sight of man also.

You may think yourself born in a blessed time, that have found this grace with God, to be a vessel of honour, to suffer with his saints, yea, with his Son. My beloved, God hath not done so with many. The Apostle saith, Not many noble, not many rich, not many wise in the world hath the Lord God chosen. Oh! then what cause have you to rejoice, that, amongst the not many, he hath chosen you to be one! For that cause hath God placed you in your office, that therefore ye might the more see his special dignation and love towards you. It had not been so great a thing for Master Hopkins to have suffered as Master Hopkins, as it is for Master Hopkins also to suffer, as Master Sheriff. Oh! happy day, that you were made Sheriff, by the which, as God in this world would promote you to a more honourable degree, so by suffering in this room he hath exalted you to heaven, and in the sight of his church and children, to a much more excellent glory. When was it read that a Sheriff of a city suffered for the Lord's sake? Where read we of any Sheriff that hath been cast into prison for conscience to God-ward? How could God have dealt more lovingly with you, than herein he hath done? To the end of the world it shall be written for a memorial to your praise, that Richard Hopkins, Sheriff of Coventry, for conscience to do his office before God, was cast into the Fleet, there kept prisoner a long time. Happy, and twice happy are you, if herefor you may give your life. Never could you have attained to this promotion on this sort, out of that office. How do you preach now, not only to all men, but especially to magistrates in this realm! Who would ever have thought that you should have

been the first magistrate, that for Christ's sake should have lost any thing. As I said before, therefore, I say again, that your state is happy. Good brother, before God I write the truth unto you, my conscience bearing me witness, that you are in a most happy state with the Lord and before his sight.

Be thankful therefore, rejoice in your trouble, pray for patience, persevere to the end, let patience have her perfect work. If you want this wisdom and power, ask it of God; who will give it to you in his good time; hope still in him, yea, if he should slay you, yet trust in him with Job, and you shall perceive that the end will be to find him merciful and full of compassion; for he will not break promise with you, which hitherto never did so with any. He is with you in trouble; he heareth you calling upon him; yea, before you call, your desires are not only known, but accepted through Christ. If now and then he hide his face from you, it is but to provoke your appetite to make you the more to long for him. This is most true, he is coming, and will come, he will not be long; but if for a time he seem to tarry, yet stand you still, and you shall see the wonderful works of the Lord. Oh, beloved! wherefore should you be heavy? Is not Christ Emanuel, God with us? Shall you not find, that as he is true in saying, In the world you shall have trouble, so is he in saying, in me you have comfort? He doth not swear only that trouble will come, but withal he sweareth that comfort shall ensue. And what comfort? Such a comfort as the eye hath not seen, the ear hath not heard, nor the heart of man can conceive. Oh, great comfort! who shall have this? Forsooth, they that suffer for the Lord; and are not you one of them? Yea, verily, are you. Then, as I said, happy, happy, and happy again are you, my dearly beloved in the Lord. You now suffer with the Lord, surely

you shall be glorified with him. Call upon God therefore in your trouble, and he will hear you, yea, deliver you in such sort, as most shall make both to his and your glory also. And in this calling I heartily pray you to pray for me your fellow in affliction. Now we be both going in the highway to heaven; for by many afflictions must we enter in thither, whither God bring us for his mercy's sake. Amen. Amen.

Your fellow in affliction,
JOHN BRADFORD.

To my good Sister, Mistress ELIZABETH BROWN.

Good sister, God our Father make perfect the good he hath begun in you unto the end.

I am afraid to write unto you, because you so overcharge yourself at all times, even whensoever I do but send unto you commendations. I would be more bold on you than many others, and therefore you might suspend so great tokens, till I should write unto you of my need; which thing doubtless I would do if it urged me. Dear sister, I see your unfeigned love to me-wards in God, and have done of long time, the which I do recompense with the like, and will do, by God's grace, so long as I live, and therefore I hope not to forget you, but in my poor prayers to have you in remembrance, as I hope you have me. Otherwise I can do you no service, except it be now and then by my writing to let you from better exercise, where yet the end of my writing is to excite and stir up your heart more earnestly to go onwards in your well-begun enterprise. For you know, none shall be crowned, but such as strive lawfully; and none receiveth the gleeve, but those that run to the appointed mark: none shall be saved, but such as persist and continue to the very end.

Therefore, dear sister, remember that we have need of patience, that, when we have done the good will of God, we may receive the promise. Patience and perseverance be the proper notes, whereby God's children are known from counterfeits; they persevere not, were always but hypocrites; many make godly beginnings, yea, their progress seemeth marvellous, but yet, after all, in the end they fail. These were never of us, saith St. John, for if they had been of us, they would have continued unto the very end.

Go to therefore, mine own beloved in the Lord: as you have well begun, and well gone forward, so well persist and happily end, and then all is yours. Though this be sharp and sour, yet it is not tedious and long. Do all that ever you do simply for God, and as to God; so shall never unkindness, nor any other thing, make you to leave off from well doing, so long as you may do well. Accustom yourself now to see God continually, that he may be all in all unto you. In good things behold his mercy, and apply it unto yourself. In evil things and plagues, behold his judgments, wherethrough learn to fear him. Beware of sin as the serpent of the soul, which spoileth us of all ornament and seemly apparel in God's sight. Let Christ crucified be your book to study on, and that both night and day. Mark your vocation, and be diligent in the works thereof. Use hearty and earnest prayer, and that in spirit. In all things give thanks to God our Father through Christ. Labour to have here life everlasting begun in you, for else it will not be elsewhere enjoyed. Set God's judgments often before your eyes, that now examining yourself, you may make diligent suit, and obtain never to come into judgment. Uncover your evils to God, that he may cover them. Beware of this antichristian trash, defile not yourself in soul or body

therewith, but accomplish holiness in the fear of God, and bear no yoke with unbelievers. Look for the coming of the Lord, which is at hand; by earnest prayer and godly life, hasten it. God our Father accomplish his good work in you. Amen. Commend me to my good mother, Mistress Wilkinson, to my very dear sister, Mistress Warcup. I shall daily commend you all to God, and I pray you do the like for me.

JOHN BRADFORD.

To a Friend of his, instructing him how he should answer his Adversaries.

My dear brother, our merciful God and dear Father through Christ, open your eyes effectually to see, and your heart ardently to desire, the everlasting joy which he hath prepared for his slaughter-sheep, that is, for such as shrink not from his truth, for any such storm's sake. Amen.

When you shall come before the magistrates, to give an answer of the hope which is in you, do it with all reverence and simplicity; and because you may be something afraid by the power of the magistrates, and the cruelty which they will threaten against you, I would you set before you the good father Moses, to follow his example; for he set the invisible God before his eyes of faith, and with them looked upon God and his glorious majesty and power, as with his corporal eyes he saw Pharaoh and all his fearful terrors. So do you, my dearly beloved; let your inward eyes give such light unto you, that as you know you are before the magistrates, so and much more, you and they also, are present before the face of God, which will give such wisdom to you, fearing him and seeking his praise, as the enemies shall wonder at; and further, he will so order their

hearts and doings, that they shall, will they will they, serve God's providence towards you (which you cannot avoid though you would), as shall be most to his glory and your everlasting comfort.

Therefore, my good brother, let your whole study be only to please God; put him always before your eyes, for he is on your right hand, lest you should be moved. He is faithful, and never will suffer you to be tempted above that he will make you able to bear: yea, every hair of your head he hath numbered, so that one of them shall not perish without his good will, which cannot but be good unto you, in that he is become your Father through Christ; and therefore, as he hath given you to believe in him (God increase his belief in us all), so doth he now graciously give unto you to suffer for his name's sake; the which you ought with all thankfulness to receive, in that you are made worthy to drink of the self-same cup, which not only the very sons of God drank of before you, but even the very natural Son of God himself hath brought you good luck. Oh! he of his mercy make us thankful to pledge him again. Amen.

Because the chiefest matter they will trouble you, and go about to deceive you withal, is the sacrament, not of Christ's body and blood, but of the altar, as they call it, thereby destroying the sacrament, which Christ instituted, I would you noted these two things; first, that the sacrament of the altar, which the priest offereth in the mass, and eateth privately with himself, is not the sacrament of Christ's body and blood, instituted by him, as Christ's institution, plainly written and set forth in the Scriptures, being compared to their using of it, plainly doth declare.

Again, if they talk with you of Christ's sacrament instituted by him, whether it be Christ's body or

no, answer them, that as to the eyes of your reason, to your taste, and corporal senses, it is bread and wine, and therefore the Scripture calleth it after the consecration so: even so to the eyes, taste, and senses of your faith, which ascendeth to the right hand of God in heaven, where Christ sitteth, it is in very deed Christ's body and blood, which spiritually your soul feedeth on to everlasting life, in faith and by faith, even as your body presently feedeth on the sacramental bread and sacramental wine.

By this means, as you shall not allow transubstantiation, nor none of their popish opinions, so shall you declare the sacrament to be a matter of faith, and not of reason, as the Papists make it; for they deny God's omnipotency, in that they say Christ is not there, if bread be there; but faith looketh on the omnipotence of God joined with his promise, and doubteth not but that Christ is able to give that he promiseth us spiritually by faith, the bread still remaining in substance, as well as if the substance of bread were taken away; for Christ saith not in any place, this is no bread; but of this gear God shall instruct you, if you hang on his promise, and pray for the power and wisdom of his Spirit, which undoubtedly, as you are bound to look for, praying for it, so he hath bound himself by his promise to give it, the which thing he grant unto us both, and to all his people, for his name's sake, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

JOHN BRADFORD.

To certain godly Men, whom he exhorteth to be patient under the Cross, and constant in the true Doctrine which they had professed.

My dearly beloved in the Lord, as in him I wish you well to fare, so I pray God I and you may con-

tinue in his true service, that perpetually we may enjoy the same welfare, as herein I hope, so in heaven indeed and eternally.

You know this world is not your home, but a pilgrimage, and place wherein God trieth his children; and therefore as it knoweth you not, nor can know you, so I trust you know not it, that is, allow it not, nor in any point will seem to do, although by many you be occasioned thereto. For this hot sun, which now shineth, burneth so sore, that the corn, which is sown upon sand and stony ground, beginneth to wither; that is, many which beforetimes were taken for hearty gospellers, begin now, for the fear of afflictions, to relent, yea, to turn to their vomit again; thereby declaring, that though they go from amongst us, yet were they never of us, or else they would have still tarried with us; and neither for gain or loss have left us, either in word or deed. As for their heart (which undoubtedly is double, and therefore in danger of God's curse), we have as much with us, as the Papists have with them; and more too, by their own judgment; for they playing wily, beguile themselves; think it enough inwardly to favour the truth, though outwardly they curry favour. What though with my body, they say, I do this or that, God knoweth my heart is whole in him.

Ah, brother! if thy heart be whole with God, why dost not thou confess and declare thyself accordingly, by word and fact; either that which thou sayest, thou believest in thine heart is good or no? If it be good, why art thou ashamed of it? If it be evil, why dost thou keep it in thine heart? Is not God able to defend thee, adventuring thyself for his cause? or will he not defend his worshippers? Doth not the Scripture say, that the eyes of the Lord are on them that fear him, and trust in his mercy? And

whereto? forsooth, to deliver their souls from death, and to feed them in time of hunger.

If this be true, as it is most true, why are we afraid of death, as though God could not comfort or deliver us, or would not, contrary to his promise? Why are we afraid of the loss of our goods, as though God would leave them that fear him destitute of all good things, and so do, against his most ample promises? Ah! faith, faith, how few feel thee now-days! Full truly said Christ, that he should scarcely find faith when he came on earth. For if men believed these promises, they would never do any thing outwardly which inwardly they disallow. No example of men, how many soever they be, or how learned soever they be, can prevail in this behalf: for the pattern which we must follow is Christ himself, and not the more company or custom. His word is the lantern to lighten our steps, and not learned men; company and custom are to be considered according to the thing they allow: learned men are to be listened to and followed according to God's law; for else the more part goeth to the devil. As custom causeth error and blindness, so learning, if it be not according to the light of God's word, is poison, and learned men most pernicious. The devil is called *dæmon*, for his cunning, and the children of the world are much wiser than the children of light, in their generation; and I know the devil and his darlings have always, for the most part, more helps in this life, than Christ's church and her children. They (the devil and his synagogue I mean) have custom, multitude, unity, antiquity, learning, power, riches, honour, dignity, and promotions plenty, as always they have had, and shall have commonly, and for the most part, until Christ's coming, much more than the true church hath presently,

heretofore hath had, or hereafter shall have. For her glory, riches, and honour, is not here; her trial, cross, and warfare, is here.

And therefore, my dear hearts in the Lord, consider these things accordingly: consider what you be, not worldlings, but God's children: consider where you be, not at home, but in a strange country: consider among whom you are conversant, even in the midst of your enemies, and of a wicked generation; and then I trust you will not much muse at affliction, which you cannot be without, being, as you be, God's children, in a strange country, and in the midst of your enemies, except you would leave your Captain, Christ, and follow Satan for the muck of this world, rest and quietness, which he may promise you, and you indeed think you shall receive it by doing as he would have you to do; my sweet hearts, he is not able to pay that he promiseth: peace and war come from God, riches and poverty, wealth and woe. The devil hath no power but by God's permission. If then God permit him a little on your goods, body, or life; I pray you tell me, what can much hurt you, as Peter saith, you being followers of godliness. Think you that God will not remember you in his time, as most shall be to your comfort? Can a woman forget the child of her womb? and if she should, yet will I not forget thee (saith the Lord). Look upon Abraham in his exile and misery; look upon Jacob, Joseph, Moses, David, and the Prophets, Apostles, and all the godly from the beginning: and, my good brethren, is not God the same God? Is he a changeling? You have heard of the patience of Job (saith St. James), and you have seen the end, how that God is merciful, patient, and long-suffering; even so I say unto you, that you shall find accordingly, if so be you be patient, that is, if so be you fear him, set his word before you,

serve him thereafter; and if he lay his cross on you, you bear it with patience, the which you shall do when you consider it not according to the present sense, but according to the end. Heb. xii. 2 Cor. iv.

Therefore, I heartily beseech you, and out of my bonds, which I suffer for your sake, pray you, mine own sweet hearts in the Lord, that you would cleave in heart, and humble obedience, to the doctrine taught you by me, and many other my brethren; for we have taught you no fables, nor tales of men, or our own fantasies, but the very word of God, which we are ready with our lives (God so enabling us, as we trust he will) to confirm, and by the shedding of our bloods, in all patience and humble obedience to the superior powers, to testify and seal up, as well that you might be more certain of the doctrine, as that you might be ready to confess the same before this wicked world, knowing that if we confess Christ, and his truth, before men, he will confess us before his Father in heaven; if so be we be ashamed hereof, for loss of life, friends, or goods, he will be ashamed of us before his Father, and his holy angels in heaven.

Therefore take heed, for the Lord's sake; take heed, take heed, and defile not your bodies or souls with this Romish and antichristian religion set up amongst us again, but come away; come away, as the angel crieth, from amongst them, in their idolatrous service, lest you be partakers of their iniquity. Harken to your preachers, as the Thessalonians did to Paul; that is, confer their sayings with the Scriptures; if they found not thereafter, the morning light shall not shine upon them. Use much and hearty prayer, for the spirit of wisdom, knowledge, humbleness, meekness, sobriety, and repentance, which we have great need of, because our sins have thus provoked the Lord's anger against us;

but let us bear his anger, and acknowledge our faults with bitter tears and sorrowful sighs, and doubtless he will be merciful to us, after his wonted mercy. The which thing he vouchsafe to do for his holy name's sake, in Christ Jesus our Lord; to whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all honour, glory, praise, and everlasting thanks, from this time forth evermore. Amen. Out of prison by yours in the Lord to command,

JOHN BRADFORD.

A Letter to Master GEORGE EATON.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, recompense abundantly into your bosom, my dearly beloved, here and eternally the good which from him by you I have continually received since my coming into prison; otherwise can I never be able to requite your loving-kindness here, than by praying for you, and, after this life, by witnessing your faith, declared to me by your fruits, when we shall come and appear together before the throne of our Saviour Jesus Christ, whither (I thank God) I am even now a-going, ever looking when officers will come and satisfy the precept of the prelates, whereof, though I cannot complain, because I have justly deserved an hundred thousand deaths at God's hands, by reason of my sins, yet I may and must rejoice, because the prelates do not persecute in me mine iniquities, but Christ Jesus and his verity; so that they persecute not me, they hate not me, but they persecute Christ: they hate Christ. And because they can do him no hurt (for he sitteth in heaven, and laugheth them and their devices to scorn, as one day they shall feel), therefore they turn their rage upon his poor sheep, as Herod their father did upon the infants. (Matt. ii.) Great cause thereof have I to rejoice,

that my dear Saviour Christ will vouchsafe, amongst many, to choose me to be a vessel of grace, to suffer in me (which have deserved so often and justly to suffer for my sins), that I might be most assured I shall be a vessel of honour, in whom he will be glorified.

Therefore, my right dear brother in the Lord, rejoice with me; give thanks for me; and cease not to pray, that God for his mercy's sake would make perfect the good he hath begun in me. And, as for the doctrine which I have professed and preached, I do confess unto you in writing, as to the whole world I shortly shall, by God's grace, in suffering, that it is the very true doctrine of Jesus Christ, of his Church, of his Prophets, Apostles, and all good men; so that if an angel should come from heaven, and preach otherwise, the same were accursed.

Therefore waver not, dear heart, in the Lord, but be confirmed in it; and, as your vocation requireth, when God so will, confess it, though it be perilous so to do. The end shall evidently shew another manner of pleasure for so doing than tongue can tell. Be diligent in prayer, and watch therein; use reverent reading of God's word; set the shortness of this time before your eyes; and let not the eternity that is to come depart out of your memory. Practise in doing that you learn by reading and hearing: decline from evil, and pursue good: remember them that be in bonds, especially for the Lord's cause, as members of your body and fellow-heirs of grace. Forget not the affliction of Sion, and the oppression of Jerusalem, and God, our Father, shall give us his continual blessing, through Christ our Lord, who guide us, as his dear children, for ever. Amen. And thus I take my farewell with you (dear brother) for ever in this present life, till we shall meet in eternal bliss; whither our good God and Father bring us shortly.

Amen. God bless all your babes for ever. Amen.
Out of prison, this 8th of February.

Your afflicted brother for the Lord's cause,
JOHN BRADFORD.

Another Letter to Mistress ANN WARCUP.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, for his Christ's sake, increase in us faith, by which we may more and more see what glory and honour is reposed and safely kept in heaven for all them that believe with the heart, and confess Christ and his truth with the mouth. Amen.

My dearly beloved, I remember that once heretofore I wrote unto you a farewell upon conjecture, but now I write my farewell to you in this life, indeed, upon certain knowledge. My staff standeth at the door. I continually look for the sheriff to come for me, and I thank God I am ready for him. Now go I to practise that which I have preached: now am I climbing up the hill—it will cause me to puff and to blow before I come to the cliff. The hill is steep and high, my breath is short, my strength is feeble; pray, therefore, to the Lord for me, that as I have now, through his goodness, even almost come to the top, I may by his grace be strengthened not to rest till I come where I should be. Oh! loving Lord! put out thy hand, and draw me unto thee; for no man cometh but he whom the Father draweth. See, my dearly beloved, God's loving mercy; he knoweth my short breath and great weakness. As he sent for Elijah in a fiery chariot, so sendeth he for me; for by fire my dross must be purified, that I may be fine gold in his sight. O unthankful wretch that I am! Lord, do thou forgive mine unthankfulness. Indeed I confess (right dear to me in the Lord) that my sins have deserved hell fire much

more than this fire. But, lo! so loving is my Lord, that he converteth the remedy for my sins, the punishment for my transgressions, into a testimonial of his truth, and a testification of his verity, which the prelates do persecute in me, and not my sins; therefore they persecute not me, but Christ in me, which, I doubt not, will take my part unto the very end. Amen.

Oh! that I had so open an heart as could so receive, as I should do, this great benefit and unspeakable dignity, which God my Father offereth to me. Now pray for me, my dearly beloved; pray for me, that I never shrink. I shall never shrink, I hope: I trust in the Lord I shall never shrink; for he that always hath taken my part, I am assured will not leave me when I have most need, for his truth and mercy's sake. O Lord help me! Into thy hands I commend me wholly. In the Lord is my trust; I care not what man can do unto me. Amen. My dearly beloved, say you Amen also, and come after, if so God call you. Be not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, but keep company with him still. He will never leave you; but, in the midst of temptation, will give you an outscape, to make you able to bear the brunt. Use hearty prayer; reverently read and hear God's word; put it in practice; look for the cross; lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh; know that the death of God's saints is precious in his sight; be merry in the Lord; pray for mitigation of God's heavy displeasure upon our country. God keep us for ever; God bless us with his spiritual blessings in Christ. And thus I bid you farewell for ever in this present life. Pray for me, pray for me; for God's sake, pray for me. God make perfect his good work begun in me. Amen. Out of prison, the seventh of February.

Yours in the Lord,

JOHN BRADFORD.

In the story of Master Bradford, it was above rehearsed, how a certain gentlewoman, being in trouble by her father and mother for not coming to mass, sent her servant to visit Master Bradford in prison; who, tendering the woful case of the gentlewoman, to the intent partly to confirm her with counsel, and partly to relieve her oppressed mind with some comfort, directed this letter unto her; the contents whereof are these:

To a certain godly Gentlewoman, troubled and afflicted by her Friends for not coming to the Mass.

I wish unto you, right worshipful, and my dearly beloved sister in the Lord, as to myself, the continual grace and comfort of Christ, and of his holy word, through the operation of the Holy Spirit, who strengthen your inward man with the strength of God, that you may continue to the end in the faithful obedience of God's Gospel, whereto you are called. Amen.

I perceived by yourself, the last day when you were with me, how that you are in the school-house and trial-parlour of the Lord, which to me is (at the least it should be) a great comfort, to see the number of God's elect by you increased, which is in that state whereof God hath not called many, as Paul saith; and as it is a comfort to me, so should it be a confirmation unto me, that the Lord, for his faithfulness sake, will make perfect and finish the good he hath begun in you to the end.

If, then, your cross be to me a comfort, or token of your election, and a confirmation of God's continual favour (my dearly beloved), how much more ought it to be so unto you, unto whom he hath not only given to believe, but also to come into the trace of suffering for his sake; and that not commonly of

common enemies, but even of your own father, mother, and all your friends; I mean kinsfolks, as you told me. By which, I see Christ's words to be true; how that he came to give his children such a peace with him, as the devil might not, nor may abide; and therefore stirreth up father and mother, sister and brother, rather than it should continue. But (my dear sister) if you cry, with David, to the Lord, and complain to him, how that, for conscience to him, your father and mother have forsaken you, you shall hear him speak in your heart, that he hath received you; and by this would have you to see, how that he maketh you here like to Christ, that elsewhere, in heaven, you might be like unto him; whereof you ought to be most assured, knowing that in time, even when Christ shall appear, you shall be like unto him; for he will make your body, which now you defile not with idolatrous service in going to mass, like unto his own glorious and immortal body, according to the power whereby he is able to do all things. He will confess you before his Father, which do not deny his verity, in word nor deed, before your Father: he will make you to reign with him that now suffer for him; and with him he will not leave you comfortless, that seek no comfort but at his hand. Though for a little time you be afflicted, yet therein will he comfort and strengthen you; and at the length make you to be merry with him, in such joy as is infinite and endless. He will wipe all the tears from your eyes; he will embrace you as your dear husband; he will, after he hath proved you, crown you with a crown of glory and immortality, such as the heart of man shall never be able to conceive in such sort as the thing is. He now beholdeth your steadfastness and striving to do his good will; and shortly will he shew you how steadfast he

is, and will be ready to do your will, after that you have fully resigned it to his will.

Pledge him in his cup of the cross, and you shall pledge him in the cup of his glory. Desire to drink it before it come to the dregs, whereof the wicked shall drink; and all those, that, for fear of the cross, and pledging the Lord, do walk with the wicked, in betraying, in fact and deed, that which their heart embraceth for verity. The which thing if you should do (which God forbid), then, my dear mistress and sister in the Lord, you should not only lose all that I have before spoken, and much more infinitely of eternal joy and glory, but also be a castaway, and partaker of God's most heavy displeasure in hell-fire eternally; and so for a little ease, which you cannot tell how long it will last, to lose for ever and ever all ease and comfort. For he that gathereth not with me (saith Christ, as no mass-gospeller doth); scattereth abroad. According to that we do in this body, we shall receive, be it good or bad. If of our words we shall be judged to condemnation or salvation, much more then of our facts and deeds. You cannot be a partaker of God's religion and anti-christ's service, whereof the mass is most principal. You cannot be a member of Christ's church, and a member of the Pope's church. You must glorify God, not only in soul and heart, but also in body and deed. You may not think that God requireth less of you, his wife now, than your husband did of you. If both heart and body your husband would have, shall Christ have less, trow you, which hath so bitterly and dearly bought it? If your husband could not admit an excuse, how your heart is his only, if he should have taken your body in bed with another; do you think that Christ will allow your body at mass, although your heart consent not to it?

God esteemeth his children, not only of their

hearts, but of their pure hands and works; and, therefore, in Elijah's time, he counted none to be his servants and people, but such as had not bowed their knees to Baal; as now he doth not, in England, account any other to be his dearlings, which know the truth in heart, and deny it in their deeds, as do our mass-gospellers.

We ought to desire, above all things, the sanctifying of God's holy name, and the coming of his kingdom; and shall we then see his name blasphemed so horribly as it is at mass, by making it a sacrifice propitiatory, and setting forth a false Christ, of the priests' and bakers' making, to be worshipped as God, and say nothing? The Jews rent their clothes asunder, in seeing or hearing any thing blasphemously done or spoken against God; and shall we yet come to church where mass is, and be mute? Paul and Barnabas rent their clothes, to see the people of Lycaonia to offer sacrifice unto them; and shall we see sacrifice and God's service done to an inanimate creature, and be mute? What thing helpeth more, or so much, antichrist's kingdom, as doth the mass? And what destroyeth preaching, and the kingdom of Christ upon earth, more than it doth? And how can we then say, Let thy kingdom come, and go to mass? How can we pray before God, Thy will be done on earth, when we will do our own will, and the will of our father or friends? How pray we, Deliver us from evil, which, knowing the mass to be evil, do come to it?

But what go I about to light a candle in the noon-day; that is, to tell you that we may not go to mass, or to the congregation where it is, except it be to prove it, in that all men, in so doing, do but dissemble both with God and man? And is dissembling now to be allowed? How long will men yet halt on both knees? (saith God.) Halting (saith Paul) bring-

eth out of the way; that is to say, out of Christ, which is the way; so that he which is not in him, shall wither away, and be cast into hell-fire. For Christ will be ashamed of them before his Father, which be now ashamed of his truth before this wicked generation.

Therefore (my good mistress) take good heed, for it had been better for you never to have known the truth, and therethrough to have escaped from papistical uncleanness, than now to return to it, making eftsoons your members, being members of righteousness, members of unrighteousness, as you do, if you do but go to the church where mass is. Be pure, therefore, and keep yourself from all filth of the spirit and of the flesh: abstain not only from all evil, but from all appearance of evil.

And so the God of peace shall be with you; the glory of God shall govern you; the Spirit of God shall sanctify you, and be with you for ever, to keep you from all evil, and to comfort you in all your distress and trouble; which is but short, if you consider the eternity you shall enjoy in glory and felicity in the Lord, which undoubtedly you shall not fail but inherit for ever, if so be you, as the elect child of God, put your trust in his mercy, call upon his name unfeignedly, and yield not over to the wicked world, but stick still against it unto the end. God, for his holy name's sake, which is properly the God of the widows, be your good and dear Father for ever, and help you always, as I myself would be holpen at his hands in all things, and especially in this his own cause. Amen. Amen.

JOHN BRADFORD.

To one by whom he had received much Comfort and Relief in his Trouble and Imprisonment.

The mercy of God in Christ, peculiar to his children, be evermore felt of you, my dearly beloved in the Lord. Amen.

When I consider with myself the benefits which God hath shewed unto me by your means, if I had so good and thankful a heart as I would I had, I could not with dry eyes give him thanks, for certainly they are very many and great; and now, being yet still the Lord's prisoner, I receive from him more benefits by you; for the which I think myself so much bound to you, my good brother (although you were but the instrument by whom God wrought and blessed me), that I look not to come out of your debt, by any pleasure or service that I shall ever be able to do you in this life. I shall heartily pray unto God, therefore, to requite you the good you have done to me for his sake; for I know that which you have done, you have done it simply in respect of God and his word. He therefore give you daily more and more to be confirmed in his truth and word, and so plentifully pour upon you the riches of his Holy Spirit and heavenly treasures, laid up in store for you, that your corporal and earthly riches may be used of you as sacraments and significations thereof, the more to desire the one, that is, the heavenly, and the less to esteem the other, that is, the earthly. For Satan's solicitation is, so to set before you the earthly, that therein and thereby you should not have access to the consideration of the heavenly; but, as one bewitched, should utterly forget them, and altogether become a lover and worshipper of the earthly mammon, and so to fall to covetousness, and a desire to be rich, by that means to bring you into many noisome and hurtful lusts; as now-a-days I hear of

many which have utterly forsaken God, and all his heavenly riches, for antichrist's pleasure, and the preserving of their worldly pelf, which they imagine to leave to their posterity, whereof they are uncertain, as they may be most certain they leave to them God's wrath and vengeance, in his time to be sent by visitation, if they in time heartily repent not, and prevent not the same by earnest prayer. Wherein (my good brother) if you be diligent, hearty, and persevere, I am sure God will preserve you from evil, and from yielding yourself to do as the world now doth, by allowing in bodily fact in the Romish service, that which the inward cogitation and mind doth disallow. But if you be cold in prayer, and come into consideration of earthly and present things simply, then shall you fall into faithless follies, and wounding of your conscience; from which God evermore preserve you, with your good wife, and your babe Leonard, and all your family, to the which I wish the blessing of God, now and for ever, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

I pray you give thanks for me to your old bed-fellow, for his great friendship, for your sake, shewed to me when I was in the Tower.

JOHN BRADFORD.

To a faithful Friend of his and his Wife, resolving their Doubt why they ought not to come to auricular Confession.

The merciful God, and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which loveth us as a most dear father, and hath put upon him towards us the affections of a most tender mother towards her children, so that he can no less think upon us (although, of ourselves, we be most unworthy, and deserve nothing less), than she can think on her only begotten child in his distress; yea,

if she should forget her child, as some unnatural mother will do, yet will he never forget us, although for a time he seem to sleep, that we might be occasioned to call loud, and awake him. This good God keep you, my dear brother Nathaniel, and your good yoke-fellow, my heartily beloved sister in the Lord, in all things, now and for ever, to his glory and your eternal comfort; and also, of his goodness, he grant you both the feeling of that hope, which undoubtedly he hath laid up in store for you both, far surpassing the store and provision, not only which you have made, but all the world is able to make, as, I trust, already he hath wrought it in you; but I beseech him to increase it more and more, and kindle in you a hearty longing for the enjoying of the same; the which once felt and had indeed, then the means by the which we come thereto cannot be so greatly dreaded, as most men do dread them, because either they want this feeling (I mean it, of altogether), or else, because the sense of this present time, and things therein, are as a mist, to the hiding of those things from our sight, lest we should run and embrace them by hearty prayer; the spirit whereof God grant us, and, indeed, we should attain enough in this behalf, if we continued therein.

For auricular confession, wherein you desire my advice for your good yoke-fellow and family (my most dear brother), I am as ready to give it as you to desire it; yea, more glad, forasmuch as half a suspicion was in me (at the least touching my dear sister, your wife), of a loathing of my advice, that too much had been given; where, indeed, I should lament my too little feeding you spiritually, as both you, out of prison and in prison, have fed me corporally. But as I always thought of her, so I yet think, that she is the child of God, whom God dearly loveth, and will, in his good time, to her eternal

comfort, give her her heart's desire ; in sure feeling, and sensible believing of this, which I would she had often in her mind, namely, that he is her God and Father, through Christ Jesus, our dear Lord and Saviour. A greater service to God she cannot give, than to believe this. If Satan say she believeth not, to answer not him, but the Lord ; and to say, Yea, Lord, help my unbelief, and increase my poor faith, which Satan saith is no faith : make him a liar, Lord, as always he hath been, is, and shall be. Undoubtedly, sooner or later, God will graciously hear her groans, and keep all her tears in his bottle ; yea, write them in his counting-book, for he is a righteous God, and hath no pleasure in the death of his creature. He loveth mercy ; he will return, and shew her his mercy ; he will cast all her sins and iniquities into the bottom of the sea ; and the longer that he tarrieth (as he doth it but to prove her), so the more liberally will he recompense her long looking, which no less pleaseth him, than it grieveth now her outward Adam. For the mortification whereof God useth this cross, ; and, therefore, if she desire to bear the same, doubtless God will make her able to bear it ; and, in presumption of his goodness and strength, let her cast herself wholly upon him ; for he is faithful, and will assuredly confirm, and bring to a happy end, that good which graciously he hath begun in her. The which thing I desire him to do for his own glory and name's sake. Amen. Amen.

And now to the matter. Confession auricular, as it was first used and instituted (which was by the way of counsel-asking), I take to be among those traditions which are indifferent, that is, neither unlawful, nor necessarily binding us, except the offence of the weak could not be avoided. But to consider it, as it is now used (I write to you but as I think, and what my mind is, which follow no further, than

good men by God's word do allow it), to consider it; I say, as it is now used, methink it is plainly unlawful and wicked, and that for these causes:

First, because they make it a service of God; a thing which pleaseth God of itself; I will not say meritorious. This bringer, my brother, can tell you at large how great an evil this is.

Secondly, because they make it of necessity, so that he or she that useth it not, is not taken for a good Christian.

Thirdly, because it requireth of itself an impossibility; that is, the numbering and telling of all our sins, which no man perceiveth, much less can utter.

Fourthly, because it establisheth and confirmeth; at the least alloweth, praying to saints; Precor Sanctam Mariam, you must say, or the priest for you.

Fifthly, because it is very injurious to the liberty of the Gospel, the which to affirm, in example and fact, I take to be a good work, and dear in God's sight.

Sixthly, because (as it is used) it is a note, yea, a very sinew of the popish church; and therefore we should be so far from allowing the same, that we should think ourselves happy to lose any thing in bearing witness thereagainst.

Seventhly, because, instead of counsel, thereat you should receive poison, or, if you refuse it under Sir Jolin's Benedicite, you should no less there be wound in the briers.

Eighthly, because the end and purpose why we go thither is, for the avoiding of the cross, that is, for our own cause, and not for Christ's cause, or for our brethren's commodity; for in that they make it so necessary a thing, and a worshipping of God, it cannot but be against Christ, and the freedom of his Gospel; and the same thing teaches us, that it is against the commodity of our brethren, which either

be weak, either be strong, either be ignorant, either be obstinate. If they be weak, by your resorting to it, they be made more weak; if they be strong, you do what you can to infirm their strength; if they be ignorant, therein you help to keep them by your fact; if they be obstinate, your resorting to it cannot but rock them asleep in their obstinate error of the necessity of this rite and ceremony. These causes recited, do shew you what I think in this; but my thinking must no further bind you than a man's thought should do, except the same be grounded upon God's word, which bindeth indeed, as I think they do. I doubt not but you, weighing these causes, and especially two of the first and the last, if you pray to God for his Spirit to direct you, and thereto ask the advice of this my good brother, and other godly learned men, I doubt not (I say) but you should be guided to do that which is best in God's sight, although in the sight of the world, perhaps, you should be counted foolish and precise. But be at a point with yourselves, as the disciples of Christ, which had forsaken themselves, to follow not your own will, but God's will, as you daily pray in the Lord's prayer.

The cross of Christ be willing to carry, lest you carry the cross of the world, the flesh, or the devil. One of these crosses you must carry. Three of them bring to hell; and therefore the more part goeth that way, which is a broad way. Only the fourth bringeth to heaven; but few go that way, as well because the way is strait, as also because few walk in it. Howbeit, though it be strait, it is but short; and the few are many, if you consider the godly, as the Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, Confessors, and Christ Jesus, with all his guard and train. Think not scorn to come after them which are gone before you, and after them which now go

before me, in whose number I trust I am appointed to be one; and I beseech you pray for me, that God would vouch me worthy that honour. Our sins deserve plagues, prisons, and the loss of all that ever we have; therefore if God remove our sins out of sight, and send us prison, or loss of goods and living for his name's sake, oh, how happy are we! My dear hearts in the Lord, consider this gear, and be assured, that he which loseth any thing for Christ's sake, the same in his posterity shall find it here and in heaven elsewhere. As for unableness to answer for your faith, it shall be enough to will them to dispute with your teachers. Faith standeth not in disputing; I think few, if it came to disputing, could defend the Godhead of Christ and many other articles; I speak it for the simple sort. Pray for me. Lack of paper maketh this end. Commend me to my good brother R. B. and my good sister, his wife. I pray them to pray for me. I trust by this bearer to hear how you do.

JOHN BRADFORD.

Another Letter to N. and his Wife.

God's mercy in Christ I wish you to feel, my dear brother, with my faithful sister, your wife, now and for ever. Amen.

Having this occasion, I could not but write something, as well to put myself in remembrance of my duty to God-ward for you both, in thankfulness and prayer, as to put you in remembrance of me, and your duty towards God for me, in praying for me, for I dare not say in thankfulness for me; not that I would have you to give no thanks to God for his wonderful great and sweet mercies towards me, and upon me, in Christ his Son, but because I have not deserved it at either of your hands; for ye both

know right well, at least my conscience doth accuse me, how that I have not only not exhorted and taught you (as both my vocation and your deserts required) to walk worthy of that vocation which God hath made you worthy of, and with trembling and fear to work out your salvation, that is; in the fear of God to give yourselves to great vigilance in prayer for the increase of faith, and to a wary circumspection in all your conversation, not only in works and words, but also in thoughts, because God is a searcher of the heart, and out of the heart it cometh that defileth us in God's sight; I have (I say) not only not done this, but also have given you example of negligence in prayer, watching, fasting, talking, and doing; so that woe to me for giving such offence. Partly for this cause, dear brother and sister, God hath cast me here, that I might repent me and turn to him, and that ye might also by his correction upon me be more diligent to redress these things and others, if they in your conscience do accuse you.

My dearly beloved, heavy is God's anger fallen upon us all, doleful is this day. Now hath antichrist all his power again: now is Christ's Gospel trodden under foot: now is God's people a derision and prey for the wicked: now is the greatest of all plagues fallen, the want of God's word; and all these we have, yea, I alone have justly deserved. Oh! that as I write (I alone), I could with David, and with Jonah, in my heart say so! but I do not, I do not; I see not how grievously I have sinned, and how great a misery is fallen for mine unthankfulness for God's word, for mine hypocrisy in professing, preaching, hearing, and speaking of God's word; for my not praying to God for the continuance of it; for my not loving of it thoroughly as it requireth, &c. I will speak nothing of my manifest evils, for they are known to you well enough.

Dear brother and sister, with me say the like for your own parts, and with me join your hearts, and let us go to our heavenly Father, and for his Christ's sake beseech him to be merciful unto us, and to pardon us. O good Father! it is we that have deserved the taking away of thy word; it is we that have deserved these thy just plagues fallen upon us; we have done amiss, we have dealt unjustly with thy Gospel, we have procured thy wrath, and therefore just art thou in punishing us, just art thou in plaguing us, for we are very miserable. But, good Lord, and dear Father of mercy, whose justice is such that thou wilt not punish the poor souls of this realm, which yet have not thus sinned against thee, as we have done (for many yet never heard thy word), for our trespasses, and whose mercy is so great, that thou wilt put our iniquities out of thy remembrance for Christ's sake, if we repent and believe; grant us, we beseech thee, true repentance and faith, that we, having obtained pardon for our sins, may through thy Christ get deliverance from the tyranny of anti-christ, now oppressing us.

O good Father! which hast said, that the sceptre of the wicked should not long lie upon and over the just, lest they put forth their hands to iniquity also, make us just, we pray thee, in Christ's name, and cut asunder the cords of them that hate Sion; let not the wicked people say, Where is their God? Thou, our God, art in heaven, and dost whatsoever it pleaseth thee upon earth.

Oh! that thou wouldest in the mean whiles, before thou do deliver us, that (I say) thou wouldest open our eyes to see all these plagues to come from thee, and other that shall come, whatsoever they be, public or private, that they come not by chance nor by fortune, but that they come even from thy hand, and that justly and mercifully; justly, because

we have and do deserve them, not only by our birth-poison still sticking and working in us, but also by our former evil life past, which by this punishment and all other punishments thou wouldest have us to call to our remembrance, and to set before us, that thou mightest put them from before thee; whereas they stand so long as they are not in our remembrance, to put them away by repentance. Mercifully, O Lord God, dost thou punish, in that thou dost not correct to kill, but to amend, that we might repent of our sins, ask mercy, obtain it freely in Christ, and begin to suffer for righteousness sake; to be part of thy house, whereat thy judgment beginneth, to be partakers of the afflictions of thy church and thy Christ, that we might be partakers of the glory of the same to weep here; that we might rejoice elsewhere, to be judged in this world; that we might with thy saints judge hereafter the world, to suffer with Christ, that we might reign with him; to be like to Christ in shame, that we might be like to him in glory; to receive our evils here, that we might with poor Lazarus find rest elsewhere; rest, I say, and such a rest as the eye hath not seen, the ear hath not heard, nor the heart of man is able to conceive.

Oh! that our eyes were open to see this, that the cross cometh from thee to declare thy justice and thy mercy, and hereto that we might see how short a time the time of suffering is; how long a time the time of rejoicing is to them that suffer here; but to them that will not, how long and miserable a time is appointed and prepared; a time without time in eternal woe and perdition, too horrible to be thought upon. From the which keep us, dear Father, and give more sight in soul to see this gear, and how that all thy dearest children have carried the cross of grievous affliction in this life; in whose company do

thou place us, and such a cross lay upon us as thou wilt make us able to bear, to thy glory and our salvation in Christ, for whose sake we pray thee to shorten the days of this our great misery fallen upon us most justly; and in the mean season give us patience, repentance, faith, and thy eternal salvation. Amen. Amen.

And thus, dear hearts, I have talked (methinks) a little with you, or rather we have all talked with God. Oh! that God would give us his Spirit of grace and prayer! My dearly beloved, pray for it, as for yourselves so for me, and that God would vouchsafe to make me worthy to suffer with a good conscience for his name's sake. Pray for me, and I shall do the like for you. This 20th of December, by him whom by this bringer ye shall learn. I pray you give my commendations to all that love me in the Lord. Be merry in Christ, for one day in heaven we shall meet and rejoice together for evermore. Amen.

JOHN BRADFORD.

To my good Brother, AUGUSTINE BARNCHER.

Mine own good Augustine, the Lord of mercy bless thee, my dear brother, for ever. I have good hope, that if you come late at night, I shall speak with you, but come as secretly as you can; howbeit, in the mean season, if you can, and as you can, learn what Master G. hath spoken to Doctor Story and others. The cause of all this trouble, both to my keeper and me, is thought to come by him. It is said, that I shall be burned in Smithfield, and that shortly. The Lord's will be done. Behold, here I am, Lord send me. Ah, mine own dear friend! I am now alone, lest I should make you and others worse. If I should live, I would more warily use

the company of God's children than ever I have done. I will bear the Lord's anger, because I have sinned against him. Commend me to my most dear sister, for whom my heart bleedeth; the Lord comfort her, and strengthen her unto the end. I think I have taken my leave of her for ever in this life, but in eternal life we shall most surely meet and praise the Lord continually. I have now taken a more certain answer of death than ever I did; and yet not so certain as I think I should do; I am now as a sheep appointed to the slaughter. Ah, my God! the hour is come, glorify thy most unworthy child. I have glorified thee, saith this my sweet Father, and I will glorify thee. Amen. Ah, mine own bowels! praise God for me, and pray for me; for I am his, I hope; I hope he will never forsake me, though I have above all others most deserved it; I am the most singular example of his mercy; praised be his name therefor. Cause Mistress Perpoint to learn of the Sheriff, Master Chester, what they purpose to do with me, and know, if you can, whether there be any writ forth for me. (Psalm ci.) I am like to an owl in the house, and as a sparrow alone on the house-top. Ah, my Augustine! how long shall God's enemies thus triumph? I have sent you this of the baptism of children to write out; when this is done, you shall have other things. Pray, pray, mine own dear heart, on whom I am bold. The keeper telleth me, that it is death for any to speak with me, but yet I trust that I shall speak with you.

JOHN BRADFORD.

To these letters of Mr. Bradford above specified, here is also adjoined another letter of the said Bradford, written to certain of his faithful friends, worthy of all Christians to be read, wherein is described a lively comparison between the old man and the new;

also between the law and the Gospel, containing much fruitful matter of divinity necessary for Christian consciences to read and understand.

A Letter of Master BRADFORD, describing a Comparison between the old Man and the new, &c.

A man that is regenerate and born of God (the which thing that every one of us be, our baptism, the sacrament of regeneration, doth require, under pain of damnation; and therefore let every one of us with the Virgin Mary say, Be it unto me, O Lord, according to thy word, according to the sacrament of baptism, wherein thou hast declared our adoption; and let us lament the doubting hereof in us, striving against it, as we shall be made able of the Lord); a man, I say, that is regenerate, consisteth of two men (as a man may say), namely, of the old man and of the new man. The old man is like to a mighty giant, such a one as was Goliath, for his birth is now perfect; but the new man is like unto a little child, such a one as was David, for his birth is not perfect until the day of his general resurrection.

The old man therefore is more strong, lusty, and stirring than is the new man, because the birth of the new man is begun now, and the old man is perfectly born; and as the old man is more stirring, lusty, and stronger than the new man, so is the nature of him clean contrary to the nature of the new man, as being earthly and corrupt with Satan's seed, the nature of the new man being heavenly, and blessed with the celestial seed of God; so that one man, inasmuch as he is corrupt with the seed of the serpent, is an old man; and inasmuch as he is blessed with the seed of God from above, he is a new man: and as inasmuch as he is an old man, he is a sinner and an enemy to God, so inasmuch as he is regenerate, he is righ-

teous and holy, and a friend to God, the seed of God preserving him from sin, so that he cannot sin, as the seed of the serpent wherewith he is corrupt even from his conception inclineth him, yea, enforceth him to sin, and nothing else but to sin; so that the best part in man before regeneration, in God's sight, is not only an enemy, but enmity itself.

One man therefore which is regenerate well may be called always just, and always sinful: just in respect of God's seed; and his regeneration, sinful in respect of Satan's seed, and his first birth. Betwixt these two men therefore there is continual conflict, and war most deadly. The flesh and old man, by reason of his birth that is perfect, doth often for a time prevail against the new man (being but a child in comparison), and that in such sort, as not only other, but even the children of God themselves think that they be nothing else but old, and that the Spirit and seed of God is lost and gone away; where yet notwithstanding the truth is otherwise, the Spirit and the seed of God at the length appearing again, and dispelling away the clouds which cover the sun of God's seed from shining, as the clouds in the air do the corporal sun; so that sometimes a man cannot tell by any sense, that there is any sun, the clouds and winds so hiding it from our sight: even so our cecity or blindness and corrupt affections do often shadow the sight of God's seed in God's children, as though they were plain reprobates: whereof it cometh, that they praying according to their sense, but not according to the truth, desire of God to give them again his Spirit, as though they had lost it, and he had taken it away; which thing God never doth indeed, although he make us to think so for a time; for always he holdeth his hand under his children in their falls, that they lie not still, as others do which are not regenerate. And this is the difference

between God's children, which are regenerate and elect before all times in Christ, and the wicked always, that the elect lie not still continually in their sin, as do the wicked, but at the length do return again by reason of God's seed, which is in them hid as a spark of fire in the ashes; as we may see in Peter, David, Paul, Mary Magdalen, and others. For these (I mean God's children) God hath made all things in Christ Jesus, to whom he hath given his dignity, that they should be his inheritance and spouse.

This our inheritor Christ Jesus, God with God, light of light, coeternal and consubstantial with the Father and with the Holy Ghost, to the end that he might become our husband (because the husband and the wife must be one body and flesh), hath taken our nature upon him, communicating with it and by it in his own person, to us all his children, his divine majesty (as Peter saith), and so is become flesh of our flesh, and bone of his bones, consubstantially as we are become flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone spiritually; all that ever we have pertaining to him, yea, even our sins, as all that ever he hath pertaineth unto us, even his whole glory. So that if Satan should summon us to answer for our debts or sins, in that the wife is not sueable, but the husband, we may well bid him enter his action against our husband Christ, and he will make him a sufficient answer.

For this end (I mean, that we might be coupled and married thus to Christ, and so be certain of salvation and at godly peace with God in our consciences), God hath given his holy word, which hath two parts (as now the children of God do consist of two men), one part of God's word being proper to the old man, and the other part of God's word being proper to the new man. The part properly pertain-

ing to the old man is the law; the part properly pertaining to the new is the Gospel.

The law is a doctrine which commandeth and forbiddeth, requiring doing and avoiding. Under it therefore are contained all precepts, threatenings, promises upon conditions of doing and avoiding, &c. The Gospel is a doctrine which always offereth and giveth, requiring faith on our behalf, not as of worthiness, or as a cause, but as a certificate unto us, and therefore under it are contained all the free and sweet promises of God; as, "I am the Lord thy God," &c.

In those that be of years of discretion, it requires faith, not as a cause, but as an instrument whereby we ourselves may be certain of our good husband Christ and of his glory; and therefore when the conscience feeleth itself disquieted for fear of God's judgment against sin, she may in no wise look upon the doctrine pertaining to the old man; but on the doctrine only that pertaineth to the new man, in it not looking for that which it requireth, that is, faith, because we never believe as we should, but only on it which it offereth, and which it giveth, that is, on God's grace and eternal mercy and peace in Christ. So shall she be in quiet, when she looketh for it altogether out of herself, in God's mercy in Christ Jesus; in whose lap if she lay her head with St. John, then is she happy, and shall find quietness indeed. When she feeleth herself quiet, then, in God's name, let her look on the law, and upon such things as it requireth, thereby to bridle and keep down the old Adam, to slay that Goliath, from whom she must needs keep the sweet promises, being the bed wherein her spouse and she meet and lie together. For as the wife will keep her bed only for her husband, although in other things she is contented to have fellowship with others, as to speak, sit, eat,

drink, go, &c. so our consciences, which are Christ's wives, must needs keep the bed, that is, God's sweet promises, alone for ourselves and our husband, there to meet together, to embrace and laugh together, and to be joyful together. If sin, the law, the devil, or any thing, would creep into the bed, and lie there, then complain to thy husband Christ, and forthwith thou shalt see him play Phineas' part. (Numb. xxv.) Thus (my dearly beloved) I have given you in few words a sum of all the divinity which a Christian conscience cannot want.

A Letter written to his Mother as a Farewell, when he thought he should have suffered shortly after.

The Lord of life and Saviour of the world, Jesus Christ, bless you and comfort you, my good and dear mother, with his heavenly comfort, consolation, grace, and Spirit, now and for ever. Amen.

If I thought that daily, yea, almost hourly, you did not cry unto God the Father, through Jesus Christ, that he would give me his blessing, even the blessing of his children, then would I write more hereabout. But forasmuch as I am certain you are diligent, and so I beseech you, good mother, to continue, I think it good to write something, whereby this your crying might be furthered; furthered it will be, if those things which hinder it be taken away; among the which, in that I think my imprisonment is the greatest and chiefest, I will thereabout spend this letter, and that briefly, lest it might increase the let, as my good brother, this bringer, can tell you. You shall know therefore, good mother, that for my body, though it be in a house, out of the which I cannot come when I will, yet in that I have conformed my will to God's will, I find herein liberty enough, I thank God; and for my lodging,

bedding, meat, drink, godly and learned company, books, and all other necessaries, for my ease, comfort, and commodity, I am in much better case than I could wish; and God's merciful providence here is far above my worthiness. Worthiness, quoth I! Alas! I am worthy of nothing but damnation!

But, beside all this, for my soul I find much more commodity; for God is my Father, I now perceive, through Christ; therefore, in preserving me for his Gospel, he maketh me like to the image of his Son Jesus Christ here, that, when he cometh to judgment, I might then be like unto him, as my trust and hope is I shall be. Now, he maketh me like to his friends the Prophets, Apostles, the holy Martyrs, and Confessors. Which of them did not suffer, at the least, imprisonment or banishment for his Gospel and word?

Now, mother, how far am I unmeet to be compared to them? I (I say), which always have been, and am, so vile an hypocrite and grievous a sinner, God might have caused me, long before this time, to have been cast into prison as a thief, a blasphemer, an unclean liver, and an heinous offender of the laws of the realm; but, dear mother, his mercy is so great, upon both you, and all that love me, that I should be cast into prison as none of these, or for any such vices, but only for his Christ's sake, for his Gospel's sake, for his church's sake, that hereby, as I might learn to lament and bewail my ingratitude and sins, so I might rejoice in his mercy, be thankful, look for eternal joy with Christ, for whose sake, praised be his name for it, I now suffer, and therefore should be merry and glad. And, indeed (good mother), so I am, as ever I was; yea, never so merry and glad was I, as now I should be, if I could get you to be merry with me, to thank God for me, and to pray on this sort: O good Father! which dost

vouchsafe that my son, being a grievous sinner in thy sight, should find this favour with thee, to be one of thy Son's captains and men of war, to fight and suffer for his Gospel's sake, I thank thee; and pray thee, in Christ's name, that thou wouldest forgive him his sins and unthankfulness, and make perfect in him that good which thou hast begun; yea, Lord, I pray thee, make him worthy to suffer, not only imprisonment, but even death itself, for thy truth, religion, and Gospel's sake. As Hannah did apply and give her first child, Samuel, unto thee, so do I, dear Father, beseeching thee, for Christ's sake, to accept this my gift, and give my son, John Bradford, grace, always truly to serve thee and thy people, as Samuel did. Amen.

If on this sort (good mother), from your heart you would pray, as I should be the most merry man that ever was; so am I certain the lets of your prayer for my imprisonment would be taken away. Good mother, therefore, mark what I have written, and learn this prayer by heart, to say it daily; and then I shall be merry, and you shall rejoice, if that you continue, as I trust you do, in God's true religion, even the same I have taught you, and my father Traves, I trust, will put you in remembrance of. My brother Roger, also, I trust, doth so daily; go to, therefore, and learn apace. Although the devil cast divers lets in the way, God, in whom you trust, will cast them away for his Christ's sake, if you will cast them upon him; and never will he suffer you to be tempted above that he will make you able to bear. But how you should do herein, the other letter, which I have written herewith, shall teach you, which I would have none should read till my father Traves have read it; and he will give you, by God's grace, some instructions.

Now, therefore, will I make an end, praying you,

good mother, to look for no more letters; for if it were known that I have pen and ink, and did write, then should I want all the aforesaid commodities I have spoken of concerning my body, and be cast into some dungeon in fetters of iron; which thing I know would grieve you; and, therefore, for God's sake, see that these be burned, when this little prayer in it is copied by my brother Roger, for, perchance, your house may be searched for such gear when you think little of it; and look for no more, sweet mother, till either God shall deliver me, and send me out, either you and I shall meet together in heaven, where we shall never part asunder. Amen.

I require you, Elizabeth and Margaret, my sisters, that you will fear God; use prayer; love your husbands; be obedient unto them, as God willeth you; bring up your children in God's fear, and be good housewives. God bless you both, with both your husbands, my good brethren, to whom to do good, because I now cannot, I will pray for them and you. Commend me to my sister Ann, mother Pike, T. Sorocold and his wife, R. Shalcross and his wife, R. Bolton, J. Wild, M. Vicar, the Parson Mottrom, Sir Laurence Hall, with all that love, and, I trust, live in the Gospel; and God turn Sir Thomas his heart. Amen. I will daily pray for him. I need not to set to my name—you know it well enough.

Because you should give my letters to my father Traves to be burnt, I have written here a prayer for you to learn to pray for me, good mother; and another for all your house, in your evening prayer, to pray with my brother. These prayers are written with my own hand; keep them still, but the letters give to father Traves to burn, and give father Traves a copy of the latter prayer.

Another Letter to his Mother, as his last Farewell unto her in this World, a little before he was burned.

God's mercy, and peace in Christ, be more and more perceived of us. Amen.

My most dear mother in the bowels of Christ, I heartily pray and beseech you to be thankful for me unto God, which thus now taketh me unto himself. I die not, my good mother, as a thief, a murderer, an adulterer, &c. ; but I die as a witness of Christ, his Gospel, and truth, which hitherto I have confessed (I thank God), as well by practising as by imprisonment ; and now, even presently, I shall most willingly confirm the same by fire. I acknowledge that God most justly might take me hence simply for my sins, which are many, great, and grievous ; but the Lord, for his mercy in Christ, hath pardoned them all (I hope) ; but now, dear mother, he taketh me hence, by this death, as a confessor and witness, that the religion taught by Christ Jesus, the Prophets, and the Apostles, is God's truth. The prelates do persecute in me Christ, whom they hate, and his truth, which they may not abide, because their works are evil, and may not abide the truth and light, lest men should see their darkness. Therefore, my good and most dear mother, give thanks for me to God, that he hath made the fruit of your womb to be a witness of his glory, and attend to the truth ; which (I thank God for it) I have truly taught out of the pulpit at Manchester. Use often and continual prayer to God the Father, through Christ ; hearken, as you may, to the Scriptures ; serve God after his word, and not after custom ; beware of the Romish religion in England ; defile not yourself with it ; carry Christ's cross, as he shall lay it upon your back ; forgive them that kill me ; pray for them, for

they know not what they do ; commit my cause to God our Father ; be mindful of both your daughters, to help them as you can.

I send all my writings to you, my brother Roger ; do with them as you will, because I cannot as I would. He can tell you more of my mind. I have nothing to give you, or to leave behind me for you ; only I pray God my Father, for his Christ's sake, to bless you and keep you from evil. He give you patience ; he make you thankful, as for me, so for yourself, that he will take the fruit of your womb to witness his verity ; wherein I confess to the whole world I die and depart this life, in hope of a much better, which I look for at the hands of God my Father, through the merits of his dear Son, Jesus Christ.

Thus, my dear mother, I take my last farewell of you in this life ; beseeching the almighty and eternal Father, by Christ, to grant us to meet in the life to come, where we shall give him continual thanks and praise for ever and ever. Amen. Out of prison, the 24th of June 1555.

Your son in the Lord,

JOHN BRADFORD.

A Letter sent with a Supplication to Queen MARY, her Council, and the whole Parliament.

In most humble wise complaineth unto Your Majesty and Honours, a poor subject, persecuted for the confession of Christ's verity, the which verity deserveth at your hands to be maintained and defended, as the thing by the which you reign, and have your honours and authorities. Although we that be professors, and, through the grace of God, the constant confessors of the same, are (as it were) the outswEEPINGS of the world ; yet (I say) the verity itself is a

thing not unworthy for your ears to hear, for your eyes to see, and for your hands to handle, help, and succour, according to that the Lord hath made you able, and placed where you are, for the same purpose. Your Highness and Honours ought to know, that there is no innocence in words or deeds, where it is enough, and sufficeth only to accuse. It becometh Kings, Queens, and all that be in authority, to know that, in the administration of their kingdoms, they are God's ministers. It becometh them to know that they are no kings, but plain tyrants, which reign not to this end, that they may serve and set forth God's glory, after true knowledge; and therefore it is required of them that they would be wise, and suffer themselves to be taught to submit themselves to the Lord's discipline, and to kiss their Sovereign, lest they perish; as all those potentates, with their principalities and dominions, cannot long prosper, but perish, indeed, if they and their kingdoms be not ruled with the sceptre of God, that is, with his word; which whoso honoureth not, honoureth not God; and they that honour not the Lord, the Lord will not honour them, but bring them into contempt; and at length take his own cause, which he hath most chiefly committed unto them to care for, into his own hands, and so overthrow them, and set up his truth gloriously; the people, also, perishing with the princes. When the word of prophecy is wanting, much more is suppressed, as it is now in this realm of England, over which the eyes of the Lord are set to destroy it, Your Highness, and all your Honours, if in time you look not better to your office and duties herein, and not suffer yourselves to be slaves and hangmen to antichrist and his prelates, which have brought Your Highness and Honours already to let Barabbas loose, and to hang up Christ, as, by the grace and help of God, I shall make ap-

parent, if first it would please Your Excellent Majesty, and all your Honours, to take to heart God's doctrine, which, rather through the malice of the Pharisees, I mean the bishops and prelates, than your consciences, is oppressed, and not for our contemptible and execrable state in the sight of the world, to pass the less of it; for it (the doctrine I mean) is higher, and of more honour and majesty, than all the whole world. It standeth invincible, above all power, being not our doctrine, but the doctrine of the ever-living God, and of his Christ, whom the Father hath ordained King, to have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the world. And, truly, so doth he, and will he reign, that he will shake all the whole earth with his iron and brazen power, with his golden and silvery brightness, only by the rod of his mouth, to shivers, in such sort as though they were pots of clay, according to that which the prophets do write of the magnificence of his kingdom. And thus much for the thing, I mean the doctrine, and your duties, to hearken, to propagate, and defend the same.

But now will our adversaries mainly cry out against us, because no man may be admitted once to whist against them; that we pretend falsely the doctrine and word of God; calling us the most wicked contemners of it, and heretics, schismatics, traitors, &c. All which their sayings, how malicious and false they are, though I might make report to that which is written by those men whose works they have condemned, and all that retain any of them, publicly by proclamation; yet, here will I occasion Your Majesty and Honours, by this my writing, to see that it is far otherwise than they report of us. God, our Father, for his holy name's sake, direct my pen to be his instrument to put into your eyes, ears, and hearts, that which most may make to his glory, to the safe-

guard of your souls and bodies, and preservation of the whole realm. Amen.

JOHN BRADFORD.

To certain of his Friends, N. S. and R. C.

I wish to you, my good brethren, the same grace of God in Christ, which I wish and pray the Father of mercies to give me, for his holy name's sake. Amen.

Your letter, though I have not read myself, because I would not alienate my mind from conceived things, to write to others, yet I have heard the sum of it, that it is of God's election, wherein I will briefly write to you my faith, and how I think it good and meet for a Christian man to wade in it. I believe that man, made after the image of God, did fall from that blessed state, to the condemnation of himself, and all his posterity. I believe that Christ for man, being thus fallen, did oppose himself to the justice of God, a mediator, paying the ransom and price of redemption for Adam and his whole posterity that refuse it not finally. I believe, that all that believe in Christ, I speak of such as be of years of discretion, are partakers of Christ and all his merits. I believe that faith and to believe in Christ (I speak not now of faith that men have by reason of miracles, John, ii. 11. Acts, viii. or by reason of earthly commodities, Matt. xiii. custom and authority of men, which is commonly seen, the hearts of them that so believe being not right and simple before God; but I speak of that faith which indeed is the true faith, the justifying and regenerating faith); I believe, I say, that this faith and belief in Christ is the work and gift of God, given to none other than to those which be the children of God; that is, to those whom God the Father, before the begin-

ning of the world, hath predestinated in Christ unto eternal life.

Thus do I wade in predestination in such sort as God hath patefied and opened it. Though in God it be first, yet to us it is last opened; and therefore I begin with creation, from whence I come to redemption, so to justification, and so to election. On this sort I am sure, that warily and wisely a man may walk in it easily by the light of God's Spirit, in and by his word, seeing this faith not to be given to all men (2 Thess. iii.), but to such as are born of God, predestinate before the world was made, after the purpose and good will of God, which will we may not call into disputation, but in trembling and fears submit ourselves to it as to that which can will none otherwise than that which is holy, right, and good, how far soever otherwise it seem to the judgment of reason, which must needs be beaten down to be more careful for God's glory, than for man's salvation, which dependeth only thereon, as all God's children full well see; for they seek not the glory which cometh of men, but the glory which cometh of God. (Jer. ix. John, v.) They know God to be a God which doth on earth, not only mercy, but also judgment, which is his justice, and most justice, although our foolish reason cannot see it. And in this knowledge they glory and rejoyce, though others, through vain curiosity, grudge and murmur thereagainst. Thus briefly I have sent you my mind and meaning concerning this matter; hereafter you shall have (I think) your letter particularly answered by Mr. Philpot, as also if I have time, and so you require it, I will do.

JOHN BRADFORD.

Notes upon the same Epistle, and to the Matter of Election appertaining.

As touching the doctrine of election (whereof this letter of Mr. Bradford and many other of his letters do much entreat), three things must be considered.

First, what God's election is, and what is the cause thereof.

Secondly, how God's election proceedeth in working out salvation.

Thirdly, to whom God's election pertaineth, and how a man may be certain thereof.

Between predestination and election there is this difference: predestination is as well to the reprobate as to the elect; election pertaineth only to them that be saved.

Predestination, in that it respecteth the reprobate, is called reprobation; in that it respecteth the saved, it is called election, and is thus defined.

Predestination is the eternal decreement of God, purposed before in himself, what shall befall on all men, either to salvation or damnation.

Election is the free mercy and grace of God in his own will, through faith in Christ his Son, choosing and preferring to life such as pleaseth him.

In this definition of election, first goeth before the mercy and grace of God, as the causes thereof, whereby are excluded all works of the law, and merits of deserving; whether they go before faith, or come after: so was Jacob chosen, and Esau refused, before either of them began to work, &c.

Secondly, in that this mercy and grace of God in this definition is said to be free: thereby is to be noted, the proceeding and working of God, not to be bounded to any ordinary place, or to any succession of chair, nor to state and dignity of person;

nor to worthiness of blood, &c. but all goeth by the mere will of his own purpose, as it is written, The wind bloweth where it listeth, &c. (John, iii. 8.) And thus was the outward race and stock of Abraham after the flesh refused (which seemed to have the pre-eminence), and another seed after the spirit raised up to Abraham of the stones; that is, of the Gentiles. So was the outward temple of Jerusalem, and chair of Moses, which seemed to be of price, forsaken, and God's chair advanced in other nations; so was tall Saul refused, and little David accepted; the rich, the proud, the wise of this world rejected, and the word of salvation daily opened to the poor and miserable objects; the high mountains cast asunder, and the low valleys exalted, &c.

Thirdly, where it is added, in his own will: by this falleth down the free will and purpose of man, with all his actions, counsels, and strength of nature, according as it is written, "It is not in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth, but in God that sheweth mercy." So we see how Israel ran long, and yet got nothing. The Gentiles hardly began to set out, and yet got the game: so they which came at the first hour did labour more; and yet they which came last were rewarded with the first. (Matt. xx.) The working will of the pharisee seemed better; but yet the Lord's will was rather to justify the publican. (Luke, xviii.) The elder son had a better will to tarry by his father, and so did indeed; and yet the fat calf was given to the younger son that run away (Luke, xv.); whereby we have to understand how the matter goeth, not by the will of man, but by the will of God, as it pleaseth him to accept, according as it is written John, i. "Which are born, not of the will of the flesh, nor yet of the will of man, but of God." Furthermore, as all these go by the will of God only, and not by the will of man, so

again here is to be noted, that this will of God never goeth without faith in Christ Jesus his Son.

And therefore fourthly, is this clause added in the definition, through faith in Christ his Son; which faith in Christ to us-ward, maketh all together. For first, it certifieth us of God's election, as this epistle of Master Bradford doth well express; for whosoever will be certain of his election in God, let him first begin with his faith in Christ, which if he find in him to stand firm, he may be sure, and nothing doubt, but that he is one of the number of God's elect. Secondly, the said faith, and nothing else, is the only condition and means, whereupon God's mercy, grace, election, vocation, and all God's promises to salvation do stay, according to the words of St. Paul (Col. i.), "If you abide in the faith," &c. Thirdly, this faith also is the immediate and next cause of our justification; simply, without any other condition annexed. For as the mercy of God, his grace, election, vocation, and other precedent causes, do save and justify us upon condition, if we believe in Christ, so this faith only in Christ, without condition, is the next and immediate cause which by God's promise worketh our justification; according as it is written (Acts, xvi.), "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy whole house." And thus much touching the definition of election, with the causes thereof declared, which you see now to be no merits nor works of man, whether they go before, or come after faith, but only the mere mercy of God, through faith: for like as all they that be born of Adam do taste of his malediction; though they tasted not his apple, so all they that be born of Christ (which is by faith) take part of the obedience of Christ, although they never did that obedience themselves, which was in him.

Now to the second consideration. Let us see likewise how, and in what order, this election of God proceedeth, in choosing and electing them which he ordaineth to salvation; which order is this: in them that be chosen to life, first, God's mercy and free grace bringeth forth election; election worketh vocation, or God's holy calling; which vocation, through hearing, bringeth knowledge and faith of Christ; faith through promise obtaineth justification, justification through hope waiteth for glorification.

Election is before time, vocation and faith cometh in time; justification and glorification is without end.

Election depending upon God's free grace and will, excludeth all man's will, blind fortune, chance, and all peradventures.

Vocation, standing upon God's election, excludeth all man's wisdom, cunning, learning, intention, power, and presumption.

Faith in Christ, proceeding by the gift of the Holy Ghost, and freely justifying man by God's promise, excludeth all other merits of men, all conditions of deserving, and all works of the law, both God's law and man's law, with all other outward means whatsoever.

Justification, coming freely by faith, standeth sure by promise, without doubt, fear, or wavering in this life.

Glorification, pertaining only to the life to come, by hope is looked for.

Grace and mercy preventeth. Election ordaineth.

Vocation prepareth and receiveth the word, whereby cometh faith.

Faith justifies. Justification bringeth glory.

Election is the immediate and next cause of vocation.

Vocation (which is the working of God's Spirit by the word) is the immediate and next cause of faith.

Faith is the immediate and next cause of justification.

And this order and connexion of causes is diligently to be observed, because of the Papists, which have miserably confounded and inverted this doctrine; thus teaching, that Almighty God, so far forth as he foreseeth man's merits before to come, so doth he dispense his election. And again, that the Lord recompenseth the grace of election, not to any merits preceding, but yet granteth the same to the merits which follow after. As though we had our election by our holiness that followeth after, and not rather have our holiness by God's election going before.

But we, following the Scripture, say otherwise, that the only cause of God's election is his own free mercy; and the only cause of our justification is our faith in Christ, and nothing else. As for example; first concerning election, if the question be asked why was Abraham chosen, and not Nahor? why was Jacob chosen, and not Esau? why was Moses elected, and Pharaoh hardened? why David accepted, and Saul refused? why few be chosen, and the most forsaken? it cannot be answered otherwise but this; because it was so the good will of God.

In like manner touching vocation, and also faith: if the question be asked, why this vocation and gift of faith was given to Cornelius the Gentile, and not to Tertullus the Jew? why to the poor, to the babes and little ones of this world? (of whom Christ speaketh, I thank thee, Father, which hast hid this from the wise, &c. Matt. xi.); why to the unwise, the simple objects and outcasts in this world? (of whom speaketh St. Paul, 1 Cor. i. Ye see your calling, my brethren, how not many of you, &c.); why to the sinners, and not to the just? why were the beggars by the highways called, and the bidden guests excluded? we can go to no other cause, but

to God's purpose and election ; and say with Christ our Saviour, Yea, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight. (Luke, x.)

And so for justification likewise, if the question be asked, why the publican was justified, and not the Pharisee (Luke, xviii.) ? why Mary the sinner, and not Simon the inviter (Luke, xi.) ? why harlots and publicans go before the Scribes and Pharisees in the kingdom (Matt. xxi.) ? why the son of the free woman was received, and the son of the bond woman, being his elder, rejected (Gen. xxi.) ? why Israel, which so long sought for righteousness, found it not, and the Gentiles, which sought it not, found it (Rom. ix.) ? we have no other cause hereof to render, but to say with St. Paul, because they sought for it by the works of the law, and not by faith ; which faith, as it cometh not by man's will (as the Papist falsely pretendeth), but only by the election and free gift of God ; so it is only the immediate cause whereunto the promise of our salvation is annexed, according as we read, " And therefore of faith is the inheritance given, as after grace, that the pre-eminence might stand sure to every need " (Rom. iv.) ; also in the same chapter, faith, believing in Him which justifieth the wicked, is imputed for righteousness.

And thus concerning the causes of our salvation, ye see how faith in Christ, only and immediately, without any condition, doth justify us ; being so linked with God's mercy and election, that wheresoever election goeth before, there faith in Christ must needs follow after. And again, whosoever believeth in Christ Jesus, through the vocation of God, he must needs be partaker of God's election.

Whereupon resulteth now the third note or consideration, which is, to consider whether a man in this life may be certain of his election. To answer

to which question, this first is to be understood, that although our election and vocation simply indeed be known to God only in himself, *à priori*; yet, notwithstanding, it may be known to every particular faithful man, *à posteriori*, by means, which means is faith in Christ Jesus crucified. Forasmuch as by faith in Christ a man is justified, and thereby made the child of salvation, reason must needs lead the same to be then the child of election, chosen of God unto everlasting life. For how can a man be saved, but by consequence it followeth that he must also be elected.

And therefore of election it is truly said, we must judge of election by that which cometh after, that is, by our faith and belief in Christ; which faith, although in time it followeth after election, yet this is the proper and immediate cause assigned by the Scripture, which not only justifieth us, but also certifieth us of this election of God.

Whereunto likewise well agreeth this present letter of Master Bradford, wherein he saith, election, albeit in God it be the first, yet to us it is the last opened; and therefore beginning first (saith he) with creation, I come from thence to the redemption and justification by faith, and so to election. Not that faith is the cause efficient of election, being rather the effect thereof; but is to us the cause certificatory, or the cause of our certification, whereby we are brought to the feeling and knowledge of our election in Christ. For albeit that election first be certain in the knowledge of God, yet in our knowledge, faith only that we have in Christ is the thing that giveth to us our certificate and comfort of this election.

Wherefore, whosoever desireth to be assured that he is one of the elect number of God, let him not climb up to heaven to know, but let him descend into himself, and there search his faith in Christ the Son of God; which if he find in him not feigned,

by the working of God's holy Spirit accordingly, thereupon let him stay, and so wrap himself wholly, both body and soul, under God's general promise, and cumber his head with no further speculations, knowing this, that whosoever believeth in him shall not perish (John, iii.), shall not be confounded (Rom. ix.), shall not see death (John, viii.), shall not enter into judgment (John, v.), shall have everlasting life (John, iii. vii.), shall be saved (Matt. xxviii. Acts, xvi.), shall have remission of all his sins (Acts, x.), shall be justified (Rom. iii. Gal. ii.), shall have floods flowing out of Him of water of life (John, vii.), shall never die (John, xi.), shall be raised in the last day (John, vi.), shall find rest to his soul, and shall be refreshed (Matt. xi.).

Now then forasmuch as we see faith to be the ground, whereupon dependeth the whole condition of our justifying, let us discuss in like manner what is this faith, whereof the Scripture so much speaketh, for the more plain understanding of the simple. For many kinds there be of faith, as a man may believe every thing that is true, yet not every truth doth save, neither doth the believing of every truth justify a man. He that believeth that God created all things of nought, believeth truly; he that believeth that God is a just God, that he is omnipotent, that he is merciful, that he is true of promise, believeth well, and holdeth the truth; so he that believeth that God hath his election from the beginning, and that he also is one of the same elect and predestinate, hath a good belief, and thinketh well; but yet this belief alone, except it be seasoned with another thing, will not serve to salvation; as it availed not the Jews, which so thought of themselves, and yet think to this day, to be only God's elect people.

Only the faith which availeth to salvation is

that whose object is the body and passion of Jesus Christ crucified; so that in the act of justifying, these two, faith and Christ, have a mutual relation, and must always concur together: faith as the action which apprehendeth, Christ as the object which is apprehended.

For neither doth the passion of Christ save without faith; neither doth faith help, except it be in Christ; as we see the body of man sustained by bread and drink, not except the same be received, and conveyed into the stomach; and yet neither doth the receiving of every thing sustain man's body, except it be meat and drink, which have power to give nourishment. In like sort, it is with faith; for neither doth the believing of any thing save, but only faith in the blood of Christ; neither again doth the same blood of Christ profit us, except by faith it be received. And as the sun, being the cause of all light, shineth not but to them only which have eyes to see, nor yet to them neither, unless they will open their eyes to receive the light; so the passion of Christ is the efficient cause of salvation, but faith is the condition whereby the said passion is to be effectual.

And that is the cause why we say with the Scripture, that faith only justifieth us, not excluding thereby all other external causes that go before faith, as grace, mercy, election, vocation, the death of Christ, &c. all which be external causes, working our salvation through faith. But when we say, that faith only justifieth us, the meaning thereof is this; that of all internal actions, motions, or operations in man; given to him of God, there is none other that contenteth and pleaseth God, nor standeth before his judgment, or can help any thing to the justifying of man before him, but only this one action of faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

For although the action of praying, fasting, alms, patience, charity, repentance, the fear and love of God, be high gifts in man, and not of man, given of God to man; yet be none of all these actions in man imputed of God to salvation; but only this one action of faith in man, upon Christ Jesus, the Son of God. Not that the action itself of believing, as it is a quality in man, doth so deserve, but because it taketh that dignity of the object. For, as I said, the act of justifying faith, as it is an action in man, is not to be considered alone, but must ever go with his object, and taketh his virtue thereof. Like as the looking up of the old Israelites did not of itself procure any health unto them, but the promise made in the object, which was the brazen serpent, whereupon they looked, gave them health by their looking up; even so, after the like sort, are we saved by our faith and spiritual looking up to the body of Christ crucified, which faith to define is this:

To believe Jesus Christ to be the Son of the living God, sent into this world, by his death to satisfy for our sins, and so to receive the same.

And thus much touching election and faith, with the order and explication of the causes necessary to be considered in our salvation, whereby may appear how far the pretended Catholics do swerve from the right mind of the Scriptures. For where the Scriptures, in declaring the causes of salvation, do send us only to faith, as the only condition whereby these causes have their working; these Catholics do quite leave out faith, and, instead thereof, place in other conditions of doings, merits, will works, pardons, masses, and especially auricular confessions, with penance and satisfaction for our sins, &c.

*A Letter of Master BRADFORD to Father TRAVES,
Minister of Blackley.*

The abundant grace and rich mercy of God in Christ, our only Saviour and high Bishop, be increased in your heart, through the lively worker of all goodness, the holy Spirit, until the day of the Lord, &c.

I have received your two letters, good father Travers, since that I did write unto you, whereof, though honesty willeth to make an excuse, yet truth biddeth me otherwise; and saith, it is better with shame to confess the fault (for therein is, as a man might say, half deserving of pardon), than without shame to lie. I might have written unto you twice, notwithstanding indeed some business wherein I have something been occupied, but yet I have not. Now the cause is, because I would not. And why would I not, but because I could not? I mean, because my cunning is taken away by sin, for my sins do forbid goodness unto me. Indeed, if my sinning were of infirmity, there were good hope of recovery of that which I have lost; but seeing, both willing and knowing, I have too much yielded, and yet do yield to my infirmities, justly I do deserve, that because I have cast away and rejected the word of the Lord behind my back, the Lord should reject me. And because I would not have blessing, I am worthy (as David saith) that it be taken away from me. I have now at length experience, that to bring a man forth of God's favour, is sooner seen, when a man hath received all things abundantly, than when need or the cross pincheth. Afore it pleased God to work the restitution (you know what I mean), and afore it pleased God to provide for me, as he hath done, so that I can say in nothing where any want is, as pertaining to my body, I was another manner of

man than now I am, and yet God's deserts have otherwise bounden me; but the Scripture is true; I have advanced my children, and nourished them, but they have contemned me; I have fed them, that they were fat and gross; and they spurned against me. Perchance you will ask me, wherein? Oh, father Traves! I warrant you, this my style, in carnal and not in spiritual writing, doth something shew unto you; but as for it, in comparison of other things, it is nothing. For where the life of man is such, that either it paineth or amendeth, as Paul saith, the outward man is corrupted day by day, and therefore, except the inward man be renewed, the show goeth away, every building in Christ doth grow to a holy temple, as the wicked, on the contrary part, shall proceed to worse. (2 Tim. iii.) I have made a change far otherwise in going back than I think by letters I can persuade you. Wherein? will you say. For the first, second, and third, and to be brief, in all things. As for an example: God's true fear is flown away from me, love to my brethren is exiled from me, faith is utterly taken away. Instead whereof is distrust and doubtfulness bearing rule, contempt of God's honour, and of my brethren reigning; and, instead of true fear, an imaginary fear, according to my brain, holding the principality. For I extenuate sin, and I do not consider that in sin which a Christian ought to consider; that sin being not forgiven, is such a thing for the which God casteth away his creatures alway, as examples not only of Saul, of Judas, of the Israelites (which were beloved indeed, and yet for sin are rejected), but also of others, on whom lately, for my warning, God hath shewed the same, do admonish me. But it is but my pen which writeth this; for the wicked, saith Solomon, when they come into the depth of their sins, then they grow in security. I am I can-

not tell what ; I fear, but it is but blindly, or else would I awake otherwise than I do. I fear me, I say, that I am entangled of the devil, after his desire. Pray for me, that the Lord would give me repentance, that I may escape out of his snares. Alas ! the spirit of prayer, which before I have felt plentifully, is taken clean away from me. The Lord be merciful unto me ! I am sold under sin ; I am the bond-slave of sin ; for whom I obey, his servant I am : I am often ashamed to speak ; no, I shame not at all, for I have forgot to blush ; I have given over to weep. And truly I obey, I obey, I say, mine own concupiscence, namely, in eating, in drinking, in jangling, and idleness ; I will not speak of vain-glory, envy, disdain, hypocrisy, desire of estimation, self-love, and who can tell all ? Is this the reward thou renderest to God ? O Bradford ! it is true, yea, too true ; thou knowest it. O Lord, for thy mercy's sake, pardon me. In your letters you touch me home, how that there is no man's heart, but that, considering the ingratitude of this world, this belly-cheer (wherein you take even me by the nose), &c. his eyes would tumble out great gushes of tears. The Lord be praised, which worketh so in you, for it is with me, as with them of whom you complain. Indeed it may be so again, but oh ! it is very unlikely, for mine enemies are become old, and are made by custom more than familiar ; for they are, as it were, converted into nature in me. Yet I am not grieved therefor, although I cannot persuade myself that God will help me. O Lord, be merciful unto me, for thy Christ's sake. This day I received the Lord's supper, but how I have welcomed him, this night (which I have spent in lasciviousness, in wantonness, and in prodigality, obeying my flesh and belly) doth so declare, that what to say, or write any more, I know not ; sleep doth aggravate

mine eyes, and to pray, I am altogether unapt. All this is come through the occasion of making this bringer a supper in my chamber; the Lord pardon me; I trust no more to be so far overseen. But this I write, not that the anger of God, which I have deserved, so feareth me, thou knowest it, O Lord; but of this perchance, too much.

For God's sake, pray for me, good father Travers, and write unto me, as you may; by your weakness, your letters do me good. By this which I have now written, you may consider more, touch me therefore home in your letters; and the Lord, I trust, shall and will reward you. If God lend me life, of which I am most unworthy, I will more trouble you with my letters, than I have done; but bear with me, I do it not out of any evil will; the Lord, I take to judge, there is none whose company and talk I more desire than yours; I speak it before God. Prove my mother's mind how she can bear it; if when I shall come down, I shall shew myself another man outwardly, but, alas! feignedly than before I have done. Marry, when my coming will be, I know not. Indeed two things move me sore; the one for my mother's cause, concerning her better instruction, if the Lord would thereto use me his instrument; the other is, to talk with you, and oftsoons to trouble you as I have hitherto ever done, but always to my profit. For God's sake, pray for me, for I had never so much need. This Sunday at night following St. Andrew's day, at Pembroke Hall.

The most miserable, hard-hearted,
unthankful sinner,

JOHN BRADFORD,

Another Letter of JOHN BRADFORD to Sir THOMAS HALL, and Father TRAVES, of Blackley.

The grace of God, our merciful Father, keep your mind and soul in Christ Jesus, who alone is our full sufficient Saviour, for in him we be complete, being made through his death, and one only oblation made and offered by himself upon the cross, the children of God, and fellow-heirs with him of the celestial kingdom, which is the free gift of God, and cometh not of merits, but of the mere grace of God; given to none that putteth any manner of hope or trust in any other thing, visible or invisible, than in that oblation of sweet savour, which Christ himself did offer upon Good Friday (as we call it), which oblation is alway recent and new in the sight of God the Father, and maketh intercession for us; us, I mean, which think that only sacrifice then offered to be sufficient, as it is, hath been, and ever shall be, for all the faithful; by the which sacrifice (if we believe) we have free pardon of all our sins. To Him therefore which was both the offerer and offering, be all honour and praise, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, blessed for ever. Amen.

Sir Thomas, the occasion of this my long silence, mine old friend, John Traves, shall declare unto you; upon the knowledge whereof, I doubt not of your pardon. I have sent unto you an English and Latin Testament, both in one print and volume; the which, though it be not so beautiful without, as I could have sent you, yet no less beautiful within, and more I think for your profit, and better for your eyes, your eyes, I mean, of the body. For undoubtedly, it giveth light unto the soul, if she be not dead. Whereof take this for an argument, and a true proof. If your soul be not delighted in it, if your soul do not hunger for it (I mean not the

book, but the doctrine in the book), surely your soul is sore sick ; for as the body abhorring meat is not well, eyen so must the soul be ; for other meat hath she none. Christ, whom you must believe afore all men, affirmeth this to be true in the 4th of Matthew. Not only in bread, but in every word of God, the soul doth live. Mark well, he saith, not one or two words, as an Epistle, or a Gospel, but he saith, every word. Take heed ! believe Christ better than any man, be he never so holy. For he that is of God (John, viii.) heareth the word of God. Will you have a more plain badge, whether you are the elect child of God or no, than this text ? Christ saith, he that is of God, heareth the word of God ; but other word of God have we none, than in the canon of the Bible ; and all things written therein, are written for our learning (saith St. Paul), whereby he proveth, seeing that it is a learning, yea, our learning that we must learn it. Therefore woe be to all them which either persuade men, that there is other doctrine of like authority, or that dissuade men from embracing this word, this word of God, or that think this word, especially the New Testament, is not above all other to be loved, to be read, to be chewed. This is the precious stone, which in the Gospel Christ saith, when a man hath found, he selleth all that ever he hath, and buyeth it. Mark now how necessary and precious Christ maketh that which great learned men (nay the devils, but no men) think not necessary. God help them ! Christ bade his disciples sell their coats, and buy a sword, which is none other thing than the word of God ; for so St. Paul calleth it, the sword of the Spirit. Nay, say our learned men (I lie, they have said so, now they are ashamed), fetch fire and burn it.

This I say, Sir Thomas, to the intent, no ungodly hypocrite should persuade or dissuade you from read-

ing the word of God, the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Follow you St. Paul's lesson : attend reading, and let the word of God dwell in you. How much ? Plentifully, saith he. And to what end ? To feed the flock of Christ, even as much as in you is, saith Peter, not once a year, or once a quarter, as a strawberry, but as much as in you is. This word of God trieth all doctrine ; for we ought to have our conscience charged with nothing, as touching religion, except the word of God in the canon of the Bible set it out ; I mean not only in allegories, but even in plain words : for no other foundation can any man lay besides that which is laid. St. Paul saith, the groundwork is laid already ; even so saith he to the Ephesians ; we are his workmanship, to do good works, which God hath created that we should walk in them. He saith, they were not to be made, but they are made already. What shall we think then of such works as man's wit hath founded, which yet seem most holy ? Let God's word be judge. Read the same diligently and reverently with prayer (I mean not Latin service not understood, but with true hearty prayer), and mark what the law requireth ; even that which we cannot give, the whole heart, and more if it were possible. But to this end, that we, seeing our abominable uncleanness and inability, might despair in ourselves, trembling at the justice of God and his anger, which we continually procure, and so offend Christ, in whom God the Father is well pleased : which Christ is the end of the law, to justify all that believe, and continue not in their popish ignorance, justifying themselves, and treading Christ's blood under their feet, denying the Lord that bought them. All such, be they never so well learned, never so holy, be nothing but hypocrites and plain antichrists, which may not abide the sword of God's mouth. For the trumpets of the

army (I mean still God's word) when they blow, the high wall of Jericho, the figure of hypocrisy, falleth down. Embrace therefore God's holy word, and be not only a reader, but a doer; for your calling requireth you to be apt to teach such proud, hypocritical, arrogant babblers, as I am now (which, if I may use this term, defile God's word). God forgive me, and pray you for me, and give God thanks for me, that spareth me thus Lucifer-like, not of a true zeal, but of a foolish bragging, which prate of God's holy word. I wot not what I do to confess it. So it is. I have sent to you other books, which I pray you read. I have written your name in them. The Holy Ghost keep you with your brother George, his wife, and children; and with your brother James, &c. Sir Lawrence, &c. This 20th of March.

A very painted hypocrite,

Yours in Christ for ever,

JOHN BRADFORD.

Pray for me, pray for me, give God thanks for me, and take John Traves' help to read this letter, written in haste.

If any thing but good be chanced to J. Traves (which God forbid), I pray you burn my letters out of hand.

*Another Letter of Master BRADFORD to Father
TRAVES.*

Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father, and Jesus Christ our Lord.

If mine heart were not altogether adamantine, your kind letters to me, unkind miser, would cause me, from the bottom of the same, to confess mine ingratitude towards you upon your behalf by me so much deserved; but as I am to do, so shew I

myself to write ; and as I am unable in the one, so am I foolish in the other ; in all those unkindnesses, rudeness, &c. whereof you accuse yourself, I am enforced to acknowledge myself most justly condemned, not so feignedly by me confessed, as most truly by you experienced. In your letters, as in a glass, I may learn by you, in dejecting yourself, to espy my nakedness, which before I thought clothed *duplici vestitu*, now only but with fig-leaves hypocritically gilded, of which dejection wrought in you by the Holy Ghost, be not proud ; for what have you that you have not received ? but be thankful to the Lord not only therefor, but also for those surges which you feel now, through the cares accompanying marriage, now through education, and bringing up of your children and family ; now through that cross of the common accustomed trade of living. For through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of heaven ; yea, they be the cognizances of God's election, the instruments which work *suspiria eternæ vitæ*, and therefore to be embraced. Believe me, it is the most excellent gift of God, a man to deject and humble himself, and to feel the crosses of Christ as crosses. But I, most hypocritical wretch, not worthy that this earth should bear me, am ever going to bed with Jezebel, and such as commit fornication with her, which is my greatest trouble. O Lord ! help me and deliver me, for Jesus's sake, anoint mine eyes with ointment, that I may see. Oh give me not over unto a lewd mind and reprobate sense, but awake my sleeping soul, that Christ may shine in me. You know the cross, the fatherly cross, the loving Lord hath laid upon me ; but I am little or nothing moved therewith. I work therein (yet not I, but God's Spirit), not of a repentant faithful mind, but (I cannot tell how) of a slothful, blind, wretchless intent. O Lord ! forgive

me for saying so (it is thy gift), forgive me my unthankfulness for Jesus' sake; and as herein I have blasphemed and dishonoured thy holy name, so do thou by thy holy Spirit glorify me the same. So be it. So be it.

Since my coming to London, I was with M. Latimer, whose counsel is as you shall hear, which I purpose by God's grace to obey (if it be thy will, O Lord, *fiat*). He willeth me (as I have done) to write to my master, who is in the country, and to shew him, that if within a certain time, which I appointed, fourteen days, he do not go about to make restitution, that I will submit myself to my Lord Protector and the King's Majesty's council, to confess the fault, and ask pardon. This life is uncertain and frail, and when time is, it must be deferred. And what should it profit me to win the whole world, and to lose my own soul? If, as I justly have deserved, I be put to death for it, God's will be done. At the least, slander, reproach, rebuke, loss of worldly friends, loss of living, &c. shall ensue: what then? Lord, thy will be done: thine I am; if death come, welcome be it, if slander, &c. even as thou wilt, Lord, so be it. Only grant me a penitent, loving, obedient heart, and of mere love to go forwards herein, and not to shrink, to stand, and not to fall, that thy name only be praised herein. Amen. Pray, pray for me, cry for me; and when you shall hear any thing, comfort my mother, to whom, for that this bringer hath not given me an hour's warning of his departure, I have not only written nothing, but also have thus prated to you, who (as no man else would) I think will bear with me. For, as God knoweth (to whose grace I commit you and your bedfellow, with all your children and family), the shortness of time, and this bringer's importance, is only the let, I neither send you

spectacles, the price of your paraphrases, nor thanks for your cheese, as by the next that cometh I will, God willing, send the premises to you, and a goodly Testament for Sir Thomas Hall, which is at the binding. But let it not be known that I have now written to you, for so I have prayed this bringer. God be with us, and pray for me, and abhor not my rude scribbling, which, if it were as well written as it is meant, would deserve pardon. Thus make I an end, imputing to the hastiness of this bringer all blame which you may lay unto me.

From the Temple, this Sunday, immediately after M. Latimer's famous sermon, which this bringer, as he saith, did hear.

By your poorest friend,

JOHN BRADFORD.

It shall be long, God willing, but you shall both have and hear from me. Keep with you Melancthon's common-places, for I have another.

*Another Letter of Master BRADFORD to Father
TRAVES.*

Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ, with increase of all manner of godly knowledge and living, be with you and all your household, now and ever. Amen.

To excuse this my long silence, within five or six days after my (like foolish) letters written to you by John Moss, it pleased God to send my master hither to London, whom (as I lately tofore had advertised by letters) I moved (you know wherein), and prayed him to discharge the same, or else I would submit myself, &c. Whereunto he answered, that if the books would declare it, he would satisfy, &c.

The books I shewed, whereupon he promised as much as I could ask. But being herein something more moved than he had cause (God be praised therefor, which of his mere good pleasure wrought it), at times as I would, I desired to know how and in what time he would discharge us both. He thinking me to be over-curious herein, was not therewith contented, and hearing me to allege the uncertainty of time, and the fear of God's justice (which, O gracious Lord, grant me to feel indeed as much as thou knowest good for me), he answered me to be scrupulous, and of a superstitious conscience (for the natural man perceiveth not the things which be of God), and plainly said further, that I should not know, nor by these words have his head so under my girdle. And when I shewed him that (God witnessed with me) I went about no such thing, he said, that there was no godly conscience, seeing he promised afore the face of God to discharge me, and to pay the thing; but it ought so to be quieted. And thus at divers and sundry times, moving often to know of him the way and time of discharging the debt, and having none other answers than tofore, I doubting worldly wisdom, which useth delays to reign in him with this mammon (the which, O merciful God, eradicate out of his heart, mind, and all others), I was something more sharp, and told him, *non ego tamen, sed gratia tua Domine*, I would obey God more than man: the which he lightly regarding, as seemed, I departed and went to M. Latimer to have had him to have brought me to my Lord Protector (whose Grace then was purposed shortly to take his journey to visit the ports; M. Latimer, I say, willed me to stay until his return, which will not be long) before Easter. In this mean time I bade my bedfellow, my master's son, whom my master had used as his instrument to move me carnally;

for my master discharged him of his exhibition, telling him that he could not be able to keep either house or child, for I purposed to undo both him and all his, untruly thou knowest, good Lord, and bade him take that as a warning, that both he and his brethren should provide for themselves as they could: I bade, I say, my said bedfellow to shew my master, as of himself, my further purpose, which thing, when he knew it, so moved and feared him, that he began something to relent, and then made fair promises, that, look what I should devise, that would he do. I devised, but my devices pleased him not: and thus, but not vainly, I trust (as I now do with you, but I know your gentleness, which ever hath borne with me) I spent the time in which I have been silent, to write, nay, babble to you. And he, departing out of London before I knew, did send me word by another of his said sons, not so given to the Gospel and a good life, as my bedfellow, and therefore more to be suspected; this other brother, I say, told me, that my master would do all things, only his fame and ability preserved: (but what shall it profit to gain the whole world, and lose the soul?) And with the said brother my master sent me a little billet also, wherein he confessed, that he was contented within twelve months to deliver to my hands the whole money; which bill I thinking not so good as it might have been, have devised another, and have sent it down to him in the country, with request that he will seal and sign it. For thus M. Latimer thinketh sufficient; but as yet I hear not of it, doubting worldly wisdom, which was the whore that overcame Sampson; that moved David to slay Uriah; that brought wise Solomon to idolatry; that crucified Christ; the which moved me to perpetrate this act, the which worketh in my master's heart, having higher place there than the fear of the Lord. What say I? there

yea, yea, with me, it sitteth in the holy place (the Lord deliver us); doubting, I say, worldly wisdom, I remain in that same state now for this matter (though in worse for my soul, which is more to be lamented; pray therefore, I beseech you, pray with me, and for me, that I may do so earnestly), that I was in at my last writing unto you. And as I then was purposed, so I doubt not (grant it, Lord) but that I shall persevere, if in the mean season I shall not hear from my master accordingly. Thus I have (like myself) foolishly but truly declared unto you, in many babbling words, which wit (if I had it) would have shortly and briefly comprehended. Arrogant, nay, God's working, unthankful wretch, my working in this matter, which is and which was the only cause (as I now do) I troubled you, not afore to the intent I might advertise you some certainty in this thing: And though silence had been much better than this foolish prating, yet your fatherly kindness ever towards me, in expecting from you a correction, as I have herein given cause, may, though not to you, yet to me be profitable. In hope whereof, I proceed in requiring you to continue your remembrance of me, a most unkind wretch to God and you, in your prayers, with the almighty merciful Lord, that I may more regard his will and pleasure therein, than all honour or shame in this life. But I must confess unto you, that my working in this matter is not of love, as I should do, nor of fear of God's justice (mine unthankfulness, mine unthankfulness, if nothing else were, hath not only deserved it, but doth deserve more than everlasting damnation: O Lord, be merciful unto me); I do not so repent it as I should do. Why say I so? as though this so were anything. O hypocritical wretch that I am! Alas! father Traves, let me so call you; I am hard-hearted, there was never any so obstinate, so unkind, against so loving,

so merciful, so gracious, so good, so beneficial a Lord, yea, a father, as I, wretch and most miserable sinner, am. This I speak, but not of humility, but of hypocrisy; yet I speak truly; I pray thee, good father, for Christ's sake, I may think it truly; as I write it even of arrogancy, so it is; therefore pray and cry for me. Here be such goodly, godly, and learned sermons, which these uncircumcised ears of mine hear at the least thrice a week, which were able (the great loving mercy of God offered to me in them I mean) to burst any man's heart, to relent, to repent, to believe, to love, and to fear that omnipotent gracious Lord; but my adamantinè, obstinate, most unkind, ingrate, unthankful heart, hearing my Lord, which is the Lord over all lords, so graciously, so lovingly, vouchsafe by so many his instruments to speak, to call, to cry unto me; now by his law, now by his threats, now by his Gospel, now by his promises, now by all his creatures, to come, to come even to himself. I hide me with Adam in the garden, I play not only Samuel running to Eli, but I play Jonas running to the sea, and there I sleep upon the hatches, tumbling in Jezebel's bed, which is my greatest trouble, until it please God to anoint mine eyes with eye-salve, until it please him to raise up a tempest, to turn and look upon me, as Luke saith he did on Peter. For, O Lord! it is thy gift, and cometh of thee, and of thy mere grace; it cometh not of man, it cometh not of works, to repent, to believe, to fear, and to love. Work thou therefore in me, for Jesus Christ's sake, which am thy creature, and most unthankful hypocritical servant; not when I will, not as I will, but when thou wilt, even that which may be most to the glory of thy name. Amen. What should I write? nay, why do I not pluck these same words and paper in pieces? for I write altogether of hypocrisy and arro-

gant presumption. I will confess it (thou wicked spirit, the Lord judge thee), I will confess it; it is most true, John Traves, I but only write it, for it is not I, it is hypocrisy. Knowledge (if I had it) puffeth up. O Lord! grant me thy grace, and leave me not to my own judgment and reason. Hypocrisy, arrogance, and obstinate security, environ me (yet I feel them not); the Lord deliver me. Pray, pray for me. Give God thanks for me. O Lord! even thy will be done; unlock this mine heart, thou which hast the key of David, which openest only that I may desire to have the desire of the glory of thy name, of repentance, faith, &c. Pray for me, and be thankful for me, O father Traves! and write to me. Your letters I desire more to see, than any-man's living. Let me have them therefore as you may, but your prayer at all times, that God would open my heart to feed and taste of these comfortable places of Scripture (which to me are locked): "Remember that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead." This text, as a text of most comfort (as it is indeed, and when God will I shall feed on it), did Paul send to Timothy, to be his comfort in all places. For our salvation (this day of resurrection) is nearer now than when we believed; therefore he that endureth to the end shall be saved. For he will accomplish the transgression, saith Daniel, he will make an end of sin, destroy iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness. For God will come and save us, he will come and will not tarry; and when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we appear with him in glory. For he was once offered, that he might bear the sins of many; and to them that look for him shall he appear without sin unto salvation, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words: O Lord! open mine eyes, which see nothing of the

great comforts in these thy most rich words; open mine eyes, good Lord, that I sleep not unto death. Pray for me, and commend me to your good bed-fellow and all the brethren in Christ with a holy kiss. Thus I make an end (for it is time you may say), and I pray you still water Sir Thomas Hall, unto whom I have sent a fair Testament, both in English and Latin, if this bringer will carry it. And I have herewith sent you a letter, which first peruse and read, and when you have so done, abhor not me, but my wickedness, and pray for me; and as you can see a meet time seal it, and deliver it to Sir Nicholas Wolstoncross, by such policy as you can think by God's grace, though prayer, I confess unto you, God is my witness, to my knowledge, I never in my being in the country this winter at any time called it to remembrance; the Lord forgive me. I would by some occasion, if any could be had, afore the delivery of the letter, by some story or communication, that he did know that abomination to be sin; for I fear me he thinketh it to be no sin. The Lord open our eyes, and forgive us. Amen. The peace of God be with you. Amen. From the Temple, this 22d of March 1547.

Yours in Christ most bounden,

JOHN BRADFORD.

I have sent you three pair of good spectacles, I trow, and other such books as have your name written in them, which take in good worth, and pray for me, and give thanks for me.

*Another Letter of Master BRADFORD to Father
TRAVES.*

Grace, mercy, and peace, &c.

My chance is not by this bringer to have any warning in manner of his farewell, so that I am con-

strained, time coarcting me, to write not so much of things (which I will omit) as my desire was. Concerning the great matter you know of, it hath pleased God to bring it to this end, that I have a bill of my master's hand, wherein he is bound to pay the sum before Candlemas next coming. This thinks Master Latimer to be sufficient; therefore I pray you to give that gracious Lord thanks, and thanks, and thanks upon it for me, a most wretched ingrate sinner, which have also in other things no less cause to praise God's name; as for that I have and sustain my master's sore displeasure, the which hath brought me (God I should say through it) unto a more contempt of worldly things, through the sequestration of such his business, as tofore I had ado withal. I call it a contempt; well, take the word even as it is hypocritically and vain-gloriously spoken; for the which fault, amongst my others innumerable, I trust you remember in your prayers, whereof I have (I would I knew how much) need. There is yet another thing, whereof I will advertise you ever to this end, that you might pray, if it be God's will, that as I trust shortly to begin, so he may confirm that he hath begun, as (if I be not deceived) I believe it is his working. If the thing seems by God's Spirit in you that I presume, then for the Lord's sake advertise me; for I am given to that disease, the Lord deliver me; I have moved my master therein by letters, to see if I shall have any living of him, as hitherto I have had; but I have thereof no answer, nor, as our natural speech is, any likelihood of any grant. Yet that I have already, I trust will suffice me for three years. You look what my purpose meaneth; I am so long atore I come to it; therefore I do it, because my long babbling should be less tedious. Now shall you have it. If God's will be (whereunto pray I may be obedient), I am minded after Mid-

summer to leave London, to go to my book at Cambridge, and, if God shall give me grace, to be a minister of his word. Thus you have of a fly an elephant. Well, take it in good part, though you see my *etiam non*, and not *etiam etiam*. A tumbling block gathereth no moss, so therefore pray for me. Perchance I do foolishly to forsake so good a living as I have: I will say no more hereof, but pray for me. I trust, as I said, for three years study I have sufficient, if my master take all from me; and when this is spent, God will send more. I do not write this, that you should think me to be in need of worldly help, and therefore, as the friars were wont, secretly to beg: no; on the Lord's name I require you not to take it so, for I had rather never send letter afore I should be herein a cross to you, for sufficient to the day is the evil thereof. We are more set by than many sparrows. But if my mother, or Sir Thomas Hall, murmur at it, or be offended with me, as you can, remedy it with your counsel. Howbeit, as yet I will not write to them of it, until such time as I be going. I am something fickle-minded and inconstant, therefore pray for me, that my hand being put to the plough (presumptuously spoken), I look not back. You may gather by my words in this letter the heroical heart which lieth in me.

I have sent you a book of Bucer against Winchester, in English, lately translated, which I never read, therefore I cannot praise it. And as I call to remembrance, I did send you with the other books more than you received, at the least one of them I remember, which is called the Common Places, or the Declaration of the Faith, by Urbanus Rhegius. Ask for it, or send me word in whom the default is you have it not. Hereafter, and that shortly, by God's grace I will send you a work or two, which I

have translated into English, so soon as they be printed, which will be afore Whitsuntide. Pray for me, good father Traves, and God send you health of soul and body, as I would mine own or any man's living. But yet to warn you of that you know not, in writing your letters to me, you hit me home, and give me that I look for. You are deceived, and so is all that knoweth me. I never came to any point of mortification, therefore a little tickling sets me afloat. God help me, and give God thanks for me, as all men be most bounden. Thus when I once begin to write to you, I run as the priest saith matins, for I think I may be bold on you. The Holy Ghost preserve you, your wife, and family, and persevere his grace in you even to the end. I pray you, pray for me, a most (what should I call me) miserable and blasphemous sinner. The peace of God be with us. From the Temple, this 12th of May 1548.

Sir Thomas Hall hath deceived me, but himself most. I desire to speak with him, as this winter it may chance, if I discharge not myself of mine office to see him. Pray for him and for me,

A very hypocrite,

JOHN BRADFORD.

Another Letter of Master BRADFORD to Father TRAVES.

The perseverance of God's grace, with the knowledge of his good will, increase with you unto the end. To declare myself as I am a carnal man, which understandeth not the things that be of the Spirit: These my letters, though I counterfeit and meddle amongst them, the spiritual words, as the devil did in his temptations to Christ, will declare no less: for I begin with carnal things in effect, and no marvel if I so end; for how can a man gather figs of briars?

These words, as they seem, so they are spoken for a cloak to make you think otherwise; but, father Traves, you cannot think so evil of me as I am. But to the matter: this present day, by God's grace, I take my journey towards Cambridge, where I pray God, and so earnestly I pray you to pray for me, that I may circumspectly redeem this time which God hath appointed (to me unknown) to lend me; for, alas! I have spent most wickedly the time past, for the which I must account even for every hair breadth, as they say; for God hath not given here time to sin. But if I considered this (as I do nothing less, custom of sin and pleasing myself hath so hardened my heart), I should then come to the feeling of myself; then should I hate sin, which I now love; then should I fear God's wrath, which I now contemn; then should I cry out, and weep, and continually pray; whereas now I am dry as a stone, as dumb as a nail, as far from praying, as he that never knew any taste of it; which thing once I felt (thanks to the Lord), but now for mine unthankfulness I am almost (but most worthily) deprived. I fear me, God will take his grace from me, I am so unthankful. Alas! why do I lie, in saying I fear me, nay, God grant I may do so, for then should I pray and pray; but seeing I cannot, speak you for me, pray for me, that the Lord would remember his old compassion towards me, for his mercy's sake draw me, yea, compel me to serve, to fear, and to love him. Thus may you see how I presume; for my intent was to have been a minister of God's word, to have been his instrument, to call from as I have called to sin; but you see how that God punisheth mine arrogancy. Alas! what shall I do? I am an unprofitable and idle member; I thought I should have been therein profitable; but, physician, heal thyself. How should I, or what should I do? I cannot la-

bour with my hands. Well, I trust God will give me grace and knowledge to translate ; nothing I fear me, yea, I distrust me that I shall never be minister of God's word : yea, if arrogancy were not in me, how should I, of all wretches the greatest, think me to look to the highest room and vocation that is upon earth ; wherefore eftsoons I desire you to pray for me, that God's will may be done in me whether I live or die, so that his name be honoured. My master, which was, hath denied me all his beneficence ; but I have for this life more than enough, thanks be to God ; as this winter I intend, by God's favour, to declare more unto you. This book, which I have sent, take it in good part ; it is the first, I trust it shall not be the last God hath appointed me to translate. The print is very false ; I am sorry for it ; I pray you, be not offended at my babbling in the prologues, &c.

JOHN BRADFORD.

I will lie, God willing, this summer at Catherine's Hall, in Cambridge : write to me.

Another Letter of Master BRADFORD to Father TRAVES.

The loving kindness and abundant mercy of God the Father, poured plentifully upon all the faithful, in the blood of that meek lamb Jesus Christ, our only satisfaction and mediator, through the working of the most holy Spirit, be increased and perceived in you daily more and more, to the glory of God, &c.

Because I stand both in doubt of the reading and delivery of such letters as I write and send unto you (dearly beloved father Traves), I am constrained to leave off such griefs and spiritual wants, as, thanks unto the Lord, I unwillingly feel ; for the flesh, as you

know, loveth nothing so much as security of all enemies most perilous, and not a little familiar with me; from the which, with vain-glory, hypocrisy, &c. and worldliness, the Lord deliver me. I had not thought to have written thus much, but these I cannot keep, but commit them to your prayers. And to the intent I would you should not think any ingratitude in me, as also that I might give you occasion to write to me again, as heretofore I have done, even so do I interrupt and trouble you with my babbling; but yet, having this commodity, that I babble not so much as I wont to do. The cause I have declared which had almost been the cause I had not written at all. I did write unto you from London, when I came hither; send me word what letters you have received, for from you I have received but two, and both by John Mosse; and in the latter I perceived that the Lord had visited you with sickness, his fatherly rod, whereby he declareth his love upon you, and that he careth for you, wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season you are in heaviness, that the trial of your faith being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, &c. (1 Pet. i.); forasmuch as ye are hereunto called, to suffer with Christ, that ye may be glorified with him; for this is certain, if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him.

You know that Christ, although the Son of God, yet learned obedience by the things which he suffered. Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing; and doth not patience come of probation; the one then you had, so that you were going to school to learn the other, which learned, what want you? The end of all God's proving is, as Paul saith, that ye may be partakers of his holiness; therefore give thanks to God the Father, who hath made thee meet to par-

take of the inheritance of the saints in light, &c. For he hath afflicted thee in the same manner, to renew, support, strengthen, settle thee; and that the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of tribulation, and that *in tempore opportuno*, even shortly; for he will not delay, who hath promised, yet a little while, and ye shall see me; he will surely come, and will not tarry. Therefore rejoice, that ye are partakers of the cross of Christ (saith Peter), that when his glory is revealed, ye may rejoice with exceeding joy. Oh! how doth my will over-run my wit! Why, Bradford, whom writest thou unto? Thou shewest thyself. Thus, father Traves, you may see my rashness to rabble out the Scripture without purpose, rhyme, or reason. I will not blot it out, as I thought to have done, for that hereby you shall see my need of your prayer. Well, I look for a watch-word from you. Write, for God's sake, and pray for me, that I may be in something profitable to the Lord's congregation; that I may be no stumbling-block, *ut confundantur in me qui illum expectant*. Send me such counsel as the Lord's Spirit shall move you how to study. My desire is in something to be profitable, if it were the Lord's will, for to be a minister of the word. Alas! I am unmeet, and my time, my time, yea, the Lord's time, I have hitherto evil, yea, most wickedly mis-spent it, &c. Thus will I end. The Lord be with you and your bedfellow, to whom have me heartily commended, and to all your children and family; the which I beseech the Lord to lighten his countenance over, and grant you his peace. Pray for me. I long for winter, to speak with you; I beseech you to write; pray for me. This Assumption-day, in Catherine's Hall, in Cambridge.

Yours, with all I have and can,

JOHN BRADFORD.

Another Letter of Master BRADFORD to Father TRAVES.

The plentiful grace of God the Father, through our only Master and Lord Jesus Christ, increase in us daily; to the glory of his name. Amen.

Forasmuch as I have often written to you, good father Traves, and yet have not once heard from you since Pentecost, I cannot now be so bold, either in writing much or often, as I would have been: howbeit, this I say, that I much marvel that I hear not from you; but not so, for I am so wretched a sinner, that the Lord's Spirit, I am certain, doth not move you to write to me; yet for God's sake, pray for me, and in the Lord's name I desire you to give thanks to God for me. And when it may please God to move you, write to me, though it be but two words, and counsel' me how to study the word of life, the ministry whereof I desire, if it be the Lord's pleasure, to profess; and that I may do it, both in living and learning, pray for me. My master hath entirely disowned me; those things he at first granted he now refuseth to pay, and is become altogether mine enemy. I know not when I shall see you in body, therefore let me hear from you. I write not this, that you should think me in want, or that I am distressed: no, father, the Lord giveth me to abound in all things, and will do. I trust I shall shortly here have a fellowship, I am so promised, and therefore I have taken the degree of Master of Art, which else I could not have attained. If I get a fellowship, I shall not need to be anxious for the morrow, as hercafter I shall more write to you by God's grace. I pray you write again, and often pray for me. In haste, as appeareth, this 22d of October.

Let not my mother know how hardly my master deals with me.

A most miserable sinner,
JOHN BRADFORD.

Another Letter of Master BRADFORD to Father TRAVES.

The peace and plenteous mercy of God our heavenly Father, in his Christ, our only Lord and Saviour, be ever increased in you, by the holy Spirit; *qui efficit omnia in omnibus.* Amen.

Father Traves, though I might think myself more happy, if you would often write unto me; yet because I ought to have respect to your pains, which now that old man cannot so well sustain, as it might, I had rather lose my happiness in that behalf, than will your grief; forasmuch as it can be no happiness unto me, which turneth to your pain; yet because pain is not painful when it is joined with gain, I therefore desire you, for God's sake, to pray often for me; for if I shall not be worthy of your prayer, as the Lord who knoweth all things doth right well see it, and so my conscience witnesseth; yet your good prayer shall return into your own bosom. And know this, that whoso converteth a sinner by prayer, whether it be by prayer, preaching, or writing letters, &c. the same hath saved a soul. Use therefore, for God's sake I ask it, that pains, whereunto is joined profit. I mean prayer to God for me, a miserable and most wretched sinner; and as for the gainless pain in writing to me, use it yet as you may; and surely God, for whose sake you do it, in that he will reward a cup of cold water, will in something requite you. And I know certainly, that if you did see what spiritual profit I receive by your letters, I am certain you would not think all your labour lost.

For Christ's sake therefore begin again to write unto me, and reprove me sharply, for my horrible unthankfulness to God. You know how that God hath exonerated my laden conscience of the great weighty burden; for so I did write to you, yea, the Lord hath in a manner unburdened me of the lesser burden also; for I have an assurance of the payment of the same by Candlemas. Lo! thus you see what a good God the Lord is unto me. O father Traves! give thanks for me, and pray God to forgive me my unthankfulness; but what! should I rehearse the benefits of God towards me? Alas! I cannot, I am too little for all his mercies; yea, I am not only unthankful, but I am too far contumelious against God; for where you know the sun, the moon, and the seven stars did forsake me, and would not shine upon me, you know what I mean, *per herum & heriles amicos*, yet the Lord hath given me here in the university as good a living as I would have wished. For I am now a Fellow of Pembroke Hall; for the which neither I, nor any other for me, did ever make any suit; yea, there was a contention betwixt the Master of Catherine's Hall, and the Bishop of Rochester, who is Master of Pembroke Hall, whether should have me, *sit hoc tibi dictum*. Thus you may see the Lord's carefulness for me. My fellowship here is worth seven pounds a year, for I have allowed me eighteen pence a week, and as good as thirty-three shillings and fourpence a year in money, besides my chamber, launder, barber, &c.; and I am bound to nothing, but once or twice a year to keep a problem. Thus you see, what a good Lord God is unto me. But, I pray you, what do I now to God for all this? I will not speak of the great mercies he sheweth upon my soul. Surely, father Traves, I have clean forgotten God; I am all secure, idle, proud, hard-hearted, utterly void of brotherly love; I am envious, and disdain others; I am a very

stark hypocrite, not only in my words and works, but even in these my letters to you; I am all sensual, without the true fear of God, another manner of man than I have been since my calling. Alas! father Traves, I write this to put myself in remembrance; but I am without all sense, I do but only write it. For God's sake, pray for me, which am only in name a Christian; in very deed, a very worldling, and, to say to you the very truth, the most worldling of all other. I pray you exhort my mother now and then, with my sister Margaret, to fear the Lord; and if my mother had not sold the forefur which was in my father's gown, I would she would send it me; she must have your counsel in a piece of cloth.

Yours for ever,

JOHN BRADFORD.

Another Letter of Master BRADFORD to Father TRAVES.

The self-same mercy, grace, and peace, which heretofore I have felt plenteously, though now through mine unthankfulness and wilful obedience to the pleasure of this outward man, I neither feel, neither can be persuaded, that I possess; yea, if I shall truly write, I in manner pass not upon the same, so far am I fallen, the Lord help me; the same mercy, &c. I say, I wish unto you as I can, with all increase of godliness; hypocritically with my pen and mouth beseeching you, in your earnest prayers to God, to be an earnest suitor unto God for me, which am fallen into such a security, and even an hardness of heart, that neither I sorrow my state, neither with any grief or fear of God's abjection, do write this before the Lord, which knoweth the hearts of all men I lie not. Consider, for Christ's sake therefore, good father Traves, my necessity, though I myself do it not; and pray

for me, that God cast me not off, as I deserve most justly. For where I ought to have well proceeded in God's school, by reason of the time, I confess it to my shame, I am so far gone back, as, alas! if shame were in me, I might be ashamed to write it; but much more to write it, and think it not; such is the reward of unthankfulness. For where God wrought the restitution of the great thing you know of; the which benefit should bind me to all obedience, alas! father Traves, I am too unthankful; I find no will in heart (though by my writing it will be hard to persuade you), either to be thankful, either to begin a new life, in all things to mortify this outward man, and heartily to be well content to serve the Lord in spirit and verity, and withstand mine affections, and especially my beastly sensuality in meat and drink, wherewith I was troubled at my being with you; but now through my licentious obeying that affect, I am fallen so that a whole legion *spirituum malorum* possesseth me. The Lord, whom I only with mouth (my heart still abiding both in hardness and wilfulness) call upon, deliver me and help me: and for God's sake, give you hearty thanks for the great benefit of restitution. Pray to the Lord, that at the length I may once return to the obedience of his good will. Amen. I thank you for your cheese, and so doth father Latimer, as unknown; for I did give it him, and he saith he did never eat better cheese, and so I dare say he did not. I thank him I am as familiar with him as with you; yea, God so moveth him towards me, that his desire is to have me come and dwell with him whensoever I will, and welcome. This do I write yet once more, to occasion you to be thankful for me to the Lord, which by all means sheweth nothing but most high love to me, and I again a very obstinate rebellion. Pray therefore for me in haste.

The sinful

JOHN BRADFORD.

GODLY MEDITATIONS

UPON

THE LORD'S PRAYER, THE BELIEF, AND
TEN COMMANDMENTS;

WITH OTHER COMFORTABLE

MEDITATIONS, PRAYERS, AND EXERCISES:

WHEREUNTO IS ANNEXED

A DEFENCE OF THE DOCTRINE OF GOD'S ETERNAL ELECTION
AND PREDESTINATION,

GATHERED BY THE CONSTANT MARTYR OF GOD,

JOHN BRADFORD,

IN THE TIME OF HIS IMPRISONMENT.

GOULD'S MIMETIC

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TO THE READER.

HERE hast thou (good reader) such godly meditations, prayers, and other exercises of that worthy witness of God, John Bradford, as God by his singular providence hath hitherto preserved, and now at the length brought to light, for thy comfort and commodity. Daily and hourly was this his exercise, to talk with God by faithful and hearty meditation and prayer, with power piercing the heavens; and many such godly exercises did he leave behind him, which either time hath consumed, or else such as keep them in store to their own private use, do little consider what benefit they withhold from the church of God, which, if they shall yet brotherly communicate, there shall not lack good will and diligence to set them abroad. In the mean season, let us with thankfulness receive, read, and practise these as means to quicken our spirits, to stir up our dull hearts to a more fervent invocation of God's holy name: which how far it is from that it should be in us, and what need we have thereof, if our dead senses cannot feel, here may we see and perceive. Here may we learn to flee unto God by prayer, that we run not on still with this unthankful world into forgetfulness of his great benefits poured upon us, especially for the liberty of his Gospel, which we (in much mercy restored now unto us again) so unthankfully receive, so ungodly neglect, so wickedly abuse. God grant us his good Spirit to work in us this good work; to look about us in time; to consider our state past and present, as indeed we have great cause to do, and so with hearty prayer flee unto God to prevent the plagues that are at hand, lest with double woe we find the latter end worse than the beginning.

Instructions to be observed concerning Prayer.

There be nine things that pertain to the knowledge of true prayer.

First, to know what prayer is; secondly, how many sorts of prayer there be; thirdly, the necessity of prayer; fourthly, to whom we ought to pray. By whom we must pray. Where to pray, and what to pray. The excellency of prayer. What we must do, that our prayers may be heard.

1. What prayer is.

Prayer is a simple, unfeigned, humble, and ardent opening of the heart before God, wherein we either ask things needful, or give thanks for benefits received. Paul (1 Tim. ii.) calleth it by four sundry names in one sentence, to wit, prayer, supplication, intercession, and thanksgiving; whereof the first is, for the avoiding and preventing of evil; the second is an earnest and fervent calling upon God for any thing; the third is an intercession for others; the fourth is a praising of God for things received.

2. There be two manner of ways how we should pray.

First, publicly, and that is called common prayer; and privately, as when men pray alone, and that is called private prayer; and how both these two are allowed before God, the Scripture beareth testimony by the example of all the holy men and women before and after Christ.

3. Of the necessity of prayer.

There be four things that provoke us to pray: first, the commandment of God; secondly, sin in us, which driveth us of necessity to God for succour, life, and mercy; thirdly, our weak nature being unable to do any good, requireth prayer to strengthen it, even as a house requireth principal pillars for the upholding of it; fourthly, the subtlety of the enemy

(who privily lurketh in the inward parts, waiting to overthrow us even in those things we think to be best done) stirreth us vehemently thereunto.

4. To whom we ought to pray.

Three things pertain to Him that must be prayed unto; first, that he have such ears as may hear all the world at once; secondly, that he be in all places at once; thirdly, that he have such power that he may be able to help, and such mercy that he will deliver.

5. By whom we should pray.

Christ only is the way by whom we have free access unto the Father, and for whom our prayers are accepted (our infirmities notwithstanding), without whom all our prayers are abominable.

6. Where to pray, and what to pray.

As touching the place where we should pray, seeing all places are one, there is none forbidden, only the common prayer must be made in what place soever the congregation of Christ doth assemble.

7. What to pray, lieth in the necessity of every man; and forasmuch as we need both spiritual and corporal things, we may boldly ask them both; for as to ask spiritual gifts, it is profitable and commanded, so to ask corporal, it is necessary and allowed.

8. Of the excellency of prayer.

The worthiness of prayer consisteth in two things; in the dignity of the commander, who is God, the fountain of all goodness, who also commandeth only good things; and in the effect that followeth it, which is the obtaining of whatsoever we desire faithfully, according to the will of God.

9. What to do that we may be heard.

First, we must put off our own righteousness, pride, and estimation of ourselves, and put on Christ

with his righteousness ; secondly, an earnest faith and fervent love, with the putting off all rancour, malice, and envy, is required ; finally, true repentance knitteth up the knot, for in it are contained all the virtues aforementioned.

JOHN BRADFORD.

A MEDITATION of the LORD'S PRAYER.

Our Father.

Thou, good Lord, which madest heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is therein (Gen. i.), together with thy dearly beloved Son, Jesus Christ, and with thy holy Spirit : thou, the same God which openedst thyself to Adam by thy promise (Gen. iii.) : thou, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Gen. xii. xxii. xxiii. xxiv. xxv) : thou, which broughtest thy people of Israel forth of Egypt with a mighty hand and a stretched-out power (Exod. xiii. xiv. xv. &c.) : thou, which gavest thy law upon mount Sinai (Exod. xix. xx.) : thou, which spakest by thy Prophets, and, last of all, in these latter days by thy dearly beloved Son, Jesus Christ (Heb. i.), whom thou wouldest should be made a second Adam (1 Cor. xv.), that as by the first we are children of wrath, carnal, and full of concupiscence, so by him we might be made children of grace and spiritual (Rom. v.), by communicating with him the quality, merits, virtues, and grace of his flesh, through the operation of the holy Spirit, as he communicated with us the substance of our flesh in the womb of the Virgin Mary (Matt. i.), by the operation of the same holy Spirit (Luke, i.), being that blessed seed which was promised to Adam, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, which should bruise the serpent's head (Gen. iii. xii. xxvi. xxviii.), which should bring the blessing on

all nations, which should reign over thy house for ever (Psal. lxxxix.), and mightily overcome thine and our enemies (2 Kings, vii.), as indeed he did by his incarnation, nativity, circumcision, exile, baptism, fasting, temptation, doctrine, deeds, miracles, workings, agonies, bloody prayer, passion, death, resurrection, and ascension (Luke, i. Psal. cx.); and yet he still doth by his mediation and intercession for us (Rom. viii.), and at the length he will on all parts fully accomplish by his coming to judgment (Matt. xxiv.), which will be suddenly, in the twinkling of an eye, in the blast of a trumpet, and shout of an archangel (1 Cor. xv. 1 Thess. iv. 2 Cor. v.), when he shall be seen with thousands of saints, and innumerable thousands of angels, all the whole world being on fire, and all people that ever were, are, or shall be, then standing before his tribunal or judgment-seat, to render an account of that they have done in this body, be it good or bad (Exod. xxxii. xxxiii. Psalm v. Joel, ii.): thou, I say, this God which art holy, righteous, true, wise, pure, chaste, mighty, merciful, good, gracious, a hater of sin, an avenger of unrighteousness, &c. wouldest that I, which am born in sin, and conceived in iniquity, which by nature am a child of wrath (Psalm li. Eph. ii.), (for my heart is so unsearchably evil, that out of it springeth corrupt concupiscence, so that the inclination thereof is prone to evil, always even from my youth up (Gen. viii. ix. Jer. xvii.), as my understanding and mind so darkened, that I cannot perceive those things that be of God of myself (2 Cor. ii. iii.), and all the wisdom which I receive from Adam naturally, or otherwise attain by labour or study before regeneration; I cannot think a good thought, much less wish it, or consent unto it, and least of all do it). Thou, I say, yet wouldest that I, being such an one, in whom dwelleth continual enmity against thee

(Rom. viii.), that I which am nothing but sin, and one that doth evil always before thee, should call thee and believe thee this God and Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to be in very deed my Father; that is, thou wouldest I should be most assured, that thou of thine own good will which thou barest to me-wards before I was, yea, before the world was, hast in Christ chosen me to be thy child, and through him art become my most loving Father (Eph. i.), from whom I should look for all good things, and be most certainly persuaded, that look how much thou art more than man, so much thy love and fatherly providence towards me passeth the love and providence of any father towards his child, in loving me, caring how to help me, providing for me, nurturing me, and helping me in all my needs; so certain thou wouldest have me to be of this, that to doubt of it, doth most displease thee and dishonour thee, as either thou wert not true, or not able to do these things, or else becamest not my father in respect of thine own goodness in Christ only, but also in respect of my worthiness and deserts; and that I should not waver or doubt of this, that thou art my dear Father, and I thy child for ever through Jesus Christ, it is required in the first commandment, which saith, I am the Lord thy God, thou shalt have none other gods but me. Again, thy Son doth here command me to call thee by the name of Father; moreover, in the first article of my belief, I profess the same in saying, I believe in God, the Father Almighty: besides this, there are many other things to confirm me herein, as the creation and government of the world generally, and of every creature particularly; for all is made and kept for man, and so for me, to serve me for my commodity, necessity, and admonition. Again, the creation of me, in that thou hast made me after thy image, having

a reasonable soul, body, shape, &c. where thou mightest have made me a toad, a serpent, a swine, deformed, frantic, &c.: moreover, thy wonderful conservation, nourishing, and keeping of me hitherto in my infancy, childhood, youth, &c.—all these, I say, should confirm my faith of thy fatherly love. But of all things, the opening of thyself by thy word and promise of grace, made after man's fall, first to Adam, then to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and so to other, being published by the Prophets from time to time; and, last of all, accomplished by thy dear Son Jesus Christ, in whom thy promises are yea and amen. (2 Cor. i.): the opening of thyself thus, I say, in and by Christ, is the most chief and sure certificate, that thou art my Father for his sake, and I thy dear child, although of myself I am most unworthy. For thou, according to thy promises, hast not spared thy dear Son Jesus Christ, but given him to the death of the cross for my sins. (John, iii.) Thou wouldest he should be made flesh of our flesh, and blood of our blood, in the womb of the Virgin Mary, by the operation of the holy Spirit (Eph. v.), that we, by the working of the same Spirit, through the merits of his flesh and blood, might be made flesh of his flesh, and blood of his blood; that is, as he hath the substance of our flesh and blood, even so we might have and for ever enjoy in him, and through him, the qualities, virtues, and gifts of righteousness, holiness, innocency, immortality, and glory, wherewith he hath endued our nature in his own person for us all; that as now in faith and hope we have the same, so in his coming we might fully enjoy them in very deed; for then shall our bodies, now vile, be like to his glorious body. (Phil. iii.) Herein appeareth thy love, not that we loved thee, but that thou lovedst us, and hast given thy Son for us. (1 John, iii.) Herein dost thou command unto us

thy love, that when we were yet sinners, Christ thy dear Son bled for us (Rom. v.), so that nothing should separate us from thy love in Christ Jesus, neither death, nor hunger, &c. (Rom. viii.) For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled unto thee by the death of thy Son, much more we, being reconciled, shall be saved by his life. (Rom. v.) And that I should not doubt hereof, but certainly be persuaded all things to pertain to me, where I might have been born of Turks, lo! thou wouldest I should be born of Christian parents, brought into thy church by baptism, which is the sacrament of adoption, and requireth faith as well of remission of my sins as of sanctification and holiness, to be wrought of thee in me by thy grace and holy Spirit. Where I might have been born in an ignorant time and region, thou wouldest I should be born in this time and region, wherein is more knowledge revealed than ever was here, or in many places is. Where I might have been of a corrupt judgment, and entangled with many errors, lo! thou of thy goodness, as thou hast reformed my judgment, so dost thou keep it, and now for the same judgment's sake dost vouchsafe somewhat by the cross to try me. By all which things I should confirm my faith of this, that thou hast always been, art, and wilt be for ever my dear Father; in respect whereof I should be as certain of salvation and of the inheritance of heaven for ever; so be thankful, cast my whole care on thee, trust on thee, and call on thee, with comfort and certain hope for all things that I want. For in that thou hast given to me this benefit to be thy child, undeserved, undesired on my behalf, simply and only in respect of thine own goodness and grace in Christ, lest at any time I should doubt of it, how should I but hope certainly that nothing profitable to me can be denied, in that thy power is infinite?

For

as thy good will is declared in adopting me, so nothing can be finally wanting me which may make for my weal (for that should improve thy power to be almighty), -in that thy will is so bounteously already declared; whereas my belief requireth to believe in thee the Father Almighty; in consideration whereof I should in all things behave myself as a child, rejoice in thee, praise thee, trust in thee, fear thee, serve thee, love thee, call upon thee, &c. But, alas! how heavy-hearted am I! how unthankful am I! how full of unbelief and doubting of this thy rich mercy! how little do I love thee, fear thee, call upon thee! &c. Oh! be merciful unto me, forgive me, good Father, for thine own sake, and grant me the Spirit of thy children, to reveal thyself unto me, and Jesus Christ thy dear Son our Lord, by whom we are made thy children, that I may truly know thee, heartily love thee, faithfully hang upon thee in all my needs, with good hope call upon thee, render faithfully this honour to thee, that thou art my God and Father, and I thy dear child, through thy grace in Christ, and so always be endued with an assured hope of thy goodness, and a faithful obedient heart in all things to thy holy will. At thy hands, and from thee, as I must look for all things, so come I unto thee, and pray thee to give me those things which thy dear children have, and thou requirest of me, that I might come and ask them of thee, as now I do through Jesus Christ our Lord.

As by this word (*Father*) I am taught to glory of thee and in thee, and all that ever thou hast (for thou art wholly mine, my Lord, my God, and my Father); so by this word (*our*) I am taught to glory of all the good, that all and every of thy servants that ever were, are, or shall be, had, have, and shall have. For now I am taught to believe that thou hast called me into the communion of thy church and people,

whom hereby I perceive thou hast commanded to be careful to me, as for themselves, and in all their prayers to be as mindful of me as of themselves. Again, as by this word (*Father*) I am taught to remember and render my duty I owe to thee-wards, faith, love, fear, obedience, &c. so by thy word (*our*) I am taught my duty towards thy people, to be careful for them, and to take their sorrow, poverty, and affliction, &c. as mine own; and therefore to labour to help them in heart and hand, after my vocation and ability, utterly abhorring all pride, self-love, arrogancy, and contempt of any. By reason whereof I have great cause to lament and to rejoice; to lament, because I am so far from consideration, much more from doing my duty to thy people in thoughts, words, or deeds; to rejoice, because I am called of thee, and placed in the blessed society of thy saints, and made a member and citizen of the heavenly Jerusalem; and because thou hast given in commandment to all thy church to be as careful for me as for themselves.

But, alas! how far am I herefrom! As I am guilty of unthankfulness for this thy calling me into the blessed communion of thy dear Son and church, yea, of thyself; so am I guilty of self-love, unmercifulness, pride, arrogancy, forgetfulness, contempt of thy children; for else I could not but be otherwise affected, and otherwise labour than I do. Oh! be merciful unto me, good Father, forgive me, and grant, for Christ's sake, that as my tongue soundeth this word (*our*), so I may in heart feel the true joy of thy blessed communion, and the true love and compassion which thy children have and feel towards their brethren; that I may rejoice in all trouble, in respect of that joyful communion, that I may deny myself, to honour thy children upon earth, and endeavour myself to do them good, for thy sake,

through Jesus Christ our Lord. I come only to thee to give me that which I cannot nor must not elsewhere have, and thou requirest it of me, that therefore I should, as thy child, come and crave it to thy glory.

Which art in heaven.

As by these words (*Our Father*) I am taught to glory and rejoice for the blessed communion which I am called to with thee, dear Father, with thy Christ, and with thy holy church, so also am I here taught by these words (*which art in heaven*) to rejoice in respect of the place and blessed joys, whereunto at the length in thy good time I shall come. For now I may perceive, that as heaven is thy home, so it is mine also, being (as I am) thy child through Christ, although here for a time I am bodily on earth and in misery.

Again, by these words (*which art in heaven*) I am admonished, not only to discern thee from earthly fathers, and to know how that thou art almighty, present in all places, and of most purity, to confirm thereby my faith, to be provoked the more to fear thee, to reverence thee, &c.; but also I am admonished to judge of thy fatherly love by heavenly benefits, and not by corporal, simply and alone; for oftentimes the wicked prosper more in the world, and have more worldly benefits, than thy children; so that by this I see thou wouldest pull up my mind from earth and earthly things, to heaven and heavenly things, and that I should see further by corporal benefits thy heavenly providence for me. For if thou place me thus on earth, and thus bless me as thou dost, and hitherto hast done, from my youth up, in that thou art nothing so careful for my body as for my soul, how should I but think much of thy

providence for it in thy home, where is such glory, as that eye hath not seen, &c. of which things these corporal benefits of thine, given me on earth, should be as it were inductions, and the taking of them away admonitions to be more mindful of permanent things, and less mindful of transitory things.

By reason hereof I have great cause to lament and to rejoice; to lament, because I am so earthly-minded, so little desirous of my home, so unthankful for thy providence, and fatherly corrections here on earth; to rejoice, because of my home, and the great glory thereof, because thou dost so provide for me here, because thou dost so correct and chasten me, &c.; but, alas! I am altogether a wretch, earthly, and unthankful, not only for these corporal benefits, health, riches, friends, fame, wisdom, &c. for thy fatherly correction, sickness, temptation, &c. but also for thy heavenly benefits, for Christ Jesus, for the promise of thy Spirit, for thy Gospel, &c. yea, even for heaven itself, and thy whole glory, as the Israelites were for the land of Canaan, and therefore never enjoyed it, but perished in the wilderness. (Psalm cvi.) I am proud in prosperity, and forget thee, waxing secure and careless, &c. I am impatient in the cross, and too much consider worldly discommodity. Oh! dear Father, forgive me, for thy Christ's sake, all mine unthankfulness, love of this world, contempt and oblivion of thy heavenly benefits, and grant me thy holy Spirit, to illuminate the eyes of my mind with the light and lively knowledge of thy presence, power, wisdom, and goodness in thy creatures, but especially in Christ Jesus, thy Son; and so by the same spirit inflame mine affection, that I may desire nothing in earth but thee, and to be present with thee, that my conversation may be in heaven continually. From whence grant me still to look for the Lord Jesus, to make this my

vile body like unto his own glorious and immortal body, according to his own power, by which he is able to do all things. As thou hast given me to be thy child, so I pray thee give me these things which be the properties of thy children given from thee in thy good time. (Col. iii. Philip. iii.)

Hallowed be thy Name.

Thy name is that whereby thou art known, for names serve to discern and know one thing from another. Now though thou art known by thy creatures, yet in this our corrupt estate they serve but to make us excuseless. (Rom. i.) Therefore properly, most lively, and comfortably thou art known by thy holy word, and especially by thy promise of grace, and freely pardoning and receiving us into thy favour for Christ Jesus' sake; for the which goodness in Christ thou art praised and magnified (Psalm xlviii. cxxxviii.), according to thy name; that is, so much as men know thee in Christ, they magnify thee, and praise thee, which here thou callest hallowing or sanctifying; not that thou art the more holy in respect of thyself, but in respect of men, who, the more they know thee, the more they cannot but sanctify thee, that is, they cannot but as in themselves by true faith, love, fear, and spiritual service, honour thee; so also, in their outward behaviour and words, they cannot but live in such sort, as others, seeing them, may in and by their holiness and godly conversation be occasioned, as to know thee, so to sanctify thy name accordingly. And therefore thou settest forth here unto me what is the chief and principal wish and desire of thy children and people, namely, that thou in Christ mightest be truly known and honoured, both of themselves and of others, inwardly and outwardly. By reason

whereof easily a man may perceive by the contrary the greatest sorrow and grief thy people have, is ignorance of thee, false service or religion, and wicked conversation: against the which they pray and labour diligently after these vocations, as they, for the obtaining of the others, both to others and themselves, do take no small pains in prayer, study, and godly exercise. By reason hereof I see that I am far from this desire and lamentation, which is in thy children: I see mine ignorance of the true knowledge of thee and thy name; for else it had not needed thee, so by thy word to have revealed thyself. I see also mine ignorance of the excellency of the same: for else wouldest thou not have told me, that the sanctifying of thy name is the chiefest thing thou requirest of every man. Again, I see my great want of holiness; for else thou needest not to teach me to seek and pray for that I want not: moreover, I see my great perversity, which would not seek at thy hands for sanctification, although I see my need thereof: for else thou wouldest not have commanded me to pray for it, if I, seeing my want, would have prayed unto thee therefor. Last of all, I see thy wonderful goodness, which wilt undoubtedly give unto me sanctification and holiness; for thou wouldest not that I should ask for that thing that thou wilt not give me; so that I have great cause to lament and rejoice: to lament, because I am so far from this desire and lamentation, which thy children have; also because of my ignorance, poverty, perversity, unthankfulness, &c. but most of all, because thy holy name, word, and religion, is so blasphemed, both in doctrine and living, of many, especially in this realm: to rejoice, I have great cause, for thy exceeding goodness and mercy, which wouldest so disclose thyself by thy works, word, and Gospel, which wouldest open these things thus unto me, and also

give unto me and others sanctification in thy sight by faith, and in the sight of men by pureness of life and godly conversation. But, alas! I do heartily neither the one nor the other, that is, lament and rejoice, as thou, Father, which searchest my heart, dost right well know. Oh! be merciful unto me, and forgive me, yea, give me of thine own pity, thy holy Spirit to reveal and open to my mind effectually my miserable estate and condition, my ignorance, perversity, and my carelessness, for thy true honour and dishonour, in such sort, that I may heartily lament these evils, and have them pardoned and taken from me through Jesus Christ our Lord. Again, good Father, give me the same thy holy Spirit to reveal to me thy name, word, and Gospel, that I may lively know thee, unfeignedly love thee, heartily obey thee, and, above all things, desire and labour, by all means lawful, that all godliness in doctrine and conversation may be exercised both in me and in all others, for whom thou wouldest I should pray.

Here think upon the state of religion, and the life of the professors of the Gospel, that you may lament some, pray for some, and give thanks for some.

Let thy kingdom come.

Thy kingdom is in two sorts to be considered, universally and particularly; universally, according to thy power, wherewith thou governest all things every where, in earth, heaven, hell, devils, angels, men, beasts, fowls, fishes, and all creatures, animate and inanimate, sensible and insensible. Of this kingdom spake David, when he said (Psalm civ.), Thy kingdom ruleth over all: particularly thy kingdom is to be considered according to thy grace wherewith thou reignest only in thy church and elect people, ruling and governing all and every member

of thy church to thy glory and their eternal comfort; not that out of this church I exclude thy power (for as therewith thou defendest thy people, so thou punishest thine enemies), but because thy grace is specially considered, being, as it were, the very keeper that keepeth and guideth thy people. The time will be when this kingdom of grace and power, now being as distinct, shall be united and made one kingdom of glory, which will be when Christ shall give up his kingdom into thine hands, that is, in the resurrection, when death, the last enemy, shall be subdued, and thou shalt be all in all. In the mean season this kingdom of grace is miraculously and mightily propagated, enlarged, and governed by the true ministry of thy word and sacraments, through the working of thy holy Spirit. And this is the mean and way, whereby as thou didst first plant, so dost thou enlarge, amplify, and preserve the same. This kingdom of grace, begun, continued, and enlarged, by the true preaching of thy Gospel, and ministration of thy sacraments, is the thing which Christ teacheth here thy children to pray for, that it might come, that is to say, that thy Gospel might so mightily, purely, and plenteously be preached (maugre the head of all thine enemies), that the number of thine elect might be brought in, and so the kingdom of thy glory might appear: so that as I see thy children desire, pray, and labour, that thy Gospel might be truly preached, heard, and lived in themselves, and in others; so they lament the not preaching and refusing, the not living and unbelieving thy Gospel; yea, they lament the lingering of the coming of thy Christ; for in his coming, they know they shall be like unto him, and having this hope, they purify themselves as he is pure. (1 John, iii.)

By reason hereof I see first, that I am far from this desire and lamenting, which thy children have; I see my ignorance of thy kingdom and power every

where, in thy grace only in thy church, and of thy glory, when all the enemies of thy grace shall be cast down, and thy glory and power shall embrace each other; I see my ignorance, how acceptable a service to thee is the true preaching and the hearing of thy Gospel; for else thou hadst not needed to have placed this petition next to the petition of the sanctifying of thy name. Again, I see here my inability to enter into thy kingdom, and to attain to it; for else what need should I have to pray for that to come from thee, which otherwise may be achieved? Thirdly, I see also my perversity and contempt of thy kingdom and grace: for although I see my want, yet I would not desire thy kingdom to come, if thou didst not command me to pray so: for if I would have prayed for it, thou wouldest not have commanded me. Last of all, I see thy goodness, which wilt bring thy kingdom, and that as generally by sending forth ministers to preach truly, so particularly by regenerating me more and more, and by giving me as grace here, so glory elsewhere: for thou wouldest not I should pray for that which thou wilt deny: so that I have great cause to lament and rejoice. To lament, because of my miserable estate and condition, because of my sin, ignorance, rebellion, perversity, Satan's power, contempt of thy grace, thy Gospel, and ministry, here or elsewhere: to rejoice, because of thy goodness and great mercy, which hast brought me into thy church, keepest me in it, and wilt do so still; also because of the ministry of thy word and sacrament, by which the Holy Ghost is and will be effectual; and, finally, because of that great glory whereunto thou hast called me, and now wilt give unto me, asking the same. But, alas! how unthankful I am and sorrowless, Lord thou knowest, for my heart is not hid from thee, &c. Oh! be merciful unto me, and for-

give me, good Father, and grant the spirit of thy children, to reveal unto me my ignorance of thy kingdom, my poverty and perversity, that I may lament the same, and daily labour for thy help and thy holy Spirit, to suppress the kingdom of sin in myself and in others. Again, grant me that same thy holy Spirit, to reveal to me thy kingdom of power, grace, and glory, to kindle mine affections, to regenerate me more and more, to reign in me as in a piece of thy kingdom, to give to me to desire, to pray, and to labour for thy kingdom, both to myself and to others, effectually to thy glory, and to assure my conscience of thy goodness, that thou wilt give me grace and glory, &c.

Here call to mind the state of the ministry and ministers, the light and life of Gospellers, the errors and heresies which men be entangled withal.

Thy will be done.

As thy power is infinite, so is thy wisdom accordingly; whereby, as we may perceive, that nothing is or can be done against thy power, or otherwise than by it; so is there not, nor cannot be, any thing done against or otherwise than by thy omnipotent and secret will; which is always, as thou art, good, holy, and just, how far soever it seem otherwise to our foolish reason and judgment: and therefore here we are taught to pray, that thy will may be done here without sin on man's behalf, as it is on the angels' behalf in heaven.

Again, forasmuch as thou art incomprehensible of thyself, as well concerning thy power as concerning thy wisdom, we may not, according thereto, search thee, but rather adore and worship thy majesty, and tremble at thy judgment and works; and therefore pray always, that we may be content with

thy will, and be obedient thereto. And forasmuch as thou hast revealed to us so much of thy will in thy written word as is necessary for us in this life to know, yea, as we can attain unto, and a little further, we ought to take all things done thereagainst as sin and transgression, although thou car.st use the same sin to serve thy providence. Of the which providence we cannot nor may not judge further than thou hast and shalt open it unto us; so that this petition (thy will be done) is not simply to be understood concerning thy omnipotent will unrevealed, against the which nothing is nor can be done; but rather concerning thy will revealed in thy law and Gospel, the which thou here teachest me, that we should desire not only to know it, but also to do it, and that in such perfection and willingness as it is in heaven. The which thing I perceive hereby, that thy children do desire daily in and for themselves and others, and do lament the contrary in whomsoever it be; so that often their eyes gush out with rivers of tears, because men keep not thy laws. (Psalm cxix.)

By reason hereof I see that I am far from the sighs and tears of thy people. I see my ignorance of thy will, if thou hadst not opened the same by thine own mouth: I see my ignorance, how acceptable a service obedience to thy will is, and therefore dost thou place this petition among the first and continual desires of thy children. Again, I see my poverty in godly obedience, which had need to be taught to pray for it, thereby to signify unto me my want and inability to attain it, but by thy gift. Thirdly, I see my disobedience; for else never wouldest thou have commanded me to have prayed for the doing of thy will, if I, seeing my want, would have prayed so.

Last of all, I see thy goodness, which wilt give to me and others to obey thy will; that is, to love thee

with all our hearts, to love our neighbour as ourselves, to die to ourselves, to live to thee, to take up our cross, and to follow thee, to believe, to repent, &c. for else thou wouldest never have bidden us to pray for a thing which we should not look for.

So that I have great cause to lament and rejoice: to lament, because of my miserable state and condition, because of my sin, ignorance, poverty, and perversity, also because thy will is every where either not known or contemned, and Satan's will, the will of the world and of the flesh, readily obeyed: to rejoice, I have great cause, for that thou hast opened thyself and will unto mankind; for that also thou peculiarly hast taught me these things, and because also thou wilt grant me grace to do the same. But, alas! how unthankful I am, and how hard-hearted, thou Lord dost know. Oh! be merciful unto me, and forgive me. I pray thee, gracious God, grant me thy holy Spirit, to reveal to me my ignorance of thy will, my poverty and perversity, that I may heartily bewail it, &c. and by thy help and working of the same Spirit may suppress the will of the flesh. Again, grant me thy holy Spirit, to reveal to me thy will declared in thy law and Gospel, that I may truly know the same, and inflame so my affections, that I may will and love the same, in such sort that it may be my meat and drink to do thy will.

Here call to mind the ten commandments of God, particularly or generally, what therein he requireth, and pray for the same particularly as you see your need, and that not only for yourself, but also for other.

Pray for patience to suffer what cross soever God shall lay upon you, and pray for them that be under the cross, that they may be patient. Pray for spiritual wisdom in every cross, peculiarly or publicly, that you may see and love God's will.

Give us this day our daily bread.

By *bread*, the food of the body, is understood all things necessary for this corporal life, as meat, drink, health, success in vocation, &c. By this word *give*, we should understand not only spiritual things, but also corporal benefits are God's free gifts, and come not for our worthiness, or travail taken about the same, although our travails be oftentimes means by the which God doth give corporal things.

By *daily*, is understood the contented minds of thy children with that which is sufficient for the present time, as having hope in thee, that they shall not want, but daily shall receive at thy hands plenty and enough of all things. By the word *our*, is as well understood public benefits, as peace in the common weal, good magistrates, seasonable weather, good laws, &c. as particular benefits, as be children, health, name, success in the works of our vocation, &c. And besides this, by it we should see the care even for corporal things, which thy children have for others as well as for themselves.

So that here I may learn how far I am from that I should be, and I see thy children are come unto. I see my ignorance also, how that as spiritual things do come from thee, so do temporal things; and as they come from thee, so are they conferred and kept of thee. And therefore thy children are thankful and look for them, as thy mere gifts, notwithstanding the means which they use if they have them. Howbeit they use them but as means, for except thou work therewith, all is in vain. (Ps. cxxvii.)

Again, here I am taught to be content with sufficient for the present time, as thy children be which have the shortness of this life always before their eyes, and therefore they ask but for daily sustenance, knowing this life to be compared to a day, yea, a

watch, a sound, a shadow, &c. Moreover, I may learn to see the compassion and brotherly care thy children have one for another. Last of all, here I may see thy goodness, which, as thou wilt give me all things necessary for this life (or else thou wouldest not bid me ask, &c.), so thou commandest all men to pray and care for me, and that bodily; much more then, if they be able, they are commanded to help me both in body and soul. By reason whereof I have great cause to lament and rejoice; to lament, because I am not so affected as thy children be, because of my ignorance, my ingratitude, my perversity, and contempt of thy goodness, and of the necessity of thy people, which, alas! be in great misery, some in exile, some in prison, some in poverty, sickness, &c. To rejoice, I have great cause, because of thy goodness, in teaching me these things, in commanding me to ask whatsoever I want, in giving me so many things unasked, in keeping the benefits given me, in commanding men to care for me, to pray for me, to help me, &c. But, alas! how far I am from true lamentation and rejoicing, Lord, thou knowest. Oh! be merciful unto me, and help me, forgive me, and grant me thy holy Spirit, to reveal to me my need, ignorance, great ingratitude and contempt of thy mercies and thy people, and that in such sort, that I might heartily lament and bewail my misery, and through thy goodness be altered with thy people to mourn for the miseries of thy children as for mine own.

Again, reveal to me thy goodness, dear Father, even in corporal things, that I may see thy mercies, thy presence, power, wisdom, and righteousness, in every creature and corporal benefits, and that in such sort, that I may be thoroughly affected, truly to reverence, fear, love, obey thee, hang upon thee, to be thankful to thee, and in all my need to come unto

thee, not only when I have ordinary means by the which thou commonly workest, but also when I have none, yea, when all means and helps are clean against me.

Here remember the state of your children and family; also your parents, neighbours, kinsfolks; also your friends, country, and magistrates, &c. as you shall have time thereto, and by God's good Spirit shall be provoked.

Forgive us our debts, as we forgive them that are debtors unto us.

By our *debts* are understood, not only things we have done, but the omission and leaving undone of the good things we ought to do.

By *our*, is not only understood, the particular sins of one, but also generally the sins of all and every one of thy church.

By *forgiveness* is understood free pardon and remission of sins by the merits and deserts of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, who gave himself a ransom for us.

By our forgiving of other men's offences to usward, is understood thy good will, not only that it pleaseth thee that we should live in love and amity, but also that thou wouldest have us to be certain of thy pardoning us of our sins. For as certain as we are that we pardon them that offend us, so certain should we be that thou dost pardon us, whereof the forgiving our trespasses is (as it were) a sacrament unto us.

So that by this petition I am taught to see that thy children, although by imputation they be pure from sin, yet they acknowledge sin to be and remain in them, and therefore do they pray for the remission and forgiveness of the same.

Again, I am taught hereby to see how thy chil-

dren do consider and take to heart, not only the evils they do, but also the good they leave undone. And therefore they pray thee heartily for pardon.

Moreover, I am here taught, to see that thy children are careful for other men, and for their trespasses; and therefore pray that they might be pardoned, in saying *our sins*, and not my sins.

Besides this, I am taught here to see, how thy children not only forgive all that offend them; but also pray for the pardoning of the offences of their enemies; and such as offend them; so far are they from maliciousness, pride, revenge, &c. Last of all, I am taught to see how merciful thou art, which wilt have me to ask pardon; whereof thou wouldest that we should in no point doubt, but be most assured, that for Christ's sake thou hearest us, and that not only for ourselves, but also for many others, for thou dost not command us to ask for any thing thou wilt not give us.

By reason whereof I have great cause to lament and rejoice; to lament, because of my miserable estate, which am so far from these affections, that are in thy children, which am so ignorant and careless of sin, not only in leaving good undone, but also in doing evil, and that daily in thought, word, and deed, &c. I speak not of my carelessness for other folk's sins, as of my parents, children, family, magistrates, &c. neither of the sins of them to whom I have given occasion to sin.

To rejoice, I have great cause, because of thy mercy in opening to me these things, in commanding me to pray for pardon, in promising me pardon, and in commanding others to pray for me. I ought surely to be persuaded of thy mercy, though my sins be innumerable. For I see not only in this, but in every petition, how that every one of thy church prayeth for me; yea, Christ thy Son, who sitteth on

thy right hand, prayeth for me, &c. Oh! dear Father, be merciful unto me, and forgive me all my sins, and of thy goodness give me thy holy Spirit, to open mine eyes, that I may see sin, the better to know it, the more truly to hate it, and most earnestly to strive against it, and that effectually, both in myself and others.

Again, grant me the same thy holy Spirit to reveal unto me the remedy of sin by Christ only, and to work in me by faith, to embrace the same thy Christ and mercies in him; that I may henceforth be endued with thy holy Spirit more and more to begin and obey thy good will continually, and to increase in the same for ever.

Here call to mind the special sins you have committed heretofore. Remember, if you have occasioned any to sin, to pray for them by name; remember that God's law should be so near unto us, that the breaking thereof in others should be an occasion to make us to lament with tears, &c.

Lead us not into temptation.

Because of our continual and great infirmities, because of the great diligence and subtilties of our enemies, and because thou art wont to punish sin with sin (which of all punishments is the greatest and most to be feared). In this petition thou wouldest have thy children to have the same in remembrance, and for a remedy hereof thou hast appointed prayer. So that the only cause why any are overcome, and led into temptation, is for that they forget what they desire in the petition going before this, which should be never out of their memory, to provoke them to be more thankful to thee, and more vigilant and heedful hereafter for falling into like perils; for which to be avoided, thou dost most graciously set

forth a remedy, in commanding us to pray after pardon for our sins past, for thy grace to guide us; so that we be not led into temptation, but might be delivered from evil. And because thou wouldest have all thy children to hang wholly upon thee, to fear thee only, and only to love thee, thou dost not teach them to pray, suffer us not to be led, but lead us not into temptation, that (I say) they might only fear thee. I certainly know that Satan hath no power over so much as a pig (Matt. viii.); but whatsoever thou givest unto him, and of thy secret but most just judgment dost appoint him to use, not as he will (for then we were all lost), but as thou wilt, which canst will nothing, but that which is most just; as to give them to the guiding of Satan, which will not be guided by thy grace, as thou didst Saul, &c.

Occasions to evil are in two sorts; one by prosperity and success, the other by adversity and the cross, &c. The evils coming of success, commonly are unthankfulness, pride, security, and forgetting ourselves, forgetting of others, forgetfulness of God, of our mortality, &c. The evils coming of adversity, commonly are impatience, murmuring, grudging, despairing, contemning of God, flattering of men, stealing, lying, &c. with many other evils, whereto temptations will entice a man that is left to himself; whereas, to one that is guided with God's Spirit, temptations are but trials to the glory of God, comfort of the tempted, and edifying of thy church. But, as I said, if a man be left alone, temptations entice even to the devil himself; and therefore thy children pray to be delivered from evil; understanding thereby Satan himself, the sower and supporter of all evil. And this thy children do, as well for others as for themselves, so that I may learn hereout many good things.

First, to remember often our infirmities and weak-

ness, and the dangerous state we stand in, in the respect of our flesh; of the world, which is full of evil; of Satan, which seeketh to sift us, and as a roaring lion to destroy us; and of our sins, which deserve all kinds of punishments and correction, that I might with thy children fear thee, watch, pray, and desire the day of redemption from all evils.

Again, I may learn here, that to avoid all dangers and evils, is not in the power of man, but only thy work. By reason whereof I should consider thy great goodness, which hitherto hast kept me from so many evils, both of soul and body; yea, of name, goods, &c. as thou hast done in my infancy, childhood, youth, middle age, &c.

Thirdly, I may learn here, that I should be careful for others, both that they might be delivered from their evils, and that they might be preserved from temptation, and from being overcome in the same; and therefore thou teachest me to pray, not deliver me from evil simply, but deliver us from evil.

Last of all, I am taught hereby to see thy goodness towards me, which will deliver me from evil, and from being overcome in temptations; for thou wouldest not have me to ask for that which I should not look for at thy hands certainly. By reason whereof thou wouldest have me to be in a certainty of salvation for ever: for else I cannot believe my prayer to be heard; if that finally I should not be delivered from evil; and therefore thou joinest hereto a giving of thanks, which, with thy church, I should say, For thine is the kingdom, thine is the power, thine is the glory for ever.

By reason whereof I have great cause to lament and to rejoice: to lament, because of my corruption, infirmity, weakness, oblivion and carelessness for thy people, ingratitude, &c. because of Satan's power, vigilance, and prudence, which hath over-

come most grave, wise, and holy men, whereof some never recovered, as Cain, Ham, Ahithophel, Saul, Judas, &c. To rejoice, because of thy goodness, which teachest me this, and shewest me the remedy; commandest all thy church to pray for me, and wilt at length deliver me from all evil, and give me glory. But, alas! I am altogether careless and miserable. Oh! be merciful unto me, dear Father, and for Christ's sake forgive me all my sins; grant me thy holy Spirit to reveal to me mine infirmities, weakness, perils, dangers, &c. in such sort, that as I may heartily lament my miseries, so I may ask and obtain thy grace to guide me from all evil for evermore.

Again, grant me the same thy holy Spirit to reveal to me thy love and kindness towards me (and that in eternity), in such sort, that I may be thoroughly persuaded of the same; become thankful unto thee, and daily expect and look for the revelation of thy kingdom, power, and glory, as one that for ever shall have the fruition of the same, through thine own goodness and mercy in Christ, prepared for me before the beginning and foundation of the world was laid.

Here call to mind our security, Satan's vigilance, our negligence, his diligence, our infirmity, his ability, our ignorance, his craftiness and subtilty.

Item, call to mind how that he hath overthrown for a time many of the dear saints of God, to whom we are to be compared in nothing; as Adain, Eve, Lot, Judas, Tamar, Moses, Aaron, Miriam, Sampson, Gideon, Eli, David, Solomon, Hezekiah, Josias, Peter, Thomas, and innumerable more.

Item, call to mind the goodness of God, and of our Shepherd Christ, which hath kept us hitherto, keepeth us still, and teacheth us here to know that he will keep us for ever. For he would not have us to ask for deliverance from evil, if that he would not

we should certainly look for the same. If thou doubt of final perseverance, thou dishonourest God. Be certain therefore; rest in hope, be still in his word. See also how he hath commanded his whole church, and every member thereof, to pray for thee as well as for themselves, in these and all other things.

Now and then go about to reckon how many and divers kinds of evils there be, that thereby, as you may know you are delivered from none, but by God's great goodness, so you may see that the number of evils that you have, are nothing to be compared to the multitude of evils wherewith (if your Christ were not) the devil would all to betray and daub you.

But what are all the miseries and evils that can be, to be compared to the least joys prepared for us in heaven? Oh! think of those joys, and pray that when the tide of death cometh, we may sail forth of the haven of this flesh and this world joyfully. In praying this petition, call to mind the evils you have been in, the evils you are in, and the evils you may fall in, if God should not preserve you, that you might be stirred up the more to thankfulness, to prayer, to trust in God, to modesty, &c.

For thine is the kingdom, thine is the power, thine is the glory for ever.

As in the beginning of this prayer by these words (our Father which art in heaven) thy children are excited and stirred up to a full confidence of obtaining the petitions following, and all things necessary; so in the latter end thou hast added for the same purpose these words, For thine is the kingdom, &c.; wherein I am taught these many things: first, that in prayer I should have such consideration of thy kingdom, power, glory, and eternity, that my mind

should be stricken with an admiration of the same; secondly, that I should so consider them especially in prayer, that I should not doubt, but that thou workest, rulest, and governest all things every where, in all persons and creatures, most wisely, justly, and mercifully; thirdly, that in prayer all my petitions should tend to the setting forth of thy power, of thy kingdom, and of thy glory. Last of all, that in prayer I should in no wise doubt of being heard, but be assured that thou, which hast commanded me to pray, and hast promised to hear me, dost most graciously, for thy mercy's sake and truth's sake, hear my petitions, according to thy good will, through Jesus Christ thy dear Son, our Lord and only Saviour. By reason whereof I have great cause to lament and rejoice; to lament, because I consider not these things in prayer in such sort, as should move me to admiration and gratitude; because I consider not thy power and wisdom generally in all things; because I am so careless for thy kingdom, and because I am so full of dubitation and doubting of thy goodness: to rejoice, I have great cause, because thou revealest these things unto me on this sort; because of thy power, kingdom, and glory, which maketh to the hearing of my prayers, and helping of me; because thou wilt use me as thine instrument to set forth thy kingdom, power, and glory, and because it pleaseth thee to hear my prayers, and assuredly wilt save me for ever.

But, alas! how far am I from these lamentations and rejoicings! by reason whereof I deserve damnation. Oh! be merciful unto me, and forgive me, and of thy goodness grant me thy holy Spirit to reveal to me my blindness, oblivion, and contempt of thy kingdom, power, and glory, with the greatness of my doubtings, that I may heartily as lament them,

so have them pardoned, and taken from me, through the merits of Jesus Christ thy Son.

Again, give me thy holy Spirit, to reveal to me in such sort thy kingdom, power, glory, and eternity, that I may always have the same before mine eyes, be moved with the admiration thereof, labour effectually to set forth the same; and finally, as to have the fruition thereof after this life, so to increase in an assured, certain, and lively expectation of the same, that I may always and in all things rejoice in thee through Christ, and give laud, thanks, and praises perpetually unto thy most holy name, O blessed Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, three Persons and one God, to whom be all honour and glory world without end.

Here think, that if the kingdom, power, glory, and eternity be God's, which is our Father, what our dignity is, which be his children. If the power be our Father's, of whom should we be afraid? If the devil be subject to the Lord's power and kingdom (as he is), how can the subject have power over us, which be sons and heirs, in that he hath not power over swine, without the providence and permission of God? Therefore full well should we pray, Lead us not into temptation, rather than, Let us not be led into temptation. For power is the Lord's, and the devil hath none, but that he hath of God's gift. No; he were not of capacity to receive power, if God did not make him of capacity, although the execution of it is rather of God's permission.

Give all thanks, praise, and glory to God our Father, through Christ our Lord and Saviour. So be it.

*A MEDITATION upon the twelve Articles of the
CHRISTIAN FAITH.*

I believe in God the Father, &c.

THY people (O Lord God, the Father of our Saviour Jesus Christ) do here in saying this article (*I believe in God the Father Almighty, &c.*) by faith know that thou, together with Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost, didst create all things that be in heaven and in earth (for by heaven and earth are understood all things therein); and as they know this, so they by the same faith do see thee the same God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; to govern all things after thy great wisdom, power, righteousness, and mercy, using every creature they see as means to put them in remembrance of fearing, reverencing, trusting, and loving thee; for in every creature they behold thy presence, power, wisdom, and mercy.

Again, by this word (*Father*) they declare their belief how that they are not only thy creatures, and all that ever they have, to be thy gracious gifts and blessings; but also how that they are thy children, dearly beloved, and cared for of thee through Jesus Christ; wherethrough (notwithstanding their unworthiness), as they conceive a sure hope of thy goodness and fatherly love towards them, in soul and body for ever, so are they thankful for their creation, and also for that thou hast made them thy excellent creatures, lords of all. They are thankful for the creation of all creatures, and use the same with thankfulness, as visible tokens of thy invisible love; they are thankful for thy conserving and keeping them, and for the governing them and all the world, lamenting that they are no more thankful, that they believe

no deeper, that reason hath so great a swing with them in these matters.

But I, most gracious good Lord and Father, though I say, *I believe in thee, my Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth*, yet thou knowest that I am full of much doubting, not only of this, whether thou art my good, almighty, and most loving dear father in Christ (because I feel in myself such a conscience of unworthiness, and so great want of those things which thou requirest of thy children; and so transfer the cause of my being thy child in part to myself, where it is due only and wholly always to thy mercy and grace in Christ), but also thou knowest my doubting of my creation and governance, and of the creation and governance of all this world (as I declare by my unthankfulness for my creation, for mine adoption, for my gubernation, for thy providence for me), or else, dear Father, I could not but heartily with thy children rejoice and praise thy holy name, and that continually; being henceforth careful for nothing but how to please thee, and profit thy people, and that they might praise thy name in all things for evermore, desiring the sanctification of thy name, the coming of thy kingdom, the doing of thy will upon earth as it is in heaven.

Thou mightest have made me a dog, but of thy goodness hast made me a creature after thine image; thou mightest have made me a Turk, a Jew, a Saracen, but thou hast made me a Christian, a member of thy church; thou, after my birth, mightest have left me, and in all need have made no providence for me, as we sometimes see hath happened unto others; but yet thou never didst so with me, and yet I am of all others most unthankful.

Thy creatures I thankfully use not; thy invisible love by thy manifold visible tokens I consider not, as

now I should by this apparel of my body, by this corporal health, by this light, by this my hearing, seeing, feeling; memory, understanding, time, place, company, creatures, and benefits, as well in keeping innumerable evils from me, both in soul and body, which else could not but come to me; as also in giving to me presently so many things, as without thy especial grace and working I never could have had, or presently could keep them. In thy creatures I see not thy power, for I fear thee not; I see not thy presence, for I reverence thee not; I see not thy wisdom, for I adore thee not; I see not thy mercy, for I love thee not; I praise thee not but in lips and tongue; and therefore in all that thy creatures do teach me, cry out upon me to be thankful to thee, to love, fear, serve thee, and trust in thee, and that continually; in that I do not so, they cannot but cry out upon me and against me in thy sight, and in the day of judgment will weapon themselves against me.

Oh that I did now consider this! Oh that my blind eyes and my deaf ears were opened! Oh that my miserable and foolish heart were made wise and converted! This only thou canst do which hast all men's hearts in thy hands, to bow them as pleaseth thee. Bow my heart, good Lord, into thy testimonies; open my eyes; make me to hear for thy mercy's sake, that I may believe and so love thee, be thankful to thee, amend in all things and serve thee, though not as thy dear servants do, yet at the least as other brute creatures do; that is, to obey thee and to be profitable to others.

Now forasmuch as my sins let this, and all good things from me, I beseech thee pardon me all my sins according to thy gracious promise, for our Lord Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, &c.

Thy servants, O Christ Jesus, and people, do know by faith, that as thou art almighty and God with the Father, by whom all things were made and are ruled; for thou art God eternal, co-equal and co-substantial with the Father and the Holy Ghost; so thou art man, and hast taken our nature upon thee by the operation of the Holy Ghost in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and art become the blessed seed which hast bruised the serpent's head (Gen. iii.); the blessed seed in whom all nations are blessed (Gen. xxiii.); the prophet whom Moses did prophesy of (Deut. xviii.); the sampler he saw in the mount (Exodus, xxv.); the truth and body of all the types, figures, and shadows of the old law; the Messias, Christ, and Saviour of thy people; the advocate and redeemer; the pacifier of God's wrath for sins, the opener of heaven, and giver of everlasting life.

This they know thou broughtest to pass in thy human nature, by thy incarnation and nativity, by thy being here on earth, by thy living, teaching, fasting, praying; especially by thy suffering under Pontius Pilate; by thy death, burial, resurrection, ascension unto the heavens, and reigning on the right hand of the Father, from whence thou shalt come to judge both the quick and the dead: and as they know this, so by faith they apply it also to themselves, that for their sake thou wast made man, didst pray, fast, wast tempted, didst die, rosest again, and didst ascend into heaven; and there art set their advocate, bishop, and high-priest, always appearing in God's sight for them, from whence they look for thee, knowing that thou wilt not enter into judgment with them to damn them, which wouldest damn thyself for them.

By this faith they feel these affections in themselves, namely, the hatred of sin, the fear of God, the love of God, trust in thee, and love to thy church. The hatred of sin they feel, because it is so foul a thing as would not be washed away with any other thing than with thy precious blood-shedding; the fear of God, because his anger is so great against sin that no less price could pacify his wrath than thy most painful death; the love of God, because he hath so loved them that he would not spare thee, his dear Son, for them, even when they were his enemies; trust in thee, because thou hadst no respect to thyself, but most willingly didst give thyself wholly to be our saviour and servant; love to thy people and church, because generally and particularly in every member of the same they see how dear they are to thee, and therefore they cannot but be so to them. Oh how do they imitate and follow thy footsteps! How do they rejoice when they are in any thing by affliction made like to thee! Oh how do they lament their sins, ingratitude, unbelief; love thee, and wholly yield themselves up to thee! whereas I (O gracious God, and dear Saviour, Jesus Christ), though I say I believe in thee, which was conceived by the Holy Ghost, yet, alas! I do but babble this, for nothing is else in me but unbelief. Of thy power and love, of thine anger and mercy, I have but an opinion, as my insensibleness and unthankfulness doth declare.

If a man should show me friendship but in a trifle, or suffer any thing at all for me, I could not but be thankful; and thou, besides my creation, hast redeemed me, and brought me into the number of God's children (than which nothing is greater), and lo! I am unthankful.

Thou hast suffered much for me: from heaven

thou camest into earth to fetch me into heaven, but I regard it not.

Thou barest my sins on thy back, suffering a most bitter death; but I am so far from thankfulness, that I still more and more loath thee.

Thou wouldest enter into a communion with me, taking my nature unto thee concerning the substance thereof, that I might enter into a communion with thee concerning the qualities wherewith in thyself thou hast endued it, but I consider it not.

Thou didst die to deliver me from death, but I still more and more give thee cause to die, so ungrateful am I.

Thou didst arise to justify me, but I with the Jews would still keep thee down, because I would not leave my wickedness.

Thou ascendedst to heaven to take possession for me there, to be always in the sight of thy Father for me, to send me down gifts, to pray for me; but I daily am pulling thee down again, as much as in me lieth. I am altogether earthly; I hide myself out of thy sight by forgetting thee; I reject and abuse thy gifts; I neglect prayer.

Thou art now in a readiness to come to judge both quick and dead, but I tremble not at this gear, nor beseech thee before thou come to be merciful unto me, and not to enter into judgment with me; yea, I think nothing at all of thy coming: the wicked consider not the end, they think not on thy judgments.

Thou wouldest bring me to thy Father, that I might find grace; but I put this off, and therefore am worthy to feel thee a Judge, which refuse to feel thee a Saviour.

Now the cause of all these things is unbelief, the which though it be natural, by reason of the corruption of our nature, yet I have augmented the

same maliciously, in not labouring thereagainst, and continuing in all sin and wickedness, by reason whereof I deserve most justly thy anger thereupon, even rejection from thy face for ever.

Long hast thou mourned, even with displeasure and anger, the incredulity of my heart ; calling me therefrom, and offering me thy grace, which I have neglected and rejected, and therefore am never worthy to have it any more offered unto me ; much more, then, I am unworthy to have grace given me to receive thy mercy.

Alas ! what shall I do ? shall I despair, or, as long as I can, keep me unmindful of my misery ? O Saviour Christ Jesu, wilt not thou be merciful unto me ? Thou didst die for me when I deserved it not, and now is thy mercy shortened ? Wilt not thou give me thy grace, and take from my heart this horrible unbelief ? Shall I never love thee ? Shall I never hate sin ? Shall I never, as with my mouth I say, *I believe in Jesus Christ*, so in heart say the same ? Shall Satan possess me for ever ? O Christ Jesus, which hast led captivity captive, what, wilt not thou help me ? though I desire it not as I should, yet give me to desire when thou wilt.

Thou didst appear to destroy the work of the devil ; thou seest his work in me ; good Christ, destroy his work, but not thy work ; save me, for thy great mercies' sake ; give me to believe in thee, in thy death, resurrection, and ascension ; pardon me my sins, and mortify now in me my corrupt affections ; raise me up and justify me ; regenerate me daily more and more ; give me faith of immortality, resurrection of this body ; give me faith to ascend into heaven, and to be certain that thou hast already taken possession for me there ; give me to look for thy coming, and to be ready in thy coming to find mercy to everlasting life, &c.

I believe in the Holy Ghost.

O Holy Spirit, the third person in Trinity, which didst descend upon Christ our Saviour in his baptism in the likeness of a dove; thy children know that with the Father and the Son thou madest and rulest all creatures, visible and invisible; they know thee in their redemption to be no less willing and loving than the Father and the Son; for thou didst always declare Christ to be the Son of God, and gavest testimony inwardly in the hearts of thy elect to believe and embrace the same; and outwardly, by miracles and wonders, they know thee to be the comforter and governor whom Christ did promise in his corporal absence should teach, rule, keep, comfort, and govern his church and people.

Again, as in the former part of their belief they consider the works of creation and redemption; so in this part they consider the place where the same is most effectual and taketh place, even thy holy church, which is catholic; that is, extending itself to all times, to all places, to all kinds of people.

For in this church only they know, that as all things were made, so the work of redemption was taken in hand, that the blessed Trinity might in this church be praised, magnified, served, and worshipped for ever.

This church is nothing else but a communion and society of saints; that is, not only a society of all such as be, have been, or shall be thy people, but also a society or partaking of Christ Jesus, which is the head of the same; yea, by him of thee (O blessed Father!) which art the head of Christ, and of thee (O Holy Ghost!) which now shadowest and sittest upon the same, to hatch and cherish it, as the hen her chickens, by the extending of thy wings,

not only to defend them from their enemies, but also to cover their sins, and to remit them in this life, beginning also here the resurrection of the flesh and everlasting life, the which thou wilt in the end of the world consummate, so that they shall not need to be covered for sin; for then shall they be pure and have glorious bodies, immortal and spiritual, the which shall have the fruition of eternal joy, life everlasting, and glory, such as the eye hath not seen, the ear hath not heard, nor the heart of man can conceive. For then Christ Jesus shall give up his kingdom to God the Father, that God may be all in all; concerning the governance of it by the ministration of his word, and other means, whereby now he governeth it, that it may be his Father's kingdom, we being become like unto him (1 John, iii.): that is, as to the manhood of Christ the Godhead is united, and is all in all without any other means; even so God shall be in us, assuming then not only in the person of Christ the human nature, but also all the human nature of his church, which be members of Christ; the wicked and reprobate being separate then from this communion, and cast into eternal perdition with Satan and antichrist, there to be in torments and horror for ever.

By reason of this their faith they are thankful to thee (O Holy Spirit), which hast taught them this, and given them to believe it.

By reason of this faith they singularly pray, love, and help thy church here militant, and labour to be holy, &c.

By reason of this faith they confess themselves sinners, they desire and believe pardon of their sins, they are risen and rise daily concerning the inward man, and do feel the life eternal begun in them, more and more labouring, praying, wishing, and desiring for the same wholly and perfectly,

Whereas (O Lord God and most gracious Holy Spirit) thou knowest that it is otherwise with me; I do but babble with my lips in saying *I believe in the Holy Ghost*, for I am unthankful for calling me into thy church; I do not live holily; I confess not, I lament not my sins, I pray not for remission of them, I stand in doubt thereof; as I feel not myself risen from a sinful life as I should be, or as I feel not life begun in me as it is in thy dear children, so do I doubt hereof, whether I have pardon of my sins, whether I am regenerate, whether I feel truly everlasting life (the which thing doth most displease thee), and yet with my tongue I say, *I believe in the Holy Ghost*. Oh, I beseech thee (good Holy Spirit), for thy love's sake, which moved thee to agree and be willing to pacify and open thy goodness, not only in the work of creation (for thou didst lie upon the waters, and as the hen her chickens, didst, as it were, hatch the work of creation), but also in the work of redemption; and therefore didst ascend and abide not only upon Christ in his baptism, but also on the Apostles and church, in fiery tongues, visibly, the fiftieth day after Christ's resurrection; as now thou dost invisibly, generally, and particularly, sit upon thy church and children, being the consolator, the comforter, the teacher, and leader, the guider and governor of us all.

For this thy love's sake, I say, I beseech thee to be merciful unto me, and forgive me my doubting, unbelief, ingratitude, and horrible, monstrous uncleanness and sin, and utterly take them from me. Bring me into thy church which thou guidest; that is, guide me, make me holy, and by faith couple me to Christ, by charity to thy people; that is, give me the communion of saints with thy saints, overshadow my sins, raise me up to righteousness, begin in me everlasting life, and now more and more to

expect and look for all these great mercies, and at length to possess eternal felicity with thee, O blessed Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, three persons and one almighty, eternal, most just, wise, and good God; to whom be all glory, power, and dominion, now and for ever!

A MEDITATION upon the TEN COMMANDMENTS.

I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, &c.

O GOOD Lord and dear Father, here thou wouldest I should know that thou, which broughtest thy people of Israel out of Egypt with a mighty hand and a stretched-out power, which gavest thy law upon Mount Sinai in great thundering, lightning, fire; which spakest by the Prophets, and didst send thy dearly beloved Son, Jesus Christ, co-equal and co-substantial with thee in power, majesty, and glory, to take upon him our nature by the operation of the Holy Ghost in the womb of the Virgin Mary, of whose substance he was made and born man, but pure, without sin, that we, by birth children of wrath, by him might be made thy children, children of grace, communicating with him righteousness, holiness, and immortality, by the working of the Spirit, as he communicated with us flesh and blood (but not infected with sin, as is ours) by the working of the same Holy Spirit; which Spirit, after his bitter death, resurrection, and ascension into the heavens, he sent plentifully, and by a visible sign, unto his Apostles and disciples, by whom he published the Gospel throughout the whole world, and so continually

hath done from age to age, doth, and will do unto the end of the world, by the ministry of preaching; thou wouldest, I say, that we should know and believe, that thou, this Almighty Lord and God, which on this sort hast revealed and opened thyself; art the one alone, very true and eternal almighty God, which madest and rulest heaven and earth, and all things visible and invisible, together with this thy dearly beloved Son, Jesus Christ, and with the Holy Spirit, consubstantial and co-eternal with thee, dear Father. Not only this, but also thou wouldest that I should know and believe, that by the same thy dearly beloved Son thou hast brought me from the tyranny and captivity of Satan and this sinful world (whereof the captivity of Egypt, under Pharaoh was a figure), and in his blood shed upon the cross thou hast made a covenant with me, which thou wilt never forget, that thou art and wilt be my Lord and my God; that is, thou wilt forgive me my sins and be wholly mine, with all thy power, wisdom, righteousness, truth, glory, and mercy; wherefore, although I might confirm my faith by the innumerable mercies hitherto poured upon me most abundantly, as thy children of Israel might have done, and did confirm their faith by the manifold benefits poured upon them in the desert; yet specially the seal of thy covenant, I mean thy holy sacrament of baptism, wherein thy holy name was not in vain called upon me (O dear Father, sweet Son and Saviour, Jesus Christ, and most gracious good Holy Ghost), should most assuredly confirm, and even on all sides seal up my faith of this covenant, that thou art my Lord and my God; even as Abraham and thy people of Israel did by the sacrament of circumcision, which as the Apostle calleth the seal or signal of righteousness, so dost thou call it; being but the sign of thy covenant in deed, yet thy very covenant; because as thy

word is most true and cannot lie, as thy covenant is a covenant of peace infallible and everlasting; even so the sacrament and seal of the same is a most true testimonial and witness thereof.

In consideration, therefore, of this, that thou, the Almighty God, of thine own goodness hast vouchsafed not only to make me a creature after thine own image and likeness, which mightest have made me a beast; to give unto me a reasonable soul endued with memory, judgment, &c. which mightest have made me an idiot, without wit or discretion, &c.; to endue me with a body beautified with right shape, limbs, health, &c. which mightest have made me a cripple, lame, blind, &c.; graciously to enrich me concerning fortune, friends, living, name, &c. which mightest have made me a slave, destitute of all friends, and helps for this life; but also hast vouchsafed that I, being a miser, born in sin, conceived in iniquity, to whom nothing is due (more than to a Turk, Jew, or Saracen) but eternal damnation, should be called into the number of thy people, enrolled in thy book, and now in thy covenant, so that thou, with all that ever thou hast, art mine; for which causes sake hitherto thou hast kept me, cherished, defended, spared, and fatherly chastised me, and now graciously dost keep me and care for me, giving me to live, be, and move in thee, expecting also and waiting how thou mightest shew mercy upon me (Isaiah, xxx.):—in consideration, I say, of this, most justly and reasonably thou requirest that as thou art my Lord God, so I should be thy servant and one of thy people; as thou hast given thyself wholly unto me, to be mine, with all thy power, wisdom, &c. (for he that giveth himself giveth all he hath), so should I be wholly thine, and give over myself unto thee, to be guided with thy

wisdom, defended with thy power, holpen, relieved, and comforted by thy mercy.

First therefore to begin withal, thou commandest that I should have none other gods in thy sight; that is to say, as I should have thee for my Lord and God, to look for all good things most assuredly at thy hands, and therefore I should put all my trust in thee, be thankful unto thee, love thee, fear thee, obey thee, and call upon thy holy name in all my needs; so should I give this faith, love, fear, obedience, thankfulness and invocation, or prayer, to none other, no, not in my heart, but only to thee or for thee, where thou commandest. All this to do (O Lord God), and that with most joyful heart, I have great cause.

For what a thing is it, that thou, Jehovah, wouldst vouchsafe to make me, as thou hast done, to give thy Son for me, and to become my God? Oh! what am I, that thou wouldest I should put my trust in thee? This thou doest, that I might never be confounded, but might be most happy. What am I, that thou wouldest I should fear thee, where the only cause, why thou requirest this of me, is not only because thou hast power to cast both body and soul into hell-fire, and because they that fear thee not, shall perish, but also that thou mightest give me thy wisdom, that it might go well with me in the evil day, that thou mightest reveal thy Son to me, and thy mercy might be upon me from generation to generation. Oh! what am I, that thou wouldest have me to obey thee, not only that I never perish with the disobedient, but that thou mightest give me thy holy Spirit, and rewards innumerable? Oh! what am I, that thou wouldest I should love thee? the which thing thou dost to this end, that I might fully and wholly enjoy and possess thee, according to the nature of love; and therefore dost thou require my

whole heart, that I might dwell in thee, and thou in me. What am I, that thou wouldest I should call upon thee? Verily, because thou wilt give me whatsoever I shall ask of thee in the name of thy dear child Jesus Christ; and even so wouldest thou have me thankful, that thou mightest pour out upon me, yet more plentifully, all good things. So that great cause have I to put my trust in thee, to love, fear, and obey thee, to call upon thee, to be thankful unto thee, not only in respect of the hurt which else will ensue, but also in respect of the commodity that hereby cometh unto me; but most of all, yea, alone for thy own sake, for thy goodness, wisdom, beauty, strength and power, truth and great mercies.

But, alas! dear Father, what shall I say? As in times past horribly I have broken this thy law, in trusting in thy creatures, calling upon them, loving, fearing, and obeying many things besides thee, and rather than thee; even so at this present I am a most miserable wretch: blinded I am through unbelief and mine own wickedness; so that I see not firmly this thy power, wisdom, goodness, &c. but waver and doubt of it; I love little or nothing; I fear less, I obey least of all; thankfulness and prayer are utterly quenched in me; by reason whereof I am worthy of eternal damnation. If after thy justice thou shalt deal with me simply, I am (O Lord) damned and lost for ever, for I am very wicked; but yet, inasmuch as thou hast given thy Son Jesus Christ to be a slain propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, so that he which believeth in him shall not perish, but be saved (for so thou hast promised); thy truth now requireth to save me. Howbeit, here thou mayest say unto me, that I do not believe; and therefore, notwithstanding thy truth and promise, in that I believe it not, thou mayest mos

justly, after thy justice, damn me. O Lord God, to this I cannot otherwise answer (my unbelief is so great), but because thy mercy is above all thy works, and thy goodness and love is that which all creatures most highly commend and magnify, as the thing whereof thou art called God; because thou art right good, and love itself; because of this thy mercy (gracious God), if thou wilt look thereon, and couple thy truth therewith, then (good Lord) I shall be saved, and praise thy name for evermore.

Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, &c.

As the first commandment teacheth me, as well that thou art my God, as what God thou art, and therefore, of equity, I should have none other gods but thee; that is, I should alone hang on thee, trust in thee, love thee, serve thee, call upon thee, obey thee, be thankful to thee; so because thou didst reveal thyself visibly, that thou mightest visibly be worshipped, this commandment is concerning thy worship, that in no point I should follow, in worshipping thee, the device or intent of any man, saint, angel, or spirit; but should take all such as idolatry and image-service, be it never so glorious. And why? forsooth because thou wouldest I should worship thee, as thou hast appointed by thy word; for if service be acceptable, it must needs be according to the will of him to whom it is done, and not of him which doeth it; but inasmuch as of man none knoweth the will and pleasure, but his spirit, except he reveal by word or sign the same; much more of thee, O Lord, none doth know thy will, but thy Spirit, and they to whom thou dost reveal the same. And therefore abominable even in thy sight are all those things which with men are in most force and estimation, because they are not after thy word; so that

the meaning of this precept is, that as in the first I should have none other gods but thee, so I should have no worship of thee, but such as thou appointest. Hereby therefore I see great cause of thankfulness for this commandment, in that thou wouldest have mine outward service, and that after thy appointment; lest I should busy my brain how best to serve thee. Good Lord, thou needest not my service: perfect thou wast before I was, therefore it is for mine own commodity, that thou commandest me, yea, even for mine own wealth. Thou mightest have let me have stood all day idle; but such is thy love, that thou wouldest I should go into thy vineyard, that with thy servants I might receive the hire of blessedness. And how great a benefit is it, to deliver me of so great a burden, wherewith I should have been cumbered, if I should have served thee in any point after my wit and reason. But, alas! I not considering what a promotion thy service is, nor what an easy service it is, and simple (for one may well know what to do, and when he pleaseth thee, namely, when he serveth thee as thou hast appointed) as I am, and always have been unthankful; so I am, and always have been, a grievous transgressor of this thy law: for as in times past, when I did not know this commandment, I was an image-worshipper of stocks, stones, &c. yea, bread and wine; so now I am a worshipper of mine affections, offering to them the service due unto thee, though not thereby to worship thee, as I thought when I kneeled to stocks and stones, bread and wine, &c. yet with no less transgression of thy law: for the which I have deserved, and do deserve, everlasting damnation. Of thy goodness and great mercy (dear Father) I beseech thee forgive me, for Christ's sake, whom thou didst give to be the fulfilling of the law, to all them that should believe. O Father! I believe, help

mine unbelief. As thou hast of thy goodness hitherto spared me, transgressing this thy holy precept; so of thy goodness forgive me, as well mine idolatry done in times past, as that which of late time I have committed, and do commit. And as thou by this commandment hast delivered me from the one, that is, bowing myself to stocks and stones, so (dear Father) deliver me from all other bowing myself after mine own will, to mine own affections; that I may have none other God in heart but thee, nor do service to any other but only to thee, and for thee, after thy word, as thou commandest. Oh! open mine eyes, to see thy will in this thy gracious precept. Give me a will to love it heartily, and a heart to obey it faithfully, for thy dear Son's sake Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.

By this commandment I perceive (O Lord), that as, in the first, thou wouldest in the exterior service of thee I should utterly abandon mine own will and reason, and all the reasons or good entreaties of man, and wholly give myself to serve thee, after thy will and word; so here dost thou begin to tell me, how thou wilt have my tongue to be exercised in thy service; and therefore thou biddest me not to take thy name in vain; as by temerarious or vain swearing, by cursing, praying without sense, as those do that pray in a tongue they know not; praying without faith or intent consideration of the thing desired; without hearty desire and certain expectation of obtaining that which is to thy glory and my salvation; also by jesting or foolish abusing; or negligent reading or hearing of thy holy word; by the which thou, as by thy name, art known; and in like manner, by

denying thy truth and word, or concealing it when occasion is offered to promote thy glory, and confirm thy truth. By reason whereof I may well see that thou wouldest have me to use my tongue in humble confessing thee, and thy word and truth after my vocation; in praying heartily, and calling upon thy name; in reading and hearing thy word, and speaking thereof, with all reverence, diligence, and attention; in thanksgiving and praising thee, for thy great mercy; in instructing my brother, and admonishing him when he erreth, after my calling and vocation, with all humbleness, gentleness, and love.

Thus wouldest thou have me to exercise my tongue, and not to think that the exercising of it in this sort is a vain and unprofitable thing; but a thing that pleaseth thee, and profiteth myself and others.

And forasmuch as thou knowest that our tongue is a slippery member, and we very negligent over it, and of the great commodity that might thereby come to us and other by using it in thy service accordingly; thou hast added a fearful and most true communication, that though men will find no fault, or punish us therefor, yet wilt not thou hold him guiltless that taketh thy name in vain (Levit. xxiii.), as by many examples we are taught, as in thy holy word, so by daily experience, if we would consider the same.

And therefore I have great cause to give praise and thanks to thy most holy name, for many great benefits, which by this commandment I receive, and ought with thankfulness to consider. First, that it would please thee, not only to give me a tongue, where thou mightest have made me speechless; but also that thou wouldest have it sanctified to thy service. Again, that thou wouldest not only reveal thy name unto us, but also wouldest give me leave to call upon it, praise and publish it; yea, thou hast commanded me so to do, and not only

commanded, but hast promised, that thou wilt hear my prayer; and that my praising of thee, and confessing thy word and truth, shall not be in vain.

Thirdly, that thou wouldest all men should use their tongue so, that thereby I might be the better instructed, admonished, and occasioned to use myself well, and in the obedience of this thy holy precept: but what go I about to reckon by tale the causes of thanks for this commandment, seeing that they be innumerable, if a man should but look even upon thy very word, by the which, as by thy name, thou art most truly known: the which word thou commandest unto us in this commandment, &c. as thou dost preaching, private admonishing, thanksgiving, and prayer; than the which, nothing is more profitable to us, in this vale of misery. But, gracious good Lord, I acknowledge myself not only to be a most unthankful wretch, for this thy holy precept, and the great mercy which herethrough I perceive thou hast most graciously poured upon me, and dost yet still offer unto me; but also that I am a miserable transgressor of this thy most holy, good, and blessed commandment, as always I have been in times past. Horribly have I abused thy name in swearing, cursing, and jesting wickedly. I have called upon other names than thine, as the names of Peter, Paul, Mary, &c. yea, of some whose salvation is to be doubted of. I have foolishly prayed in such a tongue as I knew not what I prayed and said, with many other transgressions of this precept, wherein yet I am conversant; as in seldom praying, and when I pray, I am not intent, nor very desirous of the thing I ask with my tongue. After prayer I do not earnestly look for the good things asked and prayed for; and therefore, when I obtain my request, I am most unthankful; thy word I read little, and most negligently, forgetting forthwith what I read;

I admonish not others when I hear them abuse thy holy word ; I am afraid, for fear of loss of friends, name, or life, to confess thy truth, Gospel, and name, which was called upon me in baptism, and not in vain, if I did not thus make it in vain. But, alas! I can in no wise comprehend the multitude of my transgressions concerning this thy law. But this is a sin above other sins, that under thy name, word, and Gospel, I play the hypocrite, having more care for mine own name, than for thine ; for if my name were evil spoken of, it would grieve me, and I would defend it ; but, alas! I hear thine daily evil spoken of, and see it profaned by false doctrine and evil living, but it grieveth me not. After my vocation I seek not, nor do not go about to redress these things in myself and in others. And why ? because (good Lord) I love myself better than thee, and not thee with my whole heart. Thy first commandment hath no place with me, as it should have ; it possesseth not my heart, mind, and will, as thou requirest, most to mine own commodity ; by reason whereof I am worthy of eternal damnation. Oh ! what shall I do (gracious God), which not only have been so grievous and filthy a swearer, curser, &c. so great a caller upon dead creatures, and so heinous a transgressor of this law ; but also at this present do so horribly and hypocritically offend thee, in taking thy name in vain, and that in so many ways, in praying and not praying ; in reading and not reading ; in speaking and not speaking ; and not confessing simply, and from my heart, thy doctrine, truth, and name ; but regarding mine own name far above it. Shall I fly from thee ? then undoubtedly I am more guilty, and more shall disobey this thy holy precept, adding sin to sin ; whereas, thou wouldest I should call upon thy holy name (dear Lord), which hast given thy dear Son Jesus Christ to be a mediator for

us; that through him we might find, not only grace for the pardon of our sins past, but also for the obtaining of thy holy Spirit; as well the better to understand, as also the better and more frankly to obey this thy holy precept for ever. For his sake (therefore, dear God) pardon my sins, past and present, whereof this law doth accuse me, and grant (most gracious Father) that I may be endued with thy holy Spirit, to know and love thy holy name, word, and truth in Jesus Christ; that I may be zealous, wise, and constant; and that my tongue may be sanctified henceforth, and guided with thy holy Spirit and grace, to publish, confess, and teach, after my vocation to others, as occasion is offered, thy truth and Gospel; to call upon thy name in all my need, to give thanks unto thee, praise thee, magnify thee, and to sanctify thy holy name, as a vessel of thy mercy, for ever and ever.

Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day, &c.

After thou hast told me, how in the external service of thee (gracious Lord) thou wilt have my tongue used, so dost thou now teach me, how thou wilt have mine ears and all my whole body occupied, namely, in sanctification and holiness; that is, in those things, which thou peculiarly hast appointed, to be means immediately to help to that end. As in hearing thy word preached, and using the ceremonies of thee appointed, even as thou hast commanded; for the which things to be exercised of thy people, thou at the first didst appoint a certain day, namely, the seventh day, which therefore thou calledst thy Sabbath, that thereby they with their children, resting from all exterior labour, which hindereth the meditation of the mind, might not only be more able to go on through with their travail and

labour (for without some rest, nothing can endure, in respect whereof thou wouldest the very beasts which in labour were exercised should have the privilege of this Sabbath), but also and much rather, that thy people might with their family and children be taught; first, by the ministry of thy word in preaching and catechising; secondly, by the using of thy sacraments appointed after thy commandment and institution, they might be assured of thy promises; thirdly, by praying, they might be augmented in all godliness; and, last of all, by their meeting together and exercising all these thy works of sanctification, they might increase in love and charity one towards another, as members of one body, and fellows of one inheritance; and thus by meeting together, praying, and using thy sacraments, they might be instructed in thy law and of that Sabbath, whereunto thou thyself didst enter, after thou hadst made the world; ceasing from thy works, not of conservation, but of creation; into the which as after this life, and the works of this time, they should enter; so now they begin spiritually to enter, in resting from their own works, which the old man moveth them unto; not that (good Lord) thou wouldest these works, appointed for the Sabbath day, should not be exercised at any other time, but only on the seventh day; but because thou didst as well ordain them for a policy, to endure till the coming of Christ, as also according to the revelation of thee in that time, didst open thyself, beginning them in figures and shadows, whose verities in thy time were to be opened; therefore it pleased thee to appoint then the seventh day, which seventh day, although by reason of the policy being by thee destroyed, and by reason of Christ, the verity and body of all shadows, it be abrogated from us; yet standeth this commandment in force, as well for the works of

sanctification, that is, for preaching thy word, coming to hear it, for praying, using thy sacraments, and coming together to that end; as also for those days which by common order, and on good ground are ordained and received; howbeit with this liberty, that necessity of our faith, and sanctification and charity, may dispense therewith; occasion of wilful and witting offence being avoided, &c. So that hereby I perceive thy will and pleasure to be, that I should at all times, as much as charity and necessity will permit, give over myself, and cause all other over whom I have charge, so to do (especially on the Sundays and other holidays being received, and to that end appointed), to the resorting to the temple and places appointed to prayer; to hear with meekness thy holy word, and use thy sacraments and ceremonies as thou hast commanded; and to exercise all things which might be, to the confirmation and propagating of thy holy religion, or make to the increase of love and charity; as giving to the poor, reconciling such as be in variance, visiting the sick, and even (as it were) beginning that Sabbath whereof Isaiah speaketh. (Isa. i.)

By reason whereof I have great cause to thank thee (most gracious Father) that thou wouldest appoint me to be in this time, wherein thou hast more plentifully revealed thyself than thou didst, not only before Christ's coming, but also since Christ's ascension. Never since England was England, didst thou so manifestly reveal thy truth, as thou hast done in these days. Great cause I have to thank thee, that thou wouldest institute the ministry of thy word and sacrament, as means whereby thy holy Spirit is effectual to work in our hearts sanctification. Great cause have I to thank thee, that thou wouldest keep the books of the Prophets and Apostles, until this time. Great cause have I to praise thee, that thou

wouldest give me such knowledge in them as thou hast done, of thy great mercy; great cause have I to thank thee for the good and true ministers and preachers of thy word, which thou hast sent amongst us, and given me grace to hear them.

Great cause have I to thank thee, that in this religion thou hast given so long quietness and harbourage to thy church; great cause have I to thank thee, for that thou wouldest make me such a man, in whom thy holy Spirit might work; great cause I have to thank thee, which wouldest call me into thine eternal sabbath and rest, full of all joy, such as the eye hath not seen, the ear hath not heard; great cause have I to thank thee, that so many days are appointed for this end, that we should meet together to hear thy word and receive thy sacraments; great cause have I to thank thee for the institution of thy sacraments, which thou hast ordained as thy visible and palpable words, to the obsignation and confirmation of the faith of all such as use the same after thy commandments. But infinite are the causes for the which I ought to give thee thanks for this commandment.

But, alas! I am not only unthankful, but also a most miserable transgressor of it. I will not now speak of my transgressions past concerning this commandment; presently they are so many that I cannot. For thou knowest how I do not only at convenient times, on the work-day, keep myself away from common prayers in the congregation and assembly of thy people, and from hearing of thy word, but also on the sabbath-days, to ride or go about this or that worldly business, I am very prest; to sit down at the tavern, and to go to that man's table, I am ready at the first bidding; but, alas! to resort to the table of thy Son, and receive with thankfulness the sacrament of his body and blood, for confirm-

ation of my faith ; that is, to learn spiritually to taste Christ's body broken, and his blood shed, for the remission of my sins : to do this, oh ! how unwilling am I ! To go to mass and sacrings, with such-like idolatry, I have been a great time more ready than now I am to hear thy word, and use thy sacraments as I should do : thy ministers I pray not for ; thy church I am not careful for ; no, not now (good Lord !) when wicked doctrine most prevail-eth ; idolatry, superstition, and abomination abound-eth ; the sacrament and sacrifice of thy dear Son Jesus Christ is blasphemously corrupted : when for preaching there is nothing but massing ; for catechising, censuring ; for reading of the Scriptures, bell-ringing ; for singing of psalms and godly songs to our edification, all is done in Latin, with such notes, tunes, ditties, and descants, that utterly the mind is pulled from the consideration of the thing (if men did understand it) unto the melody ; all which my wickedness hath brought in, my profaning of this commandment, and my not praying. Thy ministers are in prison, dispersed in other countries, spoiled, burnt, murdered, many fall for fear of goods, life, name, &c. from the truth they have received unto most manifest idolatry ; false preachers abound among thy people ; thy people, dearly bought, even with thy blood, are not fed with the bread of thy word, but with suillings ; antichrist wholly prevail-eth ; and yet for all this, alas ! I am too careless, nothing lamenting my sins, which be the cause of all this. O dear Father, forgive me, for Christ's sake, and be merciful unto me ; and as of thy mercy thou didst give me time to repent, so give me repentance. Grant me thy holy Spirit, to open to me this thy law ; so that I may know thy will in it, love it, and always obey it ; thy good Spirit sanctify me, and work in me a true taste of eternal

life and pleasure, in the meditation of it ; give me (gracious, good Father) one little mouthful of the bread that thou feddest Elijah withal (1 Kings, xix.) ; give me that with him I may come into Mount Horeb. Help thy church, cherish it, and give it harbourage here and elsewhere, for Christ's sake ; purge thy ministry from corruption and false ministers ; send out preachers to feed thy people ; destroy antichrist and all his kingdom ; give to such as be fallen from thy truth repentance ; keep others from falling, and by their falling do thou the more confirm us ; confirm the ministers and poor people in prison and exile ; strengthen them in thy truth ; deliver them, if it be thy good will ; give them that with conscience they may so answer their adversaries, that thy servants may rejoice and the adversaries be confounded ; avenge thou thy own cause. (O thou God of Hosts), and help all thy people, and me especially, because I have most need.

Honour thy father and mother, that thou mayest live long, &c.

After that thou hast told me (good Lord) thy will concerning thy service which thou requirest inwardly and outwardly to be given unto thee, now dost thou begin to tell me what thy will is that I should do and leave undone for thy sake unto man. And first thou settest before mine eyes them who for order's sake and the more commodity of man in this life, thou hast set in degree and authority above me, comprehending them under the names of father and mother, that I might know that as of thee they are commanded to bear towards me a faithful love and a motherly care, in the very names of father and mother, wherewith thou honourest them ; so am I commanded of thee to do that which is most equal

and just (as the very brute beasts do teach us), that with childly affection and duty I should behave myself towards them; that is, I should honour them, which comprehendeth in it love, thankfulness, reverence, and obedience; and that not so much because they be my parents, and in their offices are careful for me (for it may be they will neglect the doing of their duty towards me), but because thou commandest me so to do, howsoever they do: so that by this commandment I perceive that thou wouldest I should consider them whom thou hast placed in authority and superior degree; as parents, magistrates, masters, or such-like; and accordingly behave myself toward them, honour them; that is to say, love them, be thankful unto them, reverence them, and obey them, for thy sake, so long as they pass not their bounds; that is, so long as they require not otherwise than thou hast given them commission or permission to do.

And forasmuch as thou seest their care and office is great, and our corruption to obey is very much; as well to encourage them in their vocation to be diligent, as to inflame me to humble obedience unto them, therethrough to make them more willing to sustain cares for me; thou addest a promise, that is, long life; which, so far as it is a blessing from thee, thou wilt endue us withal. Whereby we may gather, that a civil life doth much please thee, and receiveth here rewards, especially if we lead it for conscience to thy law. And on the contrary part, a disobedient life to them that be in authority, will bring the sooner thy wrath and vengeance in this life. All which worketh much to the commendation of the state of politic and civil magistrates. By reason hereof (dear Father) I see myself much bound to praise thee, and heartily to obey this thy commandment; for in it and by it thou declarest

thy great love toward us, which even in this present life, our pilgrimage and passage to our home, wouldest have us to enjoy the benefit of peace; and most seemly quietness and order, and by this order so couple us, that none should contemn or despise another, but even high and low to be and account themselves as parents and children; particularly, for my part, I cannot but say that I have most cause to thank thee for my parents, schoolmasters, and others, under whose tuition thou hast put me. No pen is able to write the particular benefits which I have hereby received in my infancy, childhood, youth, middle age, and always hitherto. Oh! how good a Lord hast thou declared thyself to me, which in them and by them hast nourished, fed, instructed, corrected, defended, and most graciously kept me! I could reckon innumerable behind me, and but few before me, so much made of and cared for as I have been hitherto. No small token of thy love to me-wards is it, that thou wouldest engrave in their hearts, and command them, under pain of damnation, to be careful over me, to do me good, and provide for me, as they have done, or rather thou by them publicly; also for the commonwealth, and such as thou hast placed in authority over me in both thy regiments, if I considered them that have been, and them that be, I could not but praise thee, good Lord; for no less praiseworthy art thou for this chastening us, and admonishing us now presently by them that be in authority, of our ingratitude and unthankfulness; than by such as have been, for all kinds of good things. But infinite are the causes of thankfulness, which this commandment considered should stir up in me; but, alas! most merciful Father, as I acknowledge myself most unthankful unto thee for all thy benefits poured upon me in this life by my parents, nurses, tutors, masters, magistrates, bishops,

pastors, and good friends, even from my cradle unto this hour, so unto them have I always been and am, in not loving them, as my coldness in praying for them, and to my power in helping them, declareth; and also my not reverencing them, my contemning them, and temerariousness in my mistrusting, or too narrowly and too straitly looking at them and their duties, sheweth; and not obeying them, as by my contumacy appeareth, not only when any thing to me unpleasant or unprofitable, but also profitable and convenient, is required; and yet I speak not of evil and muttering reports, or the offences in transgressing the politic laws for apparel and meats, and other no small offences, which I have committed and given. Oh! this is a sin, dear Father, that I always have been a private more than a common weal man, always I seek for mine own commodity, contemning that which maketh to the commodity of others. As for my disobedience and wicked behaviour towards my own parents, and all others whom thou hast set over me, dear Father, no tongue can express it, and therefore I am worthy of damnation. But (gracious good Lord and dear Father) I beseech thee, for thy Christ's sake, to have mercy upon me, and pardon me, as of thy goodness it pleased thee to pardon the Patriarchs. Thou hast given this commandment as thy holy law to open to us how corrupt we are, and how much we swerve from the pattern whereafter we were first made, and once agreed thereto before Adam's fall, that we might loath ourselves, and even thereby be driven to seek and set by thy sweet mercies in Christ Jesus, whom therefore thou didst send to fulfil the law in his flesh, that we might borrow of him the same, by true faith; which of thy goodness work in us by thy holy Spirit, and open this law unto us, that we may more and more increase in the knowledge, love, and obe-

dience of it to thy glory and our salvation. Amen. Dear Father, be merciful to our magistrates, especially the Queen's Highness, whose heart with the residue of her counsellors turn into thy testimonies, give them thy wisdom, and a zeal to the truth according to knowledge, that they may use the power they have received of thee to the cherishing of thy church, that with us here thy word may have free passage, and thy true worship may be maintained; and not only here, but also every where among those whom thou wouldest we should pray for. Be merciful to my poor parents (gracious Lord), with my brethren, sisters, wife, children, family, servants, kinsfolks, neighbours, as thou knowest they all have need. Give unto the hearts of all parents, magistrates, and such as be in authority here or elsewhere, that they may, according to that thou hast put them in trust withal, be faithful, diligent, careful, and happy. Grant unto children, servants, and subjects, that every one may render love, obedience, thankfulness, and reverence to all such as thou hast put in authority over them. Bless the church, and send it peace and harbourage here or elsewhere; bless the common weal, and send us peace; bless the dioceses and shires, and send them good bishops and justices; bless every household and family, that thy peace may be in the same continually. Finally, write this law, and all thy laws, in our hearts, we beseech thee, that we may keep them. Amen.

Thou shalt do no murder, &c.

As in the commandment going next before, thou settest before me the personages of all such as thou for the commodity, order, and peace of man in this life hast placed in authority, accordingly of us for thy sake to be esteemed, so dost thou in this com-

mandment set before us to look on the personages of all men generally, high and low, over whom thou givest us a charge, that we shall not kill or murder them. In which word thou comprehendest all kind of hatred or malice, in word, thought, or deed, as thy dearly beloved Son, expounding this commandment, doth teach (Matt. v.); yea, because thou wouldest all men should be dear unto us, being all of one substance, of one similitude, coming of the same parents, Adam and Eve, made of one God, redeemed of one Christ, in whom we should be coupled as members of one body, and live to the aid, succour, and comfort one of another; because of this (I say) easily we may see that not only thou forbiddest here to beware of all kinds of displeasures, but also thou commandest us to bear and exercise all kinds of love and favour in heart, word, and deed, and that for thy commandment's sake; for else towards our enemies our hearts would arise, and be great, in that they, contemning their duties towards us, seem to deserve the like at our hands.

By reason hereof I have great cause to thank thee, dear Father; for hereby I see how that thou dost much love my soul, which art so careful over my body, so that he which hurteth it displeaseth thee, and he that doth it good pleaseth thee, if so be he do it for thy sake. By this commandment now I see that it is thou that hast kept me from doing many evils, which else I should have outrageously done, and hast stirred me up to do good to my brethren, if at any time I have done any, even as thou hast also kept and dost keep presently others from doing me hurt, and hast and dost stir up those that do me good, to do so unto me. Oh! how great is the multitude of thy benefits, good Lord, wherewith thou hast overwhelmed me, and the which, through this commandment, I perceive myself to

have received, presently do receive, and so long as I live am like to receive; for thou commandest all men every where to do me good, love me, defend me, and cherish me; such is thy love to me in this present life, and that for my body. Oh! how great is thy love then to me in everlasting life, and that for my soul! If in a strange country so great is thy protection, how great is it at home! But, alas! dear Lord, how unthankful have I been, and am yet still, for these thy fatherly benefits! Oh! mine ingratitude! Yea, Lord, horribly have I transgressed, and still do transgress, this thy gracious precept, in pride, envy, disdain, malice, hardness of heart, unmercifulness, and contemning thy children, saints, and servants. Self-love altogether reigneth in me, and desire of praise, rule, and fame; I am so far from love and mercy in heart, good Lord, that no man can hear it in my tongue, nor see it in my works; but rather clean contrary, and that generally, and to them to whom I am most bound particularly. By reason whereof I have deserved everlasting damnation, and to be cast away from thy presence for ever. O most gracious Father, forgive me, for Christ's sake, I beseech thee; for to this end didst thou give this commandment, that I, seeing my corruption and depraved nature by sin, might come to thy mercy deserved by Christ, and through faith in him might find not only pardon of that which is past, but also thy grace and holy Spirit, to begin in me the obedience to this and all other thy holy precepts for evermore. So be it. For this thy Christ's sake, dear Father, I beseech thee therefore to take from me, and all other for whom thou wouldest that we should pray, all envy, pride, arrogancy, disdain, hatred, and all suspiciousness; and grant unto us bowels of mercy, humility, patience, meekness, long-suffering, gentleness, peace, charity, and all kinds of

brotherly love; comfort the feeble, relieve the poor, help the fatherless, heal the sick, bless the afflicted; shew thy great mercy upon all poor prisoners, and deliver them in thy good time; remember thy pity towards strangers, captives, widows, and such as be oppressed.

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

Here (good Lord) thou goest about to command unto me, as love in the other, so pureness and chastity in this; and therefore thou sayest I should not commit adultery; in the which word thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ doth comprehend all uncleanness, yea, the very concupiscence and abusing of the heart in lusting after any man's wife, or otherwise unchastely: by the which, in that thou wouldest have us to love in ourselves and others, purity and cleanness, that we might be holy as thou our God art holy, and our bodies being temples of thy holy Spirit might be kept pure; and accordingly easily we may see, that as thou forbiddest all unclean deeds, words, looks, and thoughts, so dost thou command us to love and exercise all purity, chastity, cleanness, sobriety, temperance, &c.

By reason whereof I have great cause to be thankful unto thee, which not only for the help and commodity of man, but also for remedy of man's infirmity, hast made womankind, and ordained the state of matrimony, which in thy sight is so holy and pure, that thou accountest this state of matrimony to be an undefiled thing; and such care thou hast over the personages married and their condition, that unto damnation they sin, which not only go about to defile that bed, but within their hearts do wish or desire it, yea, which do not endeavour themselves with thought, word, and deed, to help that

purity and cleanness between married folks be kept. But the great causes thou givest us to thank thee for this state and ordinance, and for thy defending us by this commandment, are innumerable.

Full well I see, that it is thou which by this commandment not only refrainest me, but also keepest my wife from impurity, which else we might both commit. Great is thy love (O good Lord), and more than I am able to consider, which declarest thyself to be thus careful over me, concerning the benefits which come unto me, both for the mind, body, and goods, by sobriety and temperance, which here thou requirest: only this I cannot but see, that I have great cause to thank thee, which art so careful over me, as by this commandment I well see.

But, alas! good Lord, what shall I say, which am and have been so far from thankfulness, that I am to be accounted among the most unthankful; yea, thou knowest it, good Lord. Filthily have I broken this law, and caused other so to do, of whose repentance I am uncertain; as also my tongue, alas! hath often been too shamefully exercised, mine eyes and my thoughts too wickedly abused.

All this gear I have increased by mine intemperance in eating, drinking, cherishing my body, &c. I have also hurt my bodily health, minished that which I and others should live on, and horribly hindered all good prayers and meditations; wherein, though I have time and place, yet, alas! I nothing exercise myself as I should do.

By reason whereof I have deserved everlasting damnation. O good Lord and gracious Father, do thou for thy name's sake, and in Christ's blood, pardon me and forgive me, I beseech thee; and as thou hast most mercifully hitherto spared me, so of thy mercy put away my trespasses, and the transgressions of those whom I have caused to sin; let that love

which moved thee to pardon Judah, with Tamar, David, Bathsheba, and the great sinner of whom we read in Luke, vii. move thee to pardon and forgive me also. Thou gavest this commandment to this end, that I might know my sin and sinful nature, and so thereby be driven to thy Christ crucified, for whose sake I ask mercy ; and also that thy good Spirit may be given unto me, to purify me, and work so in me and with me, that I may truly know, heartily love, and faithfully obey this thy holy precept, inwardly and outwardly, now and for ever. Amen. Gracious good Lord, grant to me and my wife, that we may dwell together according to knowledge, and may keep ourselves in holiness ; grant, O Lord, that we may be pure and undefiled, and grant the same to all that be married ; and to them which be unmarried, grant that they may live a pure, chaste, and undefiled life ; and if they have not the gift of singleness of life, grant them such mates with whom they may live holily to thy praise. Dear Father, give me the gift of sobriety and temperance, and grant the same to all them whom thou wouldest I should pray for. As in times past I have used my tongue and other members evil, so now, good Lord, grant that I may use them well chastely and godlily. This I pray thee, grant through Jesus Christ ; and finally, O Lord, both in soul and body, sanctify me, and as in thy temple dwell in me now and for evermore. Amen.

Thou shalt not steal.

Now that thou hast taught me the service required of thee for me to observe towards the personages of all men and women of every condition, thou beginnest to tell me what thou wouldest I should do concerning their goods ; and as in the next commandment before this thou didst command unto me so-

briety and pureness; so dost thou in this, justice and righteousness; forbidding me to steal, under the which word thou comprehendest all kinds of deceit; the which thing thou doest, because thou wouldest that I should give over myself wholly to the study and exercise of justice, as in the precept going before, thou wouldest I should give over myself wholly to the keeping of sobriety and pureness; so that I see thy good pleasure herein is not that I should alonely abstain from all theft, but also from all fraud and craft in word or deed, yea, that I should earnestly follow and exercise all equity, truth, and justice.

By reason whereof, I see myself much bound to praise thee, which art so careful over my goods and substance, that if any man should go about to steal from me, or to defraud me in any thing, yea, whosoever goeth not about to keep and care for that I have as he would do for his own, the same displeaseth thee.

O Lord, if thou hast such care for my goods, cattle, and such pelf, how great is thy care for my soul. If this one commandment were not, I perceive, as I for my own part should have done and do much worse than I have done; so much worse had been done to me and mine than hath been. It is thou, good Lord (I perceive), that hast both given all that I have, and also still conservest and keepest the same, and not my own polity, wisdom, and industry; for in vain were all this, except thou didst vouchsafe to use and take it as a mean to work by. There is nothing therefore that I have, but whensoever I look upon it, by this commandment, I learn thy goodness, strength, and power; for as thou givest it of thy mercy, so it speaketh to me that presently thou still dost keep it for me; so that exceeding great cause have I to thank thee for this precept, dear God and most gracious Lord.

But, alas! I am so far from thankfulness (as always I have been for all thy care for me, and for all that ever thou hast given unto me), that as I have used subtilty and craft, yea sometimes theft and bribery; so now (good Lord) I still, when occasion is offered, do exercise the same; I live also voluptuously of that thou hast given and lent me, and nothing consider, what equity requireth; and what or how great the necessity of the poor is, whom I thus defraud by excess and prodigality. That which I borrow, I with unwillingness repay; I use it more negligently than I would do my own. Lack of excommunication of justice, the great usury, robbery, oppression, and such-like wickedness as is exercised among us, I lament not, labour not after my vocation for the redress of the same, I pray not to thee thereabout, but neglect altogether.

Yea, even those things wherewith I am put in trust, or am hired to do, those (I say) I do with great negligence; so that great is my sin herein, and worthy I am of damnation. But, merciful God, I beseech thee, for Christ's sake, to have mercy upon me, and to pardon me my unthankfulness, thefts, frauds, deceits, avarice, negligences, and great carelessness, for the lack of justice, and for the monstrous oppression, usury, excess, riot, the which be horribly exercised in the common weal. For thy mercy's sake in Christ Jesus (O Lord), whom thou hast given to fulfil the law for them that do believe, give me true faith and thy holy Spirit, to work in me the knowledge, love, and perpetual obedience of this thy holy precept, and all other thy commandments for ever.

Dear Lord, give unto me, and to all whom thou wouldest I should pray for, the hatred of all craft, and love of all justice; grant to the oppressed thy comfort; to wrongers repentance; to thieves and deceivers, that they may make restitution; to jus-

tices of peace, landlords, and the rich of the world, that they may have thee before their eyes, love their poor tenants and brethren; to labourers and artificers, that they may be diligent in their work and labours, and that wherewith they are put in trust,

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

Now dost thou (most gracious Lord) instruct me in this commandment, how I should use my tongue towards my neighbour, and behave myself concerning his name, forbidding me to bear false witness, in the which thou forbiddest me all kinds of slandering, lying, hypocrisy, and untruth. And why? because, as members of one body, thou wouldest we should speak truth one to another; and be careful, every one, to cover others' infirmity, and with our tongue defend the names of others, even as we would that others should defend ours; so that in this commandment, as thou forbiddest me all kinds of evil, calumnious and untrue speaking; so dost thou command to me all kind of godly, honest, and true report and talk.

By reason whereof I have great cause to praise thee, in that I see thee to be so careful over my name, that all men are by thee commanded to defend the same. O precious God, great is thy care over my soul, I now perceive. If this commandment were not, I see, as I should have done and do much worse with my tongue to others than is happened, so should I have felt of others towards me.

Besides this, no small commodity is it to me, that thou wouldest all men should use truth in all their words to me.

Oh! how great and good thing is this unto me! If we consider the hurt that cometh by untruth and

by words, wherethrough many are deceived, easily may we see a wonderful benefit and care of thee for us in this commandment.

But (gracious Lord), like as I acknowledge my unthankfulness to be monstrous and great, and always hath been hitherto, even so yet continue I in wonderful hypocrisy in all my conversation; often lying and speaking, as vainly, so offensively, fleshly, subtilly, calumniously, and giving my ears to hear such things as be slanderously spoken; nor repugning or admonishing other, as the slanderer to do as he would be done by, to tell his tale where he should tell it, neither admonishing the party slandered of that which is reported of him, thereby to take better heed; but rather I augment it. By reason whereof I have deserved eternal damnation.

But thou (good Lord) be merciful unto me, I beseech thee, for Christ's sake, whom thou hast ordained to be the end of the law to all them that do believe, as well for pardon of that which is past, as for not imputing the imperfection that remaineth. In his name therefore (good Lord) I beseech thee to pardon me, and give me thy holy Spirit; to open to me this law and all other thy precepts; so to understand them, that I may heartily love them, and faithfully give myself to the obedience of them for ever. Grant me thy good Spirit to sanctify my tongue, that it may be kept from lying, slandering, and all such vices; and that it may be continually used in thy service, and speaking that which may be to edify to thy glory and praise, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A MEDITATION concerning PRAYER, with a brief Paraphrase upon the Petitions of the Lord's Prayer.

THE mind of man hath so large room to receive good things, that nothing indeed can fully fill it but only God, whom then thy mind fully possesseth, when it fully knoweth him, it fully loveth him, and in all things is framed after his will. They therefore (dear Lord God) that are thy children, and have tasted somewhat of thy goodness, do perpetually sigh, that is, do pray, until they come thereto; and in that they love thee also above all things, it wonderfully woundeth them that other men do not so, that is, love thee, and seek for thee with them. Whereof it cometh to pass, that they are inflamed with continual prayers and desires, that thy kingdom might come every where, and thy goodness might be both known, and in life expressed of every man.

And because there are innumerable many things, which as well in themselves as in others be against thy glory, they are kindled with continual prayer and desire, sighing unspeakably in thy sight for the increase of thy Spirit; and sometimes, when they see thy glory more put back than it was wont to be, either in themselves or in any other, then are they much more disquieted and vexed. But because they know, that thou dost rule all things after thy good will, and that none other can help them in their need, they oftentimes so go aside, all business laid apart, and give themselves to godly cogitations and talk with thee, complaining to thee as to their Father, of those things that grieve them, begging thereto, and that most earnestly, thy help, not only for themselves, but also for others, especially for those whom singularly they embrace in thee, and

often do repeat and remember thy gracious benefits both to others and to themselves also, wherethrough they are provoked to render to thee hearty thanks, thereby being inflamed, as well assuredly to hope well of thy good will towards them, and patiently to bear all evils; as also to study and labour to mortify the affections of the flesh, and to order all their whole life to the service of their brethren and the setting forth of thy glory.

This they know is that prayer thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord commanded to be made to thee in the chamber, the door being shut. In this kind of prayer he himself did watch often, even all the whole night. Herein was Paul frequent, as all thy saints be. This kind of prayer is the true lifting up of the mind unto thee; this standeth in the affections, in the heart, not in words and in the mouth. As thy children be endued with thy Spirit, so frequent they this talk with thee; the more thy Spirit is in them, the more are they in talk with thee. Oh! give me plentifully thy Spirit, which thou hast promised to pour out upon all flesh, that thus I may with thy saints talk with thee night and day, for thy only beloved Son's sake, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Moreover, thy saints, to provoke them to this kind of prayer, do use first their necessity, which they consider in three sorts; inwardly, concerning their souls; outwardly, concerning their bodies; and finally, concerning their names and fame, whereto they add the necessity of those that be committed to them, the necessity of thy church, and of the common weal.

Secondly, they use thy commandments, which require them, under pain of sin, to pray to thee in all their need.

Thirdly, they use the consideration of thy goodness, which art naturally merciful to young ravens

calling upon thee, much more then to them for whom ravens and all things else were made, for whom thou hast not spared thy dear Son, but given him, &c.

Fourthly, they use thy most sweet and free promises made, to hear and help all them that call upon thee in Christ's name.

Fifthly, they use examples, how that thou, which art the God of all, and rich unto all them that call upon thee in Christ's name, hast heard and holpen others calling upon thee.

Sixthly, they use the benefits given them before they asked, thereby not only provoking them to ask more, but also certifying their faith, that if thou wast so good to grant them many things unasked, now thou wilt not deny them any thing they ask to thy glory and their weal.

Last of all, they use the reading and weighing of psalms and other good prayers, because they know thereby peculiarly, besides the other Scripture, there is no small help; as may appear by Paul (Eph. v. Col. iii.), where he willeth the congregation to use psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, but so that in the heart we should sing and say them; not that thy children do not use their tongues and words in praying to thee, for they do use their tongues, speech, and words, to stir up their inward desire and fervency of the mind; full well knowing that else it were a plain mocking of thee, to pray with lips and tongue only. Oh! that I might feel now thy Spirit so to affect me, that both with heart and mouth I might heartily and in faith pray unto thee.

Now concerning the things that are to be prayed for, thy children know that the prayer taught by thy Son, most lively and plainly doth contain the same; and therefore they often use it; first, asking of thee, their heavenly Father, through Christ, that thy name might every where be had in holiness and praise;

then that thy kingdom by regeneration and the ministry of the Gospel might come.

And so thirdly, that willingly, perfectly, and perpetually they might study to do, yea do indeed thy will, with thy holy and heavenly angels and spirits. These things they seek and pray for; namely, thy kingdom and thy righteousness before any worldly benefit. After which petitions, because all things, yea, even the benefits of this present life, do come from thee, they do godly desire the same under the name of daily bread, being instructed of thy wisdom, that after small benefits to ask corporal, is not unseemly to thy children, which know both spiritual and corporal to come from thy mercy. In the other petitions, they pray for things to be taken from them, beginning with forgiveness of sins, which were impudently prayed for, if that their hearts were not so broken, that they could forgive all things to all men for their part. They add their profession, that is, charity, whereby they profess that they have forgiven all offences done to them; howbeit, because it is not enough to have pardon of that which is past, except they be preserved from new offences, they pray thee not to lead them into temptations, by permitting them to the perverse suggestions of Satan; but rather to deliver them from his importunity and power; by evil, understanding Satan the author of all evil. Oh! dear God, that thou wouldest endue me with thy Spirit of grace and prayer, with thy children accordingly, to make this prayer always whensoever I do pray.

As for outward evils, so long as they do not (as it were) enforce thy people to sin, in that Christian profession doth account them among thy benefits, thy Son hath not taught thy church to pray for the taking away of them in this prayer; for here he hath contained but those things for the which all

Christians, generally and particularly, may of faith pray at all times. It often cometh to pass, that exterior evils, because they be not evils indeed, that is, they are not against God's grace in us, therefore they cannot of faith be prayed for to be taken away; for thy children that have faith do always prefer thy judgment before their own; the which judgment when they know, by that which happeneth to them, they submit themselves thereto wholly; although the Spirit make his unspeakable groanings to help their infirmities by prayer, not to have them taken away, but that they might have strength and patience to bear the burden accordingly; which burden, if it be too heavy in the better sense and feeling thereof, they in their prayers do complain something, rather than pray to have it taken away; as our Saviour did in the garden, when he added to his complaint, Not my will, but thy will be done; so do thy people in all their complaints add, not as we will, but as thou wilt; for they are taught by thy Spirit no otherwise to pray for the taking away of corporal evils, either from themselves or from others, unless they by the same spirit do certainly see the same to make to thy glory; as did thy Apostles and servants, when absolutely and without condition they did ask health or miracle for any when they healed or raised the dead by prayer; for they know nothing can be better, than when it is according to thy will. Oh! that I might always know thy will in all things, and for ever apply myself thereto. Hereof it cometh that thy saints and dear children, which love their neighbours as themselves, do yet notwithstanding in their prayers ask vengeance of some, as we may read in the Psalms of David, because, in praying and talking with thee, they see by thy holy Spirit (for without it is no true prayer) sometimes thy judgments upon some, which

they perceive to sin to death, and therefore ought not to be prayed for; but rather prayed against, because thy glory cannot be set forth as it should be without their destruction; thy will is always best, and the thing whereto they frame all their desires. Therefore when they perceive it decreed with thee, such and such by their destruction to set forth more mightily thy glory, how should they but desire and pray for the same, and write it as David hath done, that the godly in reading and weighing such prayers might receive comfort, and the ungodly be afraid; else when that they perceive not so manifestly the determined judgments of God, they in their prayers do most heartily pray for them, as Samuel did for Saul, Moses for the Israelites, Abraham for the Sodomites. Oh! good Father, for thy mercy's sake, give me the true love of mankind; but yet so, that I may love man for thee and in thee, and always prefer thy glory above all things, through Christ our Lord.

Now though thy children do know, that thy will cannot but be done, and nothing can be done but that thou of thine own will hast determined to do, although no man should desire the same, yet are they earnest and frequent in prayer; first, to render obedience to thee, which requirest prayer as a spiritual service to thee; secondly, because thou hast ordained prayer to be as an instrument and mean, by the which thou workest things with thee already decreed and determined. Thy children do use prayer to offer thee their service, if it shall please thee to use the same. As they do eat and drink, which is a mean ordained of thee, for the conservation of their life, not looking hereby to lengthen their days above their bounds, which already thou hast appointed, but as becometh them to use thy means which thou hast ordained to serve thy providence, so do they (herein

as men, not curious to know thy providence further than thou revealest it) use prayer as a mean by the which thou art accustomed to work many of thy children's desire, that according to thy good will thou mayest use the same ; they do not think a mutability in thee (for thou art God, and art not changed, with thee there is no variableness), and therefore they pray, not as men which would have thy determinations and ordinances, which are in most wisdom and mercy to be altered; but rather that they might submit their wills to thine, and make them more able to bear thy will and pleasure. They know thou hast promised to help them calling upon thee ; wherefore they doubt not, but thou so wilt do, and therefore pray accordingly. They love thee heartily, and therefore they cannot but desire much to talk with thee, that is, to pray ; even as a well-mannered and loving wife will not take upon her to ask any thing of her husband at all, but that she hopeth he would take in good part, and do of his own free will, although she had spoken nothing thereof. When she knoweth what her husband's will is in things, she gladly talketh with him thereof, and accordingly as she seeth he is purposed to do, she will often desire him to do it ; even so thy children (I say), which heartily love thee, in that they know thy wisdom and will is best ; how can they but often talk with thee, and desire thee to do that which they know is best, which they know also thou wouldest do, if none should ask or pray for the same. Thy children use prayer as a means, by which they see plainly thy power, thy presence, thy providence, mercy, and goodness towards them, in granting their petitions, and by prayer they are confirmed of them all. Yea, thy children use prayer to admonish them how that all things are in thy hands. In prayer they are as it were of thee put in mind of those things

they have done against thee their good Lord. By reason whereof repentance ensueth, and they conceive a purpose to live more purely ever afterwards, and more heartily to apply themselves to all innocency and goodness. Who now, considering so many great commodities to come by reason of prayer, would marvel why thy children are much in prayer, and in labouring to provoke others thereunto?

For as none that is a suitor to any other, will use any thing which might offend or hinder his suit, so no man that useth prayer will flatter himself in any thing that should displease thee, to whom by prayer he moveth suit, whensoever he prayeth; so that nothing is a more provocation to all kinds of godliness than prayer is. And therefore not without cause we may see thine Apostles and servants to labour so diligently, and desire that others might use prayers for themselves and others. As concerning outward things, which thy children pray for, although they know thy will and decree is not variable, and thy purpose must needs come to pass, yet do they receive by their prayer no small commodity. For either they obtain their requests, or no; if they do obtain them, then prove they by experience that thou doest the will of them that fear thee, and so they are more kindled to love and serve thee. And indeed for this purpose thou art wont, when thou wilt do good to any, to stir up their minds to desire the same good of thee, to the end that both thou and thy gifts may be so much more magnified, and set by of them, by how much they have been earnest suitors and petitioners for the same: for how can it but inflame them with love towards thee, to perceive and feel thee so to care for them, hear them, and love them? If they do not obtain that they pray for, yet undoubtedly they receive great comfort to see, that the evils which press them, and whereof

they complain still, do not oppress and overcome them, and therefore they receive strength to bear the same the better. O good Father! help me, that I may heartily love thee, complain to thee in all my needs, and always by prayer to pour out my heart before thee. Amen.

*Another PARAPHRASE or MEDITATION upon the
Lord's Prayer.*

O ALMIGHTY and eternal God, of whom all fatherhood in heaven and in earth is named, whose seat is the heaven, whose footstool is the earth, which of thy great clemency and unspeakable love hast not weighed nor considered our great unkindness and wilful disobedience, but according to the good pleasure of thy eternal purpose hast in thy well-beloved Son Jesus Christ chosen us out of the world, and dost accept us far otherwise than we be in deed, to be called, yea and to be in deed thine adopted sons; and dost vouchsafe (O loving Father), that we, as it were heavenly children, should every one of us confess, declare, and call thee our heavenly Father; grant (dear Father) that among us thy poor children, by pureness of mind and conscience, by singleness of heart, by uncorrupt and innocent life, and example of virtue and godliness, thy most holy name may be sanctified; and that so many of all other nations as thou hast thereunto chosen and predestinated, beholding our godliness and virtuous deeds that thou workest in us, may be the more stirred to hallow and glorify thy blessed name.

Oh! faithful Father! we beseech thee that the kingdom of thy holy Spirit of grace and prayer, of thy loving kindness and mercy, and of all other thy holy virtues, and of thy holy and most blessed word, may continually reign in our hearts, so that thou

wouldest vouchsafe thereby to make us worthy to be partakers of the realm and kingdom of thy glorious and blessed presence.

Oh! dear God and heavenly Father, we humbly desire thy goodness to bow our hearts unto thee, to make us humble of mind, to make us low in our own sight and obedient, that, like as thy dear Son, our only Saviour Jesus Christ, counted his meat, works, praise, and life, to be only in obeying to thy most blessed will, wherein for our sakes he became obedient to the death of the cross; so we may, even unto the very death, in lowliness, in meekness, patience, and thankfulness, obey unto thy holy will, and not to murmur and grudge, nor refuse whatsoever thy fatherly pity shall think good to lay on us, be it poverty, hunger, nakedness, sickness, slanders, oppressions, vexations, persecutions, yea, or death itself, for well-doing; but in all things seek and labour to make these our earthly bodies serviceable to do thy will, and to refuse that thou willest not, never to strive nor wrestle against thy holy will, but with thy heavenly citizens and household, builded upon the foundation of thy holy Prophets and Apostles, thy Son Jesus Christ being the head corner-stone; all self-will and controversy in opinions secluded; the lusts, desires, and affections of the flesh mortified; the flattering assaults of the vain world, the cruel and subtil layings await of the devil overcome; agreeing together quietly, and united in spirit, we may freely obey unto thy most blessed will, therein to walk all the days of our life.

Oh! dear God, give unto our needful bodies necessary sustenance, and take from us all love of worldly things, all carefulness and covetousness, that we may the more freely worship and serve thee. Oh! merciful Father, we beseech thee to give unto us that heavenly bread, to strengthen our hearts; I

mean the body of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, the very food and health of our souls, that we may always with thankfulness firmly feed on him by faith, and utterly forsake and abhor all false doctrine and persuasions of men, and all lying spirits that shall persuade us any otherwise of him than thy holy word doth teach and assure us. Satisfy our hungry souls (dear Father) with the marrow and fatness of thy rich mercy, promised to us in the same thy Son, and of our eternal election, redemption, justification, and glorification in him. Make us (O gracious God) to contemn and despise this world, with the vain things and pleasures thereof, and inwardly to hunger for thy blessed kingdom and presence, which do thou satisfy (good God) in thy good time, according to thy good will and pleasure. Oh! most loving God; give us the bread of thy divine precepts, and make our hearts perfect, that we may truly and freely walk and live in them all the days of our life. Oh! dear and merciful Father, we beseech thee, give us the bread of thy lively and heavenly word, and the true understanding thereof, which is the light of our paths, the food, strong tower, and sure defence of our souls, that we, being well fenced with this ammunition, fed and filled with this food, may be worthy guests at thy celestial feast and wedding, where we shall never hunger nor want.

Oh! most righteous and merciful God, Father, and Governor of our life, we confess that we have grievously sinned against thee from our youth up until now, in ingratitude, in unthankfulness, wilfulness, disobedience, presumption, and innumerable our negligences and sins, which we from time to time most heinously have committed; whereby we have deserved not only sore and grievous plagues, but even eternal damnation, were it not that thou art the Lord of mercy, and hast power to shew

mercy on whom thou wilt; wherein thou art rich and plentiful to all them that call upon thee faithfully; wherefore (dear Father) we, seeing our manifold and grievous sins which we have committed against thee, and also thy great mercy, loving kindness, patience, and long-suffering towards us, are compelled not only to bear patiently and suffer our enemies when they rail on us, slander us, oppress us, vex us, or trouble us, curse, persecute, and kill us, but also to speak well of them, to instruct them, to pray for them, to do them good, to bless them, to clothe them, feed them, so heaping coals of thy charity and love upon them, and mercifully to forgive them, even as thou (dear Father) for thy beloved Christ's sake hast forgiven us. Thus hast thou taught us (good Father), not as the hypocrites, to look narrowly on our neighbours' faults, but diligently to examine our own consciences, wherein we have offended thee, and also what occasion of offence or falling we have given to our brethren in eating, drinking, going, apparel, speaking, dissolute or uncomely laughter; in bargaining, or by any means, and with all speed seek to reconcile ourselves to them, and to forgive unto other, from the bottom of our hearts, whatsoever they have offended us, and to do none otherwise than we wish and desire in our hearts that other should do to us; that so we may find thee (O Lord), in forgiving us our trespasses, mild and merciful, which speedily do thou shew thyself unto us, for thy dear Christ's sake.

Oh! Lord, thou God of the righteous, we feel the frailty of our nature to be so perverse and apt to sin, that when thou by the gifts of thy holy Spirit dost move us, and (as it were) call us, yea, rather draw us unto thee, then are we drawn away and tempted of our own concupiscence and lust, beside the great and dangerous assaults of the world and

devil; therefore (faithful Father) we thy poor children beseech thee to take from us all those evils and occasions that may draw us from thee. Oh! dear God, protect, defend, and strengthen us against all the suggestions and assaults of our enemies, the world, the flesh, and the devil, that neither in prosperity we were haughty and high-minded to say unthankfully, What fellow is the Lord! nor yet in the abundance of temptation, anguish, vexation, tribulation, or persecution, to be oppressed with fear; nor be deceived by flattery, nor yet to fall in despair, and so utterly perish; but in all dangers and perils of temptations, and in the midst of the stormy tempests of tribulation (dear Father), make us, thy poor children, to feel the consolation of the certainty of our eternal election in Christ Jesus our Lord, and to perceive thy fatherly succour ready to help us, lest that we, being overcome with the wicked, slight, and deceitful invasions of the enemies, should (as without thy grace and merciful protection we shall) be drawn into an obstinate mind, and so shut up by the cundity that should lead thy gracious gifts and benefits unto us to our commodity and comfort, that thou mightest lead us forth with the evil doers, and harden our hearts. Therefore (O good God) give us these thy good gifts, namely, strength, patience, and joyfulness of heart, to rejoice in temptation, and assure us that it is the trial of our faith, that faith in us may have her perfect work, that when we be well approved, and purged with the fire of temptations, we may finish our life in victory, and evermore live with thee in thy heavenly kingdom, where no temptation shall do us hurt.

Finally (most merciful Father), we humbly beseech thee to deliver us from this present evil world, from all human and worldly fear, from all infirmities of the flesh and mind, from false prophets and

teachers, from false brethren, from traitors and tyrants, &c. and if it be thy good pleasure, and may make most to the glory of thy name, deliver us from the hands of our enemies, and from all other evils, present and to come, both of body and soul, that we, being by thy great mercy defended from all hurtful things, may always use those things that be profitable for us, devoutly given to serve thee in good works, that the yoke of our enemies and the bands of sin being shaken off, we may possess the inheritance of thy heavenly kingdom, which thy dear Son Jesus Christ hath with his precious blood purchased for thine elect from the beginning of the world; for thine is the kingdom, thou only hast the majesty, thou only art the God above all gods, King of all kings, and Lord of all lords; thou only hast the power and authority to set up kings, and to put them down; thou liftest the poor out of the dirt, and makest him to sit among the princes of thy people; thou only makest wars to cease, and givest victory to whom thou wilt. Oh! dear God, there is neither majesty, rule, nor power, honour nor worship, dignity nor office, riches nor poverty, health nor sickness, plenty nor scarcity, prosperity nor adversity, war nor peace, life nor death, nor any other thing, but it is all thine; and thou both hast the power, and also wilt give it to whom it pleaseth thee, in thy time and season, that all glory may be given to thee alone, for thou art worthy.

Oh! dear Father, to thee we come therefore for help and succour, for without thee there is no help at all. Oh! good Father, deliver us from all that is evil in thy sight, for thine own name's sake, and for thy dear Christ's sake, that we being armed with thy holy armour, and weaponed with thy blessed word, and instructed with thy holy Spirit, may, according to thy holy promise, serve thee without fear all the days

of our life, in such holiness and righteousness as is acceptable in thy sight. To thee therefore (our dear Father) our creator, feeder, protector, governor, and defender, and thy beloved Son Jesus Christ, our only peace, mercy-seat, redeemer, justifier, and advocate, and thy holy Spirit, our sanctification, our wisdom, teacher, instructor, and comforter, be all dominion, power, and glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

A MEDITATION on the Coming of Christ to Judgment, and of the Reward both of the faithful and unfaithful.

Oh! Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the everliving God, by whom all things were made, are ruled and governed, as of thy love for our redemption thou didst not disdain to be our mediator, and to take upon thee our nature in the womb of a virgin, purely and without sin, by the operation of the holy Spirit, that both thou mightest in thine own person wonderfully beautify and exalt our nature, and work the same in us also, first abolishing the guiltiness of sin by remission; then sin itself by death; and last of all, death, by raising up again these our bodies, that they may be like unto thine own glorious and immortal body, according to the power wherewith thou art able to subject all things unto thee. As I say of thy love for our redemption, thou becamest man, and that most poor and afflicted upon earth by the space of thirty-four years at the least, in most humility, and paidest the price of our ransom by thy most bitter death and passion, for the which I most heartily give thanks to thee; so of the same by thy love towards us in thy good time, thou wilt come again in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory (Matt. xxv.), with flaming fire, with thousands

of saints, with angels of thy power, with a mighty cry, shout of an archangel, and blast of a trump, suddenly as the lightning which shineth from the east, &c. when men think least, even as a thief in the night, when men be asleep, and wilt so come (I say) thus suddenly in the twinkling of an eye, all men that ever have been, be, and shall be, with women and children, appearing before thy tribunal judgment-seat, to render an account of all things which they have thought, spoken, and done against thy law; openly and before all angels, saints, and devils, and so to receive the just reward of thy vengeance, if that they have not repented and obeyed the Gospel; and so to depart from thee to the devil and his angels, and all the wicked which ever have been, be, or shall be, into hell-fire, which is unquenchable and of pains intolerable, easeless, endless, hopeless, even from the face of thy glorious and mighty power; but if they have repented and believed thy Gospel, if they be found watching with their lamps and oil in their hands, if they be found ready apparelled with the wedding-garment of innocence; if they have not hardened their hearts, and hoarded up their treasure of thy vengeance in the day of wrath to be revealed, but have used the time of grace, the acceptable time, the time of salvation, that is, the time of this life, in the which thou stretchest out thy hand and spreadest thine arms, calling and crying unto us to come unto thee, which art meek in heart, and lowly, for thou wilt ease all that labour, and are heavy laden; if they have visited the sick and prisoners, comforted the comfortless, fed the hungry, clothed the naked, lodged the harbourless; if they have not loaden their hearts with gluttony and surfeiting, and carefulness of this life; if they have not digged and hid their talent in the ground, doing no good therewith, but

have been faithful to occupy thy gifts to thy glory, and here washed their garments in thy blood by hearty repenting them; then shall thy angels gather them together, not as the wicked, which shall be collected as faggots, and cast into the fire, but as the good wheat that is gathered into thy barn; then shall they be caught up to meet thee in the clouds; then shall their corruptible body put on incorruption; then shall they be endued with immortality and glory; then shall they be with thee, and go whither thou goest; then shall they hear, Come, blessed of my Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning, &c.; then shall they be set on seats of majesty, judging the whole world; then shall they reign with thee for ever; then shall God be all in all with them and to them; then shall they enter and inherit heavenly Jerusalem, and the glorious restful land of Canaan, where is always day and never night, where is no manner of weeping, tears, infirmity, hunger, cold, sickness, envy, malice, nor sin; but always joy without sorrow, mirth without measure, pleasure without pain, heavenly harmony, most pleasant melody, saying and singing, Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Hosts, &c. A sum the eye hath not seen, the ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, that they shall then inherit and most surely enjoy, although here they be tormented, prisoned, burned, solicited of Satan, tempted of the flesh, and entangled with the world; wherethrough they are enforced to cry, Thy kingdom come, come Lord Jesu, &c. (Rev. xxii.) How amiable are thy tabernacles! Like as the hart desireth the water-brooks, &c. (Psalm xlii.) Now let thy servant depart in peace; I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ. (Rom. viii.) We mourn in ourselves, waiting for the deliverance of our bodies, &c. Oh! gracious Lord, when shall I

find such mercy with thee, that I may repent, believe, hope, and look for this gear, with the full fruition of these heavenly joys, which thou hast prepared for all them that fear thee, and so rest with thee for evermore.

A MEDITATION concerning the sober Usage both of the Body and Pleasures in this Life.

THUS our body, which God hath made to be the tabernacle and mansion of our soul for this life, if we be considered accordingly, we could not but use it otherwise than we do, that is, we should use it for the soul's sake, being the guest thereof, and not for the body itself, and so should it be served in things to help, but not to hinder the soul. A servant it is, and therefore it ought to obey to serve the soul, that the soul might serve God; not as the body will, neither as the soul itself will, but as God will; whose will we should learn to know, and behave ourselves thereafter: the which thing to observe, is hard for us now, by reason of sin, which hath gotten a mansion-house in our bodies, and dwelleth in us, as doth the soul; to the which (sin I mean) we are altogether of ourselves inclined, because we naturally are sinners, and born in sin, by reason whereof we are ready as servants to sin, and to use our bodies accordingly, making the soul to sit at reward, and pampering up the servant to our shame. Oh! therefore, good Lord, that it would please thee to open this gear unto me, and to give me eyes to consider effectually this my body what it is, namely, a servant lent for the soul to sojourn in, and serve thee in this life; yea, it is by reason of sin, that hath his dwelling there, become now to the soul nothing else but a prison, and that most strait, vile, stinking, filthy, and therefore in danger of miseries, to many

in all ages, times, and places, till death hath turned it to dust, whereof it came, and whither it shall return; that the soul may return to thee, from whence it came, until the day of judgment come, in the which thou shalt raise up that body, that then it may be partaker with the soul, and the soul with it, inseparably, of wealth or woe, according to that is done in and by the same body here now in earth.

Oh! that I could consider often and heartily these things, then should I not pamper up this body to obey it, but bridle it, that it might obey the soul; then should I fly the pain it putteth my soul unto, by reason of sin and provocation to all evil, and continually desire the dissolution of it, with Paul (Philip. i.), and the deliverance from it, as much as ever did prisoner his deliverance out of prison; for alonely by it the devil hath a door to tempt, and so to hurt me; in it I am kept from thy presence, and thou from being so conversant with me as else thou wouldest be; by it I am restrained from the sense and feeling of all the joys and comforts (in manner) which are to be taken as joys and comforts indeed. If it were dissolved, and I out of it, then could Satan no more hurt me; then wouldest thou speak with me face to face; then the conflicting time were at an end; then sorrow will cease, and joy would increase, and I should enter into inestimable rest. Oh! that I considered this accordingly!

Another MEDITATION to the same Effect.

THE beginning of all evil in our kind of sinning springeth out of the depravation and corruptness of our judgment, because our will always followeth that which the reason judgeth to be followed. Now that which every man taketh to be friendly and agreeing to his nature, the same doth he judge he-

cessarily to be good for him, and to be desired. This is meat, drink, apparel, riches, favour, dignity, rule, knowledge, and such-like, because they are thought good and agreeing either to the body or to the mind, or to both, for they help either to the conservation, or to the pleasure of man, accounted of every one amongst good things.

Howbeit, such is the weakness of our wit on the one part, and the blindness and too much rage of our lusts on the other part, that we, being left to ourselves, cannot but in the desire of things which we judge good and agreeing to our nature by the judgment of our senses and reason; we cannot (I say) but overpass the bounds whereby they might be profitable unto us, and so make them hurtful to us, which of themselves are ordained for our health. What is more necessary than meat and drink? or more agreeing to our nature? but yet how few be there which do not hurt themselves by them! In like manner it goeth with riches, estimation, friends, learning, &c. Yea, although we be in these most temperate, yet when there wanteth the Spirit, our regenerator, we are so drowned in them, that we utterly neglect to lift up our minds to the good pleasure of God, to the end we might imitate and follow God our Maker, by yielding ourselves over, duly to use his gifts to the common and private utility of our neighbours. But now God only is life and eternity, and cannot but demand of his handywork, that we should render ourselves and all we have to the ends wherefore we were made, that is, to resemble for our portion, his goodness, as those which be nothing else but witnesses and instruments of his mercy: so that when we wholly do naturally strive against that kind of life, whereto he hath created us, by seeking always ourselves, what other thing ought to ensue, but that he should again destroy us, and take away

his notable gifts, wherewith he endued us, that by all kinds of well-doing we should resemble his image? yea, what other thing may ensue, but that he should leave us, and that eternally, that we might feel, and by experience prove, how bitter a thing it is to leave the Lord, in whom is all goodness. Oh! that therefore I might find such favour in thy sight, dear Father, that thou wouldest work in me, by thy holy Spirit, a true knowledge of all good things, and hearty love to the same, through Christ Jesus our Lord and only Saviour. Amen.

A MEDITATION for the Exercise of true Mortification.

HE that will be ready in weighty matters to deny his own will, and to be obedient to the will of God, the same had need to accustom himself to deny his desires in matters of less weight, and to exercise mortification of his own will in trifles: for if that our affections by this daily custom be not (as it were) half slain, surely when the plunge shall come, we shall find the more to do. If we cannot watch with Christ one hour, as he saith to Peter, we undoubtedly can much less go to death with him. Wherefore that in great temptations we may be ready to say with Christ, Not my will, but thine be done, in that this commonly cometh not to pass, but when the roots of our lusts by thy grace (dear Father) are almost rotten and rooted out by a daily denial of that they desire, I humbly beseech thee, for Christ's sake, to help me herein: first, pardon me my cherishing and (as it were) watering of mine affections, obeying them in their devices and superfluous desires; where-through in that they have taken deep root, and are so lively in me, I secondly do beseech thee to pull them up by the roots out of my heart, and so hence-

forth to order me, that I may continually accustom myself to weaken the principal root, that the by-roots and branches may lose all their power. Grant me (I beseech thee) that thy grace may daily mortify my concupiscence of pleasant things, that is, of wealth, riches, glory, liberty, favour of men, meats, drinks, apparel, ease, yea, and life itself; that the horror and impatience of more grievous things may be weakened, and I made more patient in adversity. Whereunto I further desire and pray thy goodnees (dear Father), that thou wilt add this, namely, that I may for ever become obedient, and ready to thy good will in all things, heartily and willingly to serve thee, and do whatsoever may please thee. For doubtless, although we accustom ourselves in the pleasant things of this life to a mortification and denial of ourselves, yet we shall find enough to do when more bitter and weighty crosses come; for if thy Son our Saviour (ever wont to obey thy good will) prayed so heartily and often, *Not my will, but thy will be done*, whereby he declared himself to be very man; how can it be but we, whose nature is corrupt, not only in nativity, but in the rest of our whole life also, shall find both our hands full in great and grievous temptations, wholly to resign ourselves unto thee? Grant therefore, dear Father, for thy Christ's sake, to me a most miserable wretch, thy grace and holy Spirit to be effectual in me, that daily I may accustom myself to deny my will in more easy and pleasant things of this life, that, when need shall be, I may come with Christ to thee with a resigned will, always steadfastly expecting thy mercy, and in the mean season continually obeying thee with readiness and willingness, doing whatsoever may most please thee, through Christ our Lord, which liveth with thee, &c.

*A godly MEDITATION and INSTRUCTION of the
Providence of God towards Mankind.*

THIS ought to be unto us most certain, that nothing is done without thy providence (O Lord); that is, that nothing is done, be it good or bad, sweet or sour, but by thy knowledge, that is, by thy will, wisdom, and ordinance; for all these knowledge doth comprehend in it, as by thy holy word we are taught in many places, that even the life of a sparrow is not without thy will (Matt. x.), nor any liberty or power upon a porket have all the devils in hell (Matt. viii.), but by thy appointment and will, which will we always must believe most assuredly to be all just and good, howsoever otherwise it seem unto us. For thou art marvellous and not comprehensible in thy ways, and holy in all thy works.

But hereunto it is necessary also for us to know no less certainly, that though all things be done by thy providence, yet the same providence hath many and divers means to work by, which means being contemned, thy providence is contemned also. As for example, meat is a mean to serve thy providence for the preservation of health and life here; so that he which contemneth to eat, because thy providence is certain and infallible, the same contemneth thy providence. Indeed, if that it were so that meat could not be had, then should we not tie thy providence to this mean, but make it free, as thou art free, that is, that without meat thou canst help and give health and life; for it is not of any need that thou usest any instrument or mean to serve thy providence; thy power and wisdom are infinite, and therefore should we hang on thy providence, even when all is clean against us. But for our erudition and infirmities' sake, it hath pleased thee by means

to work and deal with us here, to exercise us in obedience, and because we cannot else (so great is our corruption) sustain thy naked and bare presence. Grant me therefore, dear Father, I humbly beseech thee, for Christ's sake, that as I something now know these things, so I may use this knowledge to my comfort and commodity in thee; that is, grant that in what state soever I be, I may not doubt but the same doth come to me by thy most just ordinance, yea, by thy merciful ordinance; for as thou art just, so art thou merciful; yea, thy mercy is above all thy works.

And by this knowledge, grant me that I may humble myself to obey thee, and look for thy help in time convenient, not only when I have means, by which thou mayest work, and art so accustomed to do; but also when I have no means, but am destitute, yea, when that all means be directly and clean against me; grant I say yet, that I may still hang upon thee and thy providence, not doubting of a fatherly end in thy good time.

Again, lest I should contemn thy providence, or presume upon it by uncoupling those things which thou hast coupled together, preserve me from neglecting thy ordinary and lawful means in all my needs, if so be I may have them, and with good conscience use them, although I know thy providence be not tied to them further than it pleaseth thee; but grant that I may with diligence, reverence, and thankfulness use them, and thereto my diligence, wisdom, and industry in all things lawful, to serve thereby thy providence, if it so please thee; howbeit, so that I hang in no part on the means or on my diligence, wisdom, and industry; but only on thy providence, which more and more persuade me to be altogether fatherly and good, how far soever otherwise it appear and seem, yea, is felt of me. By this I being pre-

served from negligence on my behalf, and despair or murmuring towards thee, shall become diligent and patient, through thy mere and alone grace, which give and increase in me, to praise thy holy name for ever, through Jesus Christ our Lord and only Saviour. Amen.

A MEDITATION of the Presence of God.

THERE is nothing that maketh more to true godliness of life, than the persuasion of thy presence, dear Father, and that nothing is hid from thee, but all to thee is open and naked, even the very thoughts, which one day thou wilt reveal and open either to our praise or punishment in this life; as thou didst David's faults, which he did secretly (2 Kings, xii.), or in the life to come. (Matt. xxv.) For nothing is so hid that shall not be revealed; therefore doth the Prophet say, Woe to them that keep secret their thoughts to hide their counsel from the Lord, and do their works in darkness, saying, Who seeth us? Grant to me therefore (dear God) mercy for all my sins, especially my hid and close sins; enter not into judgment with me, I humbly beseech thee; give me to believe truly in thy Christ, that I never come into judgment for them, that with David I might so reveal them and confess them unto thee, that thou wouldest cover them. And grant further, that henceforth I always think myself continually conversant before thee, so that if I do well, I pass not of the publishing it as the hypocrites do; if I do or think any evil, I may forthwith know that the same shall not always be hid from men. Grant me that I may always have in mind that day wherein hid works of darkness shall be illumined, and also the sentence of thy Son, that nothing is so secret which shall not be revealed. So in trouble and wrong I shall find com-

fort, and otherwise be kept through thy grace from evil, which do thou work, I humbly beseech thee, for Christ's sake. Amen.

*A MEDITATION of God's Power, Beauty,
Goodness, &c.*

BECAUSE thou, Lord, wouldst have us to love thee, not only dost thou will, entice, allure, and provoke us, but also dost command us so to do, promising thyself unto such as love thee, and threatening us with damnation if we do otherwise; whereby we may see both our great corruption and naughtiness, and also thine exceeding great mercy towards us.

First, concerning our corruption and naughtiness, what a thing is it! that power, riches, authority, beauty, goodness, liberality, truth, justice, which all thou art, good Lord, cannot move us to love thee. Whatsoever things we see fair, good, wise, mighty, are but even sparks of that power, beauty, goodness, wisdom, which thou art. For to the end thou mightest declare thy riches, beauty, power, wisdom, goodness, &c. thou hast not only made, but still dost conserve all creatures to be (as David saith of the heavens) declarers and setters-forth of thy glory, and as a book to teach us to know thee.

How fair thou art, the beauty of the sun, moon, stars, light, flowers, rivers, fields, hills, birds, beasts, men, and all creatures, yea, the goodly shape and form of the whole world, doth declare.

How mighty thou art, we are taught by the creation of this world even of nought, by governing the same, by punishing the wicked mighty giants thereof, by overthrowing their devices, by repressing the rage of the sea within her bounds, by storms, by tempests, by fires; these and such-like declare unto us

thine invisible, almighty, and terrible power, whereby thou subduest all things unto thee. How rich thou art, this world, thy great and infinite treasure-house, doth well declare. What plenty is there, not only of things, but also of every kind of things! Yea, how dost thou yearly and daily multiply these kinds! How many seeds dost thou make of one seed! yea, what great increase dost thou bring it unto! These cannot but put us in remembrance of the exceeding riches that thou hast; for if to thine enemies, which love thee not (as the most part in this world be), if to them thou givest so plentifully thy riches here; what shall we think that with thyself thou hast laid up for thy friends? How good thou art, all creatures generally and particularly do teach. What creature is there in the world which thou hast not made for our commodity? I will not say how that thou mightest have made us creatures without sense or reason, if thou hadst would. But, amongst all things, none doth teach us so thy great love towards us, as doth the death of thy most dearly beloved Son, who suffered the pains and terrors thereof, yea, and of hell itself, for our sakes.

If this thy love had been but a small love, it would never have lasted so long, nor Christ should never have died.

A MEDITATION of Death, and the Commodities it bringeth.

WHAT other thing do we daily in this present life, than heap sin to sin, and hoard up trespass upon trespass? so that this day is worse always than yesterday, by increasing, as days, so sins, and therefore thy indignation, good Lord, against us; but when we shall be let go out of the prison of the body, and so taken into thy blessed company, then shall we be

in most safety, of immortality and salvation; then shall come unto us no sickness, no need, no pain, no kind of evil to soul or body; but whatsoever good we can wish, that shall we have, and whatsoever we loath shall be far from us. Oh! dear Father, that we had faith to behold these things accordingly! Oh! that our hearts were persuaded thereof, and our affections inflamed with the desire of them! then should we live in longing for that which now we most loath. Oh! help us, and grant that we, being ignorant of things to come and of the time of our death, which to thee is certain, may so live and finish our journey here, that we may be ready, and then depart, when our departing may make most to thy glory and our comfort through Christ.

What is this life, but a smoke, a vapour, a shadow, a warfare, a bubble of water, a word, grass, a flower? Thou shalt die is most certain, but of the time, no man can tell when. The longer in this life thou dost remain, the more thou sinnest, which will turn to thy more pain. By cogitation of death, our minds be often in manner oppressed with darkness, because we do but remember the night of the body, forgetting the light of the mind, and of the resurrection. Thereto remember the good things that after this life shall ensue, without wavering, in certainty of faith, and so shall the passage of death be more desired. It is like a sailing over the sea to thy home and country; it is like a medicine or purgation, to the health of soul and body; it is the best physician; it is like to a woman's travail, for as the child being delivered cometh into a more large place than the womb wherein it did lie before, so thy soul, being delivered out of the body, cometh into a much more large and fair place, even into heaven.

A godly MEDITATION upon the Passion of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

O LORD Jesus Christ, the Son of the everliving and almighty God, by whom all things were made, and be ruled and governed, thou the lively image of the substance of the Father, the eternal wisdom of God, the brightness of his glory, God of God, light of light, co-equal, co-eternal, and consubstantial with the Father; thou of the love thou hadst to mankind, that when he was fallen from the fellowship of God into the society of Satan and all evil, didst vouchsafe for our redemption to become a mediator between God and man, taking to the Godhead our nature, as concerning the substance of it, and so becamest man; also the heir of all, and most merciful Messias, which by the power of thy Godhead, and merits of thy manhood, hast made purgation of our sins, even by thine own self, whilst thou wast here on earth, being now set on the right hand of thy Father for us, even concerning our nature, in majesty, glory, and power infinite; I beseech and humbly pray thy mercy, to grant me at this present to rehearse some of thy passions and sufferings for me the last night thou wast here before thy death; that thy good Spirit might thereby be effectual to work in me faith, as well of the pardon of my sins by them, as mortification of mine affections, comfort in my crosses, and patience in afflictions. Amen.

In the midst of thy last supper, with thy dear Apostles, these things could not but be before thee, namely, that they would all leave thee, the most earnest would forswear thee, and one of the twelve should most traitorously betray thee; which were no small crosses unto thee: Judas was admonished of thee to beware; but when he took no heed, but

wilfully went out to finish his work, contemning thy admonition and counsel, he could not but vex thy most loving heart.

After supper there was contention among thy disciples who should be greatest after thee; yet dreaming carnally of thee and of thy kingdom, and having this affection of pride and ambition busy among them, notwithstanding thy diligence in reproving and teaching them.

After thy admonition to them (of the cross that would come), thereby to make them more vigilant, so gross were they, that they thought they could with their two swords put away all perils; which was no little grief unto thee. After thy coming to Gethsemane, heaviness oppressed thee, and therefore thou wouldest thy disciples to pray; thou didst tell to Peter and his fellows, that thy heart was heavy to death; thou didst will them to pray, being careful for them also, lest they should fall into temptation. After this thou wentest a stone's cast from them, and didst pray thyself, falling flat and grovelling upon the earth; but, alas! thou feltest no comfort, and therefore thou camest to thy disciples, which of all others were most sweet and dear unto thee; but, lo! to thy further discomfort, they pass neither of thy perils nor of their own, and therefore sleep apace. After thou hadst awaked them, thou goest again to pray, but thou foundest no comfort at all, and therefore didst return again for some comfort at thy dearest friends' hands. But yet again, alas! they are fast asleep, whereupon thou art enforced to go again to thy heavenly Father, for some sparkle of comfort in these thy wonderful crosses and agonies. Now here thou wast so discouraged and so comfortless, that even streams of blood came running from thine eyes and ears, and other parts of thy body. But who is able to express the infirmities

of thy crosses, even at thy being in the garden ! all which thou sufferedst for my sake, as well to satisfy thy Father's wrath for my sins, as also to sanctify all my sufferings the more gladly to be sustained of me.

After thy bloody prayer, thou camest, and yet again foundest thy disciples asleep ; and before thou canst well awake them, lo ! Judas cometh with a great band of men to apprehend thee as a thief, and so doth, leading thee away bound to the high Bishop's house Annas, and so from him to Caiaphas. Here now to augment this thy misery, behold thy disciples flee from thee, false witnesses be brought against thee, thou art accused and condemned of blasphemy. Peter, even in thy sight, forswearth thee ; thou art unjustly stricken for answering lawfully, thou art blindfold, stricken, and buffeted all the whole night in the Bishop Caiaphas' house of their cruel servants.

In the morning betimes thou art condemned again of the priests of blasphemy, and therefore they bring thee before the secular power to Pilate, by whom thou art openly arraigned as other thieves and malefactors were ; when he saw that thou wast accused of malice, yet he did not dismiss thee, but did send thee to Herod, where thou wast derided shamefully, in coming and going to and from him, all the way wonderfully, especially after Herod had apparelled thee as a fool.

Afore Pilate again therefore thou wast brought, and accused falsely. No man did take thy part, or speak a good word for thee. Pilate caused thee to be whipped and scourged, and to be handled most pitifully, to see if any pity might appear with the prelates ; but no man at all pitied thee.

Barabbas was preferred before thee ; all the people, head and tail, was against thee, and cried, hang thee up ; unjustly to death wast thou judged ; thou

wast crowned with thorns that pierced thy brains; thou wast made a mocking-stock; thou wast reviled, rebaited, beaten, and most miserably handled.

Thou wentest through Jerusalem to the place of execution, even the mount of Calvary; a great cross to hang thee was laid upon thy back to bear and draw, as long as thou wast able.

Thy body was racked to be nailed to the tree, thy hands were bored through, and thy feet also, nails were put through them to fasten thee thereon; thou wast hanged between heaven and earth, as one spewed out of heaven, and vomited out of the earth, unworthy of any place; the high priest laughed thee to scorn, the elders blasphemed thee, and said God hath no care for thee; the common people laughed and cried out upon thee; thirst oppressed thee, but vinegar only and gall were given thee to drink; heaven shined not on thee, the sun gave thee no light, the earth was afraid to bear thee, Satan tempted thee, and thine own senses caused thee to cry out, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Oh! wonderful passions which thou sufferedst; in them thou teachest me, in them thou comfortest me; for by them God is my father, my sins are forgiven; by them I should learn to fear God, to love God, to hope in God, to hate sin, to be patient, to call upon God, and never to leave him for any temptation, but with thee still to cry, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.

A Confession of Sins and Prayer for the Mitigation of God's Wrath and Punishment for the same:

O ALMIGHTY God, King of all kings, and Governor of all things, whose power no creature is able to resist, to whom it belongeth justly to punish sinners, and to be merciful unto them that truly repent,

we confess that thou dost most justly punish us, for we have grievously sinned against thee; and we acknowledge, that in punishing us thou dost declare thyself to be our most merciful Father, as well because thou dost not punish us in any thing as we have deserved, as also because, by punishing us, thou dost call us and (as it were) draw us to increase in repentance, in faith, in prayer, in contemning of the world, and in hearty desiring for everlasting life, and thy blessed presence; grant us, therefore, gracious Lord, thankfully to acknowledge thy great mercy, which hast thus favourably dealt with us, in punishing us, not to our confusion, but to our amendment. And seeing thou hast sworn that thou wilt not the death of a sinner, but that he turn and live, have mercy upon us, and turn us unto thee for thy dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ's sake, whom thou wouldest should be made a slain sacrifice for our sins, thereby declaring thy great and unspeakable anger against sin, and thine infinite mercy towards us sinful wretches.

And forasmuch as the dulness of our hearts, blindness, and corruption is such, that we are not able to arise up unto thee by faithful and hearty prayer, according to our great necessity, without thy singular grace and assistance; grant unto us, gracious Lord, thy holy and sanctifying Spirit to work in us this good work with a pure and clean mind, with a humble and lowly heart, with grace to weigh and consider the need and greatness of that we do desire, and with an assured faith and trust that thou wilt grant us our requests; because thou art good and gracious even to young ravens calling upon thee, much more then to us for whom thou hast made all things; yea, and hast not spared thine own dear Son; because thou hast commanded us to call upon thee; because thy throne whereunto we come is a throne of grace and

mercy; because thou hast given us a mediator Christ, to bring us unto thee, being the way by whom we come, being the door by whom we enter, and being the head on whom we hang, and hope that our poor petitions shall not be in vain, through and for his name's sake.

We beseech thee therefore of thy rich mercy, wherein thou art plentiful to all them that call upon thee, to forgive us our sins, namely, our unthankfulness, unbelief, self-love, neglect of thy word, security, hypocrisy, contempt of thy long-suffering, omission of prayer, doubting of thy power, presence, mercy, and good will towards us, insensibleness of thy grace, impatience, &c.; and to this thy benefit of correcting us, add these thy gracious gifts, repentance, faith, the spirit of prayer, the contempt of this world, and hearty desiring for everlasting life; endue us with thy holy Spirit, according to thy covenant and mercy, as well to assure us of pardon, and that thou dost accept us into thy favour, as thy dear children in Christ and for his sake, as to write thy law in our hearts, and so to work in us, that we may now begin and go forwards in believing, living, fearing, obeying, praying, hoping, and serving thee, as thou dost require, most fatherly and most justly of us, accepting us as perfect through Christ and by imputation.

And moreover, when it shall be thy good pleasure, and most to thy glory, deliver us, we beseech thee, out of the hands of thine adversaries, by such means, be it death or life, as may make to our comfort most in Christ. In the mean season, and for ever, save us and govern us with thy holy Spirit and his eternal consolation.

And concerning thine adversaries, which for thy sake are become our adversaries, so many of them as are to be converted, we beseech thee to shew thy

mercy upon them, and to convert them; but those that are not to be converted, which thou only dost know (most mighty God and terrible Lord), confound, and get thy name a glory over them, abate their pride, assuage their malice, bring to nought their devilish devices, and grant that we and all thine afflicted children may be armed with thy defence, weaponed with thy wisdom, and guided with thy grace and holy Spirit, to be preserved for ever from all giving of offences to thy people, and from all perils, to glorify thee, which art the only giver of all victory, through the merits of thy only Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Another Confession of Sins.

As David, seeing thine angel with his sword ready drawn (most righteous Lord) to plague Jerusalem, cried out unto thee, It is I, Lord, that have sinned, and I that have done wickedly; thine hand, Lord, be on me, and not on thy poor sheep; wherethrough thou wast moved to mercy, and badest thine angel put up his sword, thou hadst taken punishment enough; even so we, gracious Lord, seeing thy fearful sword of vengeance ready drawn, and presently striking against this common weal and thy church in the same, we (I say) are occasioned every man now to cast off our eyes from beholding and narrowly spying out other men's faults, and to set our own only in sight, that with the same David thy servant, and with Jonas in the ship, we may cry, It is we (O Lord) which have sinned, and procured this thy grievous wrath.

And this we now, gathered together in Christ's name, do acknowledge, confessing ourselves guilty of horrible ingratitude for our good King, for thy Gospel and pure religion, and for the peace of thy

church, and quietness of the common weal, besides our negligences and many other our grievous sins, wherethrough we have deserved not only these but much more grievous plagues, if that even presently thou didst not, as thou art wont, remember thy mercy.

Hereupon (that thou in thine anger rememberest thy mercy before we seek and sue for it) we take boldness, as thou commandest us to do, in our trouble, to come and call upon thee, to be merciful unto us, and of thy goodness now we humbly in Christ's name pray thee, to hold thy hand and cease thy wrath; or at the least so to mitigate it, that this realm may be quietly governed, and the same eftsoons to be a harbour for thy church and true religion, which do thou restore to us again, according to thy great power and mercy, and we shall praise thy name for ever, through Jesus Christ our only Mediator and Saviour. Amen.

A Prayer for the Remission of Sins.

OH! Lord God and dear Father, what shall I say, that feel all things to be in manner with me as in the wicked! Blind is my mind, crooked is my will, and perverse concupiscence is in me, as a spring or stinking puddle. Oh! how faint is faith in me! how little is love to thee or thy people, how great is self-love, how hard is my heart! &c. By the reason whereof I am moved to doubt of thy goodness towards me, whether thou art my father or no, and whether I be thy child or no. Indeed worthily might I doubt if that the having of these were the causes and not the fruits rather of thy children. The cause why thou art my Father, is, thy mercy, goodness, grace, and truth in Christ Jesus, the which cannot but remain for ever. In respect whereof thou hast borne me this good will, to accept me into the

number of thy children, that I might be holy, faithful, obedient, innocent, &c. And therefore thou wouldest not only make me a creature after thy image, enduing me with sight, limbs, shape, form, memory, wisdom, &c. where thou mightest have made me a beast, a maimed creature, lame, blind, frantic, &c. ; but also thou wouldest that I should be born of Christian parents, brought into thy church by baptism, and called divers times by the ministry of thy word into thy kingdom, besides the innumerable other benefits always hitherto poured upon me ; all which thou hast done of this thy good will that thou of thine own mercy barest to me in Christ and for Christ before the world was made ; the which thing, as thou requirest straitly that I should believe without doubting, so in all my needs that I should come unto thee as a Father, and make my moan without mistrust of being heard in thy good time, as most shall make to my comfort. Lo ! therefore to thee, dear Father, I come through thy Son our Lord, Mediator, and Advocate Jesus Christ, who sitteth on thy right hand, making intercession for me, and pray thee of thy great goodness and mercy in Christ to be merciful unto me, that I may feel indeed thy sweet mercy as thy child. The time (O dear Father) I appoint not, but I pray thee that I may with hope still expect and look for thy help ; I hope that as for a little while thou hast left me, thou wilt come and visit me, and that in thy great mercy, whereof I have need by reason of my great misery. Thou art wont for a little season in thine anger to hide thy face from them whom thou lovest, but surely (O Redeemer) in eternal mercies thou wilt shew thy compassions : for when thou leavest us, O Lord, thou dost not leave us very long, neither dost thou leave us to our loss, but to our lucre and advantage : even that thy holy Spirit, with

bigger portion of thy power and virtue, may lighten and cheer us, that the want of feeling to our sorrow may be recompensed plentifully with the lively sense of having thee, to our eternal joy; and therefore thou swarest, that in thine everlasting mercy thou wilt have compassion on us: of which thing to the end we might be most assured, thine oath is to be marked, for thou sayest, As I have sworn that I will not bring any more the waters to drown the world; so have I sworn, that I will never more be angry with thee, nor reprove thee. (Isa. liv.) The mountains shall remove, and the hills shall fall down, but my loving kindness shall not move, and the bond of my peace shall not fail thee; thus sayest thou the Lord our merciful Redeemer. Dear Father, therefore I pray thee, remember, even for thine own truth and mercy's sake, this promise and everlasting covenant, which in thy good time I pray thee to write in my heart, that I may know thee to be the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent; that I may love thee with all my heart for ever; that I may love thy people for thy sake; that I may be holy in thy sight through Christ; that I may always not only strive against sin, but also overcome the same, daily more and more, as thy children do; above all things desiring the sanctification of thy name, the coming of thy kingdom, the doing of thy will here on earth, as it is in heaven, &c. through Jesus Christ our Redeemer, Mediator, and Advocate. Amen.

Another Prayer for Remission of Sins.

O GRACIOUS God! which seekest all means possible how to bring thy children into the feeling and sure sense of thy mercy, and therefore when prosperity will not serve, then sendest thou adversity, gra-

ciously correcting them here, whom thou wilt shall with thee elsewhere live for ever, we poor misers give humble praises and thanks unto thee (dear Father), that thou hast vouch'd us worthy of thy correction at this present, hereby to work that which we in prosperity and liberty did neglect; for the which neglecting and many other our grievous sins, whereof we now accuse ourselves before thee (most merciful Lord), thou mightest most justly have given us over, and destroyed us both in souls and bodies. But such is thy goodness towards us in Christ, that thou seemest to forget all our offences; and as though we were far otherwise than we be indeed, thou wilt that we should suffer this cross now laid upon us for thy truth and Gospel's sake, and so be thy witnesses with the prophets, apostles, martyrs, and confessors, yea, with thy dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ, to whom thou dost now here begin to fashion us like, that in his glory we may be like him also.

O good God! what are we on whom thou shouldest shew this great mercy! O loving Lord! forgive us our unthankfulness and sins. O faithful Father! give us thy holy Spirit now to cry in our hearts, Abba, dear Father; to assure us of our eternal election in Christ; to reveal more and more thy truth unto us; to confirm, strengthen, and stablish us so in the same, that we may live and die in it as vessels of thy mercy, to thy glory and to the commodity of thy church; endue us with the Spirit of thy wisdom, that with good conscience we may always so answer the enemies in thy cause, as may turn to their conversion or confusion, and our unspeakable consolation in Jesus Christ; for whose sake we beseech thee henceforth to keep us, to give us patience, and to will none otherwise for deliverance or

mitigation of our misery, than may stand alway with thy good pleasure and merciful will towards us.

Grant this, dear Father, not only to us in this place, but also to all other elsewhere afflicted for thy name's sake, through the death and merits of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A Prayer for Deliverance from Sin, and to be restored to God's Grace and Favour again.

O ALMIGHTY and everlasting Lord God! which hast made heaven, earth, &c. O incomprehensible unity! O always to be worshipped, most blessed Trinity! I humbly beseech thee and pray thee, by the assumption and crucified humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ, that thou wouldest incline and bow down the great depth of thy Deity to the bottomless pity of my vility, drive from me all kind of vice, wickedness, and sin, and make in me a new and clean heart, and renew in me a right spirit, for thy holy name's sake.

O Lord Jesu! I beseech thy goodness, for the exceeding great love which drew thee out of thy Father's bosom into the womb of the holy Virgin, and for the assumption of man's nature, wherein it pleaseth thee to save me, and to deliver me from eternal death; I beseech thee, I say, that thou wouldest draw me out of myself into thee, my Lord God, and grant this thy love may recover again to me thy grace, to increase and make perfect in me that which is wanting, to raise up in me that which is fallen, to restore to me that which I have lost, and to quicken in me that which is dead and should live; that so I may become conformable unto thee in all my life and conversation, thou dwelling in me and I in thee, my heart being supplied with thy grace, and settled in thy faith for ever.

O thou my God! loose and set at liberty my spirit from all inferior things, govern my soul, and so work, that both in soul and body I may be holy, and live to thy glory, world without end. Amen.

A Prayer for the obtaining of Faith.

O MERCIFUL God and dear Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ! in whom as thou art well pleased, so hast thou commanded us to hear him, forasmuch as he often biddeth us to ask of thee, and thereto promiseth that thou wilt hear us, and grant us that which in his name we shall ask of thee. Lo! gracious Father, I am bold to beg of thy mercy, through thy Son Jesus Christ, one sparkle of true faith and certain persuasion of thy goodness and love towards me in Christ, wherethrough I being assured of the pardon of all my sins by the mercies of Christ thy Son, may be thankful to thee, love thee, and serve thee in holiness and righteousness all the days of my life. Amen.

A Prayer for Repentance,

MOST gracious God and merciful Father of our Saviour Jesus Christ, because I have sinned and done wickedly, and through thy goodness have received a desire of repentance, whereto this long-suffering doth draw my hard heart, I beseech thee, for thy great mercy's sake in Christ, to work the same repentance in me; and by thy Spirit, power, and grace, to humble, mortify, and fear my conscience for my sins to salvation, that in thy good time thou mayest comfort and quicken me, through Jesus Christ, thy dearly beloved Son. So be it.

*A Dialogue or Communication between Satan and
our Conscience.*

Satan. Thou hast sinned against God, therefore thou must die.

Conscience. Why then died Christ?

S. For sinners; but how knowest thou he died for thee?

C. Because I am a sinner, and he is both able and willing to forgive me.

S. I grant that he is able to forgive thee; but how knowest thou he will?

C. He would not surely have died, if he would not forgive.

S. But how knowest thou that he will forgive thee?

C. Because I would fain be forgiven.

S. So would Judas as well as thou, and prevailed not.

C. The Scriptures went upon Judas's fact, which must needs be fulfilled; they never went upon mine. Again, Judas bare a figure of the people of the Jews, which tribe only fell from Christ, when all other eleven tribes of the world did stick fast unto him. I am a poor sinner of the gentiles, of whom it is written, I will be exalted in the gentiles.

S. If thou be a sinner of the gentiles, yet thou must consider thy sin is great.

C. I grant, but Christ's passion is greater.

S. Oh, but thou hast sinned very often.

C. Tell me not, Satan, what I have done, but what I will do.

S. What wilt thou do?

C. By God's grace my full purpose is hereafter to take better heed, and to amend my former life.

S. Is that enough, thinkest thou?

C. What lacketh?

S. The favour of God, which hath clean forsaken thee.

C. So God favoured and loved the world, that he gave his own dear Son, that whosoever seeth him, as the Israelites did the brazen serpent, they shall not perish, but have life everlasting.

A godly Meditation.

O ALMIGHTY and everlasting Lord God! the dear Father of our Saviour Jesus Christ, which hast made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that therein is, which art the only ruler, governor, conserver, and keeper of all things, together with thy dearly beloved Son Christ Jesus our Lord, and with thy holy Ghost the Comforter: O holy, righteous, and wise! O strong, terrible, mighty, and fearful Lord God! judge of all men, and governor of all the whole world! O exorable, patient, and most gracious Father! whose eyes are upon the ways of all men, and are so clean they cannot abide impiety; thou searchest the hearts, and triest the very thoughts and reins of all men; thou hatest sin, and abhorrest iniquity; for sin's sake thou hast grievously punished mankind, thy most dear creature, as thou hast declared by the penalty of death laid upon all the children of Adam, by the casting out of Adam and his offspring forth of paradise; by the cursing of the earth, by the drowning of the world, by the burning up of Sodom and Gomorrah, by the hardening the heart of Pharaoh, so that no miracle could convert him; by the drowning of him and his people with him in the Red Sea; by the overthrowing of the Israelites in the wilderness, so that of six hundred thousand, all only but two did enter into the land of promise; by rejecting King Saul; by the great punishment upon thy servant David, notwithstanding his hearty repentance; by grievously

afflicting Solomon in himself and in his posterity; by the captivity of the ten tribes, and by the thralldom of the Jews, wherein until this present day they continue a notable spectacle of thy wrath to the world against and for sin; but of all spectacles of thy anger against sin, the greatest and most notable is the death and bloody passion of thy dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ. Great is thy anger against sin, when in heaven and earth nothing could be found which might appease thy wrath, save the bloodshedding of thine only and most dearly beloved Son, in whom was and is all thy delight; great is the sore of sin, that needeth such a salve; mighty was the malady that needed such a medicine. If in Christ, in whom was no sin, thy wrath was so fierce for our sin, that he was constrained to cry, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? how great and importable then is thine anger against us, which are nothing but sinful! They that are thy children through the contemplation of thine anger against sin, set forth most evidently in the death of Christ, do tremble and are afraid, lamenting themselves upon him (and heartily crying for mercy); whereas the wicked are altogether careless and contemptuous, nothing lamenting their iniquities, or crying to thee heartily for mercy and pardon, among whom we are rather to be placed, than among thy children; for that we are so shameless for our sin, and careless for thy wrath; which we may well say to be most grievous against us, and evidently set forth in the taking away of our good King and thy true religion, in the exile of thy servants, prisonment of thy people, misery of thy children, and death of thy saints: also by the placing over us in authority thy enemies, by the success thou givest them in all they take in hand, by the returning again into our country of antichrist the Pope.

All these, as they do preach unto all the world (but specially unto us) thy grievous wrath, so do they set before our eyes our iniquities and sins, which have deserved the same; for thou art just and holy in all thy works, thy judgments are righteous altogether; it is we, it is we that have sinned, and procured these plagues; we have been unthankful wretches, and most carnal gospellers; therefore to us pertaineth shame, and nothing else is due, but confusion: for we have done very wickedly, we have heaped sin upon sin, so that the measure hath overflowed and ascended up to heaven, and brought these plagues, which are but earnest for greater to ensue; and yet, alas! we are altogether careless in manner: what shall we do? what shall we say? who can give us penitent hearts? who can open our lips? that our mouths might make acceptable confession unto thee. Alas! of ourselves we cannot think any good, much less wish it, and least of all do it; as for angels or any other creatures, they have nothing, but that which they have received, and they are made to minister unto us, so that where it passeth the power of the master, the minister must needs want. Alas! then, what shall we do? Thou art holy, and we unholy; thou art good, and we nothing but evil; thou art pure, we altogether impure; thou art light, and we most dark, darkness; how then can there be any conveniency or agreement betwixt us? Oh! what now may we do? Despair? No; for thou art God, and therefore good; thou art merciful, and therefore thou forgivest sins; with thee is mercy and propitiation, and therefore thou art worshipped. When Adam had sinned, thou gavest him mercy before he desired it; and wilt thou deny us mercy, which now desire the same? Adam excused his fault, and accused thee; but we accuse ourselves, and excuse thee; and shall we be sent empty away? Noah found

favour when thy fury abounded ; and shall we, seeking grace, be frustrated ? Abraham was pulled out of idolatry when the world was drowned therein ; and art thou his God only ? Israel in captivity in Egypt was graciously visited and delivered ; and, dear God, the same good Lord, shall we always be forgotten ? How often in the wilderness didst thou defer, and spare thy plagues, at the request of Moses, when the people themselves made no petition to thee ? And seeing we not only now make our petitions unto thee through thy goodness, but also have a Mediator for us now far above Moses, even Jesus Christ ; should we, I say, dear Lord, depart ashamed ? So soon as David said, I have sinned, thou didst forthwith answer to him, that he should not die, thou hadst taken away his sins. And, gracious God, even the self-same God, shall not we, which now with David gladly confess that we have sinned, shall we, I say, not hear by thy good Spirit that our sins be pardoned ? Oh ! grant that with Manasseh we may find favour and mercy ; remember that thou hast not spared thine own only dear Son Jesus Christ, but given him for us all to die for our sins, to rise for our righteousness, to ascend for our possession-taking in heaven, and to appear before thee for us for ever, a High-priest after the order of Melchisedeck, that through him we might have free access to come to thy throne, now rather of grace than of justice. Remember that thou by him hast bidden to ask, and promised that we should receive, saying, Ask, and ye shall have ; seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. O thou dear God, and most meek and merciful Father ! we heartily beseech thee to be merciful unto us ; for this thy Christ's sake, for his death's sake, for thy promise, truth, and mercy's sake, have mercy upon us ; pardon and forgive us all our sins, iniquities, and trespasses,

whatsoever we committed against thee, in thought, word, or deed, ever or at any time hitherto by any means. Dear Father, have mercy upon us, though we be poor; if our Christ is rich, though we be sinners, yet he is righteous; though we be fools, yet he is wise; though we be impure, yet he is pure and holy; for his sake therefore be merciful unto us. Call to mind how thou hast promised that thou wilt pour out of thy clean waters, and wash us from our filth, and cleanse us from our evils; forget not that thou hast promised to take from us our stony hearts, and dost promise to give us soft hearts, new hearts, and to put into the midst of us right spirits. Remember thy covenant, namely, how thou wilt be our God, and we shall be thy people; forget not the parts of it, that is, to put out of thy memory for ever all unrighteousness, and to write in our minds and hearts thy law and testimonies. Remember that thou dost strictly charge us to have none other gods but thee, saying, that thou art the Lord our God. Oh! then declare the same to us all, we heartily now beseech thee; forgive us our sins, forget our iniquities, cleanse us from our filthiness, wash us from our wickedness, pour out thy holy Spirit upon us, take from us our hard hearts, our stony hearts, our impenitent hearts, our distrusting and doubtful hearts, our carnal, our secure, our idle, our beastly hearts, our impure, malicious, arrogant, envious, wrathful, impatient, covetous, hypocritical, and epicurial hearts, and in place thereof give us new hearts, soft hearts, faithful hearts, merciful hearts, loving, obedient, chaste, pure, holy, righteous, true, simple, lowly, and patient hearts, to fear thee, to love thee, trust in thee for ever; write thy law in our hearts, grave it in our minds; we heartily beseech thee, give us that spirit of prayer, make us diligent and happy in the works

of our vocation, take into thy custody and governance for ever our souls and bodies, our lives, and all that ever we have; tempt us never further than thou wilt make us able to bear; and whatsoever thou knowest we have need of, in soul or body, dear God and gracious Father, vouchsafe to give us that same in thy good time, and always as thy children guide us, so that our life may please thee, and our death praise thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord, for whose sake we heartily pray thee to grant these things thus asked, and all other things necessary for soul and body; not only to us, but to all others also, for whom thou wouldest that we should pray; especially for thy children that be in thralldom, in exile, in prison, misery, heaviness, poverty, sickness. Be merciful to all the whole realm of England; grant us all true repentance, mitigation of our misery, and, if it be thy good will, thy holy word and religion among us once again; pardon our enemies, persecutors, and slanderers, and if it be thy pleasure, turn their hearts; be merciful unto our parents, brethren and sisters, friends, kinsfolks and families, neighbours, and such as by any means thou hast coupled and linked us by love or otherwise; and unto us poor sinners, here gathered together in thy holy name, grant us thy blessing and holy Spirit to sanctify us, and dwell in us, as thy dear children to keep us, this day and for ever, from all evil, to thy eternal glory, and our everlasting comfort, and the profit of thy church, which mercifully maintain, cherish, and comfort; strengthening them that stand, so that they never fall; lifting up them that be fallen, and keep us from falling from thy truth, through the merits of thy dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ, our only Saviour, which liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, to whom be all praise and honour, both now and for ever. Amen.

When you awake out of your sleep, pray thus :

O MOST dear Father of our Saviour Jesus Christ, whom none doth know but of thy gift, grant that to the manifold great benefits of thy goodness given to me, this which of all other is most, may be added ; that like as thou hast awaked my body from sleep, so thou wouldest thoroughly awake, yea, deliver my soul from the sleep of sin and darkness of this world, and that which now is awaked out of sleep, thou wouldest, after death, restore to life, for that is but sleep to thee, which is death to us. Dear God, I most heartily beseech and humbly pray thy goodness to make my body such a companion, or rather a minister of godliness to my soul, in this present life, that in the life to come it may partake with the same everlasting happiness by Jesus Christ our Lord. Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall shew light unto thee. (Eph. v.)

Occasions to meditate.

Here call to mind the great mirth and blessedness of the everlasting resurrection ; also remember to muse upon that most clear light and bright morning, and new clearness of our bodies, after the long darkness it hath been in : all then shall be full of joy.

So soon as you behold the daylight, pray :

O LORD, thou greatest and most true light, where this light of the day and sun doth spring ! O light, which dost lighten every man that cometh into this world ! O light, which knowest no night nor evening, but art always a mid-day, most clear and fair, without whom all is most dark darkness, by whom all be most splendent ! O thou wisdom of the

eternal Father of mercies! lighten my mind, that I may only see those things that please thee, and may be blinded to all other things. Grant that I may walk in thy ways, and that nothing else may be light and pleasant unto me. Lighten mine eyes, O Lord! that I sleep not in death, lest mine enemies say, I have prevailed against him.

Occasions to meditate.

Muse a little how much the light and eye of the mind and soul is better than of the body; also that we care more for the soul to see well, than for the body. Think that beasts have bodily eyes, and therewith see, but men have eyes of the mind, and therewith should see.

When you arise, pray:

OUR first father tumbled down himself from a most excellent, high, and honourable estate into the mire of misery and deep sea of shame and mischief; but, O Christ, thou putting forth thine hand, didst raise him up; even so we, except we be lift up of thee, shall lie still for ever. O good Christ, our most gracious Redeemer, grant that as thou dost mercifully raise up now this my body and burden, even so I beseech thee raise up my mind and heart to the light of the true knowledge of the love of thee, that my conversation may be in heaven, where thou art; if thou be risen with Christ, think upon those things that be above.

Occasions to meditate.

Think something how foul and filthy that Adam's fall was by reason of sin, and so of every one of us from the height of God's grace; again think upon the great benefit of Christ, by whose help we do daily arise from our fallings.

When you apparel yourself, pray:

O CHRIST, clothe me with thine own self, that I may be so far from making provision for my flesh to fulfil the lusts of it, that I may clean put off all my carnal desires, and crucify the kingdom of the flesh in me. Be thou unto me a web to warm me from catching the cold of this world: if thou be away from me (dear Lord), all things will be unto me forthwith cold, weak, dead, &c. But if thou be with me, all things will be warm, lively, fresh, &c. Grant therefore, that as I compass this my body with this coat, so thou wouldest clothe me wholly (but especially my soul) with thine own self. Put upon you as the elect of God, bowels of mercy, meekness, love, peace, &c.

Occasions to meditate.

Call to mind a little how we are incorporated into Christ; again, how he doth clothe us, nourish us under his wings, protection, and providence, preserve us, &c.

*When you are made ready to begin the day withal,
pray:*

O GOD and merciful Father, thou knowest and hast taught us to know something, that the weakness of man is much, and that without thy grace and virtue he can do nor think no good thing; have mercy upon me, I humbly do beseech thee, which am thy most unworthy and most weak child. Oh! be gracious and tender towards me, lighten me, that I may with pleasure look upon good things only; exhort me, that I may covet them; carefully lead me, that I may follow, and at the length attain them. I distrusting myself altogether, commend and offer myself wholly, soul, body, life, &c. into thy hands. Thy loving Spirit lead me forth unto the land of righteousness.

Cogitations meet to begin the Day with.

THINK first that a man consisteth of a soul and a body, and that the soul is from heaven, firm and immortal; but the body is of the earth, earthly, frail, and mortal. Again, think that though by reason of sin, wherein you are conceived and born, the parts of the soul that understandeth and desireth be so corrupt, that without especial grace to both parties, you can neither know nor love any good thing in God's sight, much less do good then; yet this notwithstanding think, that you are regenerate by Christ's resurrection (whereof your baptism requireth faith, and therefore have both those parts something reformed both to know and love, and therefore to do some good in the sight of God through Christ), for whose sake our poor doings are accepted for good; the evil and infirmity cleaving thereto not being imputed through faith; think that by faith, which is God's seed (for they which believe are born of God, and made God's children), given to those that be ordained to eternal life; think (I say) by faith that you receive more and more the spirit of sanctification, through the use of God's word and sacraments, and earnest prayer to illumine and lighten our mind's understanding, judgment, and reason, and to bow, form, frame, and inflame your affections with love and power to that that good is, and therefore use you the means aforesaid accordingly; think that, by this spirit, you are through faith coupled to Christ as a lively member, and so to God, and, as it were, made one with him, and by love which springeth out of this faith you are made one also with all that be of God; and so you have fellowship with God, and all good men that ever were, or shall be, in all the good, that God and all his saints have or shall have; think as, by faith and love through the Spirit, you

are now entered into this communion (the blessedness thereof no tongue can express), so after this life you shall first in soul, and in the last day in body, also enjoy for ever the same society most perfectly, which now is but begun in you ; think then of your negligence, that doth so little care for this your happy estate ; think upon your ingratitude to God for making you, redeeming you, calling you, and so lovingly adopting you ; think upon your foolishness in fancying so much earthly and bodily pleasures ; think upon your deafness and blindness, which heareth not God, nor seeth him, he calling you so diligently by his works, words, and sacraments ; think upon your frowardness, which will not be led of God and his Spirit ; think upon your forgetfulness and inconsideration of your high-estate, how your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, your members are the members of Christ, the whole world and all things are your own (1 Cor. vi.) ; therefore say unto your soul, O soul ! arise, follow God, contemn this world, purpose well, and pursue it, long for thy Lord's coming, be ready and watch that he come not upon thee unawares. And forasmuch as you must live to God's pleasure, see the vocation and state of your life whereto God hath called you, and pray God for grace, knowledge, and ability to take the most profitable things in hand ; well to begin, better to go on, and, best of all, to end the same to God's glory, and profit of your brethren ; and think that time lost, wherein you speak or do not, or (at the least) think not something to God's glory and your brethren's commodity.

When you go forth of the doors, pray :

Now must I walk among the snares of death, stretched out of Satan and of his mischievous ministers in the world, carrying with me a friend to them

both, and a foe to myself, even this body of sin and sinful flesh. O grand Captain Christ, lead me and guide me, I beseech thee; defend me from the plagues and subtilties whereof I am endangered; grant that I may take all things that happen as I should do, only upon thee set thou mine eyes, that I may so go on forwards in thy ways as by nothing I be hindered, but rather forwarded, and may refer all things to thee accordingly; shew me thy way, O Lord, and teach me thy paths; consider how vainly the most part of men be occupied, how they do trouble and cumber themselves diversely, how they meddle with many things, thereby much alienating their minds from the knowledge and cogitation of that which they should most esteem, and so become a let and an offence to others. As in going abroad, you will see that your apparel be seemly in the sight of men, so see how seemly you appear in the sight of God.

When you are going any journey, pray :

THIS our life is a pilgrimage; from the Lord we came, and to the Lord we make our journey; howbeit, through thievish places, and painful, yea, perilous ways, which our cruel enemies have, and do prepare for us, now more than stark blind by reason of sin. O Christ! which art a most true lodesman and guide, and thereto most expert, faithful, and friendly, do thou put out thine hand, open mine eyes, make thy highways known unto me, which way thou didst first enter into out of this corruptible life, and hast fenced the same for us to immortality. Thou art the way, lead us to the Father by thyself, that all we may be one with him as thou, and he together be one. Shew me thy way that I should walk in, for I lift up my soul unto thee. (Psalm cxliv.)

Or pray thus :

MERCIFUL Father, thou art wont to send to thy servants and men of simple hearts, thine angels to be their keepers, and, as it were, guides as elder brethren, to watch upon thy weak children ; so didst thou to young Tobias, to Jacob, to Abraham's servant, to Joshua, &c. O good God! though we be much unlike unto them (so many are our sins), yet for thine own goodness sake, send thine holy angels, to pitch their tents about us, from Satan and his slaves to hide and defend, to carry us in their hands, that we come not into further danger than thou throughout wilt deliver us, for thine own sake ; his angels or ministers for them that be heirs of salvation. Satan sleepeth not, but seeketh always to destroy us. (Heb. i.) Think something how we are strangers from our country, from our home, from our original ; I mean from God. Again, think upon your madness, that do linger and loiter so gladly in this our journey and pilgrimage ; also how foolish we are to fancy things which we cannot carry with us, and to contemn conscience, which will always be a companion to us, to our joy if it be good, but to our shame and sorrow, if it be evil and corrupt ; finally, how unnatural we are, that so little desire to be at our home, to be with our only Father, master, fellows, and friends, &c.

When you are about to receive your meat, pray :

THIS is a wonderful mystery of thy work, O Maker and Governor of the world ! that thou dost sustain the lives of men and beasts with these meats : surely this power is neither in the bread nor food, but in thy will and word, by which word all things do live and have their beings. Again, how great

thing is it, that thou art able yearly to give sustenance to so many creatures; this is spoken of by thy Prophets in thy praises. All things look up to thee, and thou givest them meat in due season; thou openest thine hand, and fillest with thy blessing every living thing: these, doubtless, are wonderful works of thine almightiness; I therefore heartily pray thee (O most liberal Lord and faithful Father), that as thou by meat through thy word dost minister life to these our bodies, even so by the same word with thy grace do thou quicken our souls, that both in soul and body we may please thee till this our mortal carcass shall put on immortality, and we shall need no more any other food, but thee only, which then wilt be all in all. Taste, and see how good the Lord is; bless the Lord (O my soul), which feedeth and filleth thy mouth with good things. Think a little how great God's power is, that made us; also think how great his wisdom is to preserve us; but most of all, think how many things are given to our use, how wonderful it is to give us life, but, most of all, to propagate to immortality the life of the soul by his only beek. Last of all, think that God, by his providence for thy body, would have thee to confirm thy faith of God's providence for thy soul.

In the meal-time pray:

O MOST liberal Distributor of thy gifts, which givest us all kind of good things to use, thou being pure givest pure things, grant to me thy grace, that I misuse not these thy gracious gifts given to our use and profit. Let us not love them because thou dost give us these things, but rather let us love thee, because thou givest them, and for that they be necessary for us for a season, till we come unto thee. Grant us to be conversant among thy gifts soberly,

purely, temperately, holily, because thou art such a one; so shall not we turn that to the poison of our souls, which thou hast given for the medicine of our bodies, but using thy benefits thankfully, we shall find them profitable both to soul and body. Think that the meats and drinks set before you, are given to you to use and not to abuse; think they are given to profit and not to hurt you; think that they are not given to you alone, but unto others also, by you; in eating and drinking, think that you do but feed the worms; remember the poor prisoners, sick, &c. as though you were in their case; think upon the food of your soul, Christ's body broken, and his blood shed. Desire the meat that lasteth for ever (John, vi.), work for it; Christ's meat was to do his Father's will. (John, iv.)

After your meat, pray thus:

By corporal meats thou dost sustain our corporal daily life (ready otherwise to perish), the which surely is a great work, but yet this is much greater, more profitable, and more holy, that thy grace (O Jesu Christ) doth keep away from us the death of the soul; for this life we ought much to thank thee, and because thou dost prolong it with thy good gifts, we most heartily praise thee; howbeit, this life is but the way to eternal life, which we beseech thee, for thy death's sake, that thou wilt give us, and so shall we not only give thee (as we can) thanks in time for temporal things, but also eternal thanks for eternal things. Oh! grant to us these our desires for thy mercies sake. Amen. Think now that God hath given thee this his blessing of meat, &c. and thereto time that thou mightest as repent to seek his glory, and the commodity of thy brethren, therefore go thereabout; but first pray for grace well to begin,

and again consider how thou hast been partaker of other men's labours, as of the husbandman, the miller, the baker, the brewer, the butcher, the cook, &c. See therefore that thou be not a drone bee, but rather such a one as may help the hive; if God have thus fed thy body, which he loveth not, but for thy soul's sake, how can it be then, but that he will be much more ready to feed thy soul? therefore take a courage to thee, and go to him for grace accordingly.

Cogitations for about the Mid-day Time.

As the body is now enlightened on all sides with light, so see that thy mind may be. As God giveth thee thus plentifully this corporal light, so pray him that he will give thee the spiritual light. Think that as the sun is now most clear, so shall our bodies be in the day of judgment. As now the sun is come to the highest, and therefore will begin to draw downward, so is there nothing in the world so perfect and glorious, which (when it is at the full) will not decrease, and so wear away.

When you come home again, pray:

THERE is nothing, O Lord, more like to thy holy nature than a quiet mind; thou hast called us out of the troublesome disquietness of the world, into that thy quiet rest and peace, which the world cannot give, being such a peace as passeth all men's understanding. Houses are ordained for us, that we might get us into them from the injury of weather, from the cruelty of beasts, from disquietness of people, and from the toils of the world. O gracious Father! grant that through thy great mercy my body may enter into this house from outward actions, but so that it may become buxom and obe-

dient to the soul, and make no resistance there-against; that in soul and body I may have a godly quietness, and peace to praise thee. Amen. Peace be to his house, and to all that dwell in the same. Think what a return, and how merry a return, it will be, to come to our eternal, most quiet, and most happy home; then will be all grief gone away; whatsoever here is pleasant and joyful, the same is nothing, but a very shadow in comparison, &c.

At the sun going down, pray:

OH! how unhappy are they, O Lord, on whom thy sun goeth down, and giveth no light! I mean, thy grace, which is always clear as the mid-day; dark night unto them is the mid-day, which depart from thee; in thee is never night, but always daylight most clear. This corporal sun hath his courses, now up, now down; but thou (dear Lord), if we do love thee, art always one. Oh! that this block and vale of sin were taken away from me, that the air might be always clear day in my mind. Think that as we are not sorry when the sun goeth down, because we know it will rise again; even so let us not sorrow for death, wherethrough the soul and body do part asunder, for they shall eftsoons return, and come together again; so long as the sun is up, wild beasts keep their dens, foxes their burrows, owls their holes, &c.; but when the sun is down, then come they abroad; so wicked men and hypocrites keep their dens in the Gospel, but it being taken away, then swarm they out of their holes like bees, as this day doth teach.

When the candles be light, pray:

Most thick and dark clouds do cover our minds, except thy light (O Lord) do dispel them. Thy sun (O

mostwise worker) is as it were a firebrand to the world; thy wisdom, whereby light cometh both to soul and body, is a firebrand to the spiritual world. After day, when the night cometh, thou hast given for the remedy of darkness, a candle; after sin, for the remedy of ignorance, thou hast given thy doctrine, which thy dear Son hath brought unto us. Oh! thou, which art the Author and Master of all truth, make us to see by both the lights, so that the dimness of our minds be driven clean away: lift upon us thy mirth in our hearts. Thy word is a lantern to my feet, and a light unto my paths. Think that the knowledge and wisdom that God hath given unto us by the candles of this night, whereby we see those things in this night of our bodies, which are expedient for us, maketh us to wish much more for this doctrine of God; and when we get it, the more to esteem and diligently embrace it, that as all would be horror without candles, so is there nothing but mere confusion, where God's word taketh not place.

When you make yourself unready, pray.

A godly Meditation.

THIS our life and weak-knit body, by reason of sin, by little and little will be dissolved, and so shall be restored to the earth whence it was taken; then will be an end of this vanity, which by our foolishness we have wrought to ourselves. O most meek Father, so do thou untie, unloose, and loose me, for thou hast knit me together, that I may perceive myself to be made unready and dissolved, and so may remember both of whom I was made, and also whither I go, lest I be had unprepared unto thy tribunal and judgment-seat. Put off the old man, with his lusts and concupiscence; be content with Joseph to

put off thy prison-apparel, that thou mayest put on new; think that we do willingly put off our garments, which in the morning we shall put on again; and therefore in thee, after the night of the world, we shall receive on our bodies again; let us not unwillingly put them off, when God by death shall call.

When you enter into your bed, pray :

THE day now ended, men give themselves to rest in the night, and so, this night finished, we shall rest in death. Nothing is more like this life than every day; nothing is more like death than sleep; nothing more like to our grave than our bed. O Lord! our keeper and defender, grant that I now, laying me down to rest, being unable to keep myself, may be preserved from the crafts and assaults of the wicked enemy; and grant further, that when I have run the race of this life, thou wouldest of thy mercy call me unto thee, that I may always live and watch with thee. Now, good God, give me to take my rest in thee, and bring to pass that thy gracious goodness may be (even in sleep) before mine eyes; that sleeping I be not absent from thee, but may have my dreams to draw me unto thee, and so both soul and body may be kept pure and holy for ever. I will lay me down in peace, and take my rest. Think that as this troublesome day is now past, and night come, and so rest, bed, and pleasant sleep, which maketh most excellent princes and most poor peasants alike; even so after the tumults, troubles, temptations, and tempests of this life, they that believe in Christ have prepared for them a heaven and rest, most pleasant and joyful. As you are not afraid to enter into your bed, and to dispose yourself to sleep; so be not afraid to die, but rather prepare yourself to it; think

that now you are nearer your end by one day's journey, than you were in the morning.

When you feel sleep to be coming, pray :

O LORD Jesus Christ, my watchman and keeper, take me to thy care; grant that my body sleeping, my mind may watch in thee, and be made merry by some sight of that celestial and heavenly life, wherein thou art the king and prince, together with the Father and the Holy Ghost. Thy angels and holy souls be most happy citizens. Oh! purify my soul, keep clean my body, that in both I may please thee, sleeping and waking, for ever. Amen.

A most fruitful Prayer for the dispersed Church of Christ, very necessary to be used of the Godly in these Days of Affliction.

O MOST omnipotent, magnificent, and glorious God, and Father of all consolation, we here assembled do not presume to present and prostrate ourselves before thy mercy-seat in the respect of our own worthiness and righteousness, which is altogether polluted and defiled; but in the merits, righteousness, and worthiness of thy only Son Jesus Christ, whom thou hast given unto us as a most pure and precious garment to cover our pollution and filthiness withal, to the end we might appear holy and justified in thy sight through him. Wherefore in the obedience of thy commandments, and in the confidence of thy promises, contained in thy holy word, that thou shalt accept and grant our prayers presented unto thee in the favour of thy only Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, either for ourselves or for the necessity of thy saints and congregation; we here, congregated together, do with one mouth and mind most humbly beseech thee, not only to pardon and forgive us all our

sins, negligences, ignorances, and iniquities, which we from time to time incessantly do commit against thy divine majesty, in word, deed, and thought, such is the infirmity of our corrupted nature ; but also that it would please thee (O benign Father) to be favourable and merciful unto thy poor afflicted church and congregation, dispersed throughout the whole world, which in these days of iniquity are oppressed, injured, despised, persecuted, and afflicted for the testimony of thy word, and for the obedience of thy laws.

And namely, O Lord and Father, we humbly beseech thee to extend thy mercy and favourable countenance upon all those that are imprisoned or condemned for the cause of thy Gospel, whom thou hast chosen for thee, and made worthy to glorify thy name ; that either it may please thee to give them such constancy as thou hast given to thy saints and martyrs in time past, willingly to shed their blood for the testimony of thy word ; or else mightily deliver them from the tyranny of their enemies, as thou deliveredst the condemned Daniel from the lions, and the persecuted Peter out of prison, to the exaltation of thy glory, and the rejoicing of thy church.

Furthermore, most beneficial Father, we humbly beseech thee to stretch forth thy mighty arm unto the protection and defence of those that are exiled for the testimony of thy verity, and that because they would not bend their backs, and incline their necks under the yoke of antichrist, and be polluted with the execrable idolatries and blasphemous superstitions of the ungodly ; that it would please thee not only to feed them in strange countries, but also to prepare a resting-place for them, as thou hast done from time to time for thine elect in all ages ; whereas they may unite themselves together in the

sincere ministration of thy holy word and sacraments, to their singular edification. And in due time restore them home again to their land, to celebrate thy praises, promote thy Gospel, and edify thy desolate congregation.

Consequently, O Lord, thou that hast said, thou wilt not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax; be merciful, we beseech thee, unto all those that through fear and weakness have denied thee, by dissimulation and hypocrisy; that it may please thee to strengthen their weak knees (thou that art the strength of them that stand), and lift up their feeble hands, that their little smoke may increase into a great flame, and their bruised reed into a mighty oak, able to abide all the blustering blasts and stormy tempests of adversity, to the end that the ungodly do no longer triumph over their fate, which (as they think) they have utterly quenched and subdued. Stir up thy strength in them, O Lord, and behold them with that merciful eye wherewith thou didst behold Peter, that they, rising by repentance, may become the constant confessors of thy word, and the sanctified members of thy church; to the end, that when as by thy providence thou purposest to lay thy cross upon them, they do no more seek unlawful means to avoid the same, but most willingly to be contented with patience to take it up, and follow thee, in what sort soever it shall please thee to lay the same upon their shoulders, either by death, imprisonment, or exile; and that it will please thee not to tempt them above their powers, but give them grace utterly to despair of their own strength, and wholly to depend upon thy mercy.

On the other side, O Lord God, thou righteous judge, let not the ungodly, the enemies of thy truth, continually triumph over us, as they do at this day; let not thine heritage become a reproach and common

laughing-stock unto the impudent and wicked Papists, who by all possible means seek the utter destruction of thy little flock, in shedding the blood of thy saints for the testimony of thy word, seeking by most devilish and damnable practices to subvert thy truth : confound them, O God, and all their wicked counsels, and in the same pit they have digged for other, let them be taken, that it may be universally known, that there is no counsel nor force that can prevail against the Lord our God. Break, O Lord, the horns of those bloody bulls of Basan ; pull down those high mountains that elevate themselves against thee ; and root up the rotten race of the ungodly, to the end that they being consumed in the fire of thine indignation, thine exiled church may in their own land find place of habitation.

O Lord, deliver our land, which thou hast given us for a portion to possess in this life, from the invasion and subduing of strangers. Truth it is we cannot deny, but that our sins have justly deserved this great plague, now imminent and approaching, even to be given over into the hands and subjection of that proud and beastly nation, that neither know thee nor fear thee, and to serve them in a bodily captivity that have refused to serve thee in a spiritual liberty ; yet, Lord, forasmuch as we are assuredly persuaded by thy holy word, that thine anger doth not last for ever towards those that earnestly repent, but in the stead of vengeance doth shew mercy, we most penitently beseech thee to remove this thy great indignation bent towards us, and give not over our land, our cities, towns and cattle, our goods, possessions and tithes, our wives, children, and our own lives, into the subjection of strangers ; but rather, O Lord, expel them our land, subvert their counsels, dissipate their devices, and deliver us from their tyranny, as thou deliveredst Samaria from cruel

Benhadad, Jerusalem from that blasphemous Sennacherib, and Beulah from that proud Holofernes.

Give us, O Lord, such princes and rulers, such magistrates and governors, as will advance thy glory, erect up thy Gospel, suppress idolatry, banish all papistry, and execute justice and equity. Water again, O Lord, thy vine of England with the moisture of thy holy word, lest it utterly perish and wither away. Build up again the decayed walls of thy new Jerusalem, thy congregation in this land, lest the ungodly do attribute our confusion not unto our sins (as the truth is), but unto our profession in religion.

Remember (O Lord) that we are a parcel of thy portion, thy flock, the inheritors of thy kingdom, the sheep of thy pasture, and the members of thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ; deal with us therefore according to the multitude of thy mercies, that all nations, kindreds, and languages, may celebrate thy praises in the restoring of thy ruined church to perfection again; for it is thy work (O Lord), and not man's, and from thee do we with patience attend the same, and not from the fleshly arm of man, and therefore to thee only is due all dominion, power, and thanksgiving, now in our days and for evermore. Amen.

1 Tim. ii. *Pray in every place, lifting up your hands.*

O MIGHTY King, and most high almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which mercifully dost govern all things which thou hast made, look down upon the faithful seed of Abraham, the children of thy chosen Jacob, thy chosen people I do mean, consecrate unto thee by the anointing of thy holy Spirit, and appointed to thy kingdom by the

eternal purpose, free mercy, and grace, but yet, as strangers, wandering in this vale of misery, brought forth daily by the worldly tyrants like sheep to the slaughter. O Father of all flesh, who by thy divine providence changest times and seasons, and most wonderfully disposest kingdoms; thou hast destroyed Pharaoh, with all his horses and chariots, puffed up with pride against thy people, leading forth safely by the hands of thy mercy thy beloved Israel through the high waves of the raging waters; thou, O God, the Lord of all hosts and arms, didst first drive away from the gates of thy people the blasphemous Sennacherib, slaying of his army fourscore and five thousand by thy angel in one night, and after by his own sons, before his own idols, didst kill the same blasphemous idolater, shewing openly to all heathen thy provident power towards thy despised little ones; thou didst transform and change proud Nebuchadnezzar, the enemy of thy people, into a brute beast, to eat grass and hay, to the horrible terror of all worldly tyrants. And as thou art the Father of mercies, and God of all consolation, so of thy wonderful mercy didst thou preserve those thy servants in Babylon, which with bold courage gave their bodies to the fire, because they would not worship any dead idol; and when they were cast into the burning furnace, thou didst give them cheerful hearts, to rejoice and sing psalms, and savedst unhurt the very hairs of their heads, turning the flame from them to devour their enemies. Thou, O Lord God, by the might of thy right arm (which governeth all) broughtest Daniel thy Prophet safe into light and life forth of the dark den of the devouring lions, where by false accusations he was shut under the earth of those raging beasts to be devoured; but thou turnedst their cruelty upon his accusers, repaying the wicked upon their own pates; yea, Lord, which

passeth all wonders, and is far above man's power to perceive therein thy working, thou didst cause the huge and great dragon of the seas, that horrible Leviathan and Behemoth, the main whale fish, to swallow up and devour thy servant Jonah, to keep him three days and three nights in the dungeon of his belly, the dark hellish grave to a living man; thou didst cause that great monster to carry him to the place that thou hadst appointed, and there to cast him up safe, and able to do thy message. Now also, O heavenly Father, beholder of all things, to whom only belongeth vengeance, thou seest and considerest how thy holy name by the wicked worldlings and blasphemous idolaters is dishonoured; thy sacred word refused, forsaken, and despised; thy holy Spirit provoked and offended; thy chosen temple polluted and defiled: tarry not too long therefore, but shew thy power speedily upon thy chosen household, which is so grievously vexed and so cruelly handled by thy open enemies. Avenge thine own glory, and shorten these evil days for thine elect's sake. Let thy kingdom come of all thy desired; and though our livings have offended thy majesty, as we do confess unfeignedly (O Lord) that we have all sinned, our kings, princes, priests, prophets, and people; all we, together with our parents, fathers, and mothers, have most grievously, infinitely passing all measure and number, with our hard flintish hearts, our dissolute and careless lives, without all shame and repentance for sin, offended, transgressed, trespassed, sinned, and committed most horrible wickedness, so that we have worthily deserved the uttermost of thy plagues and terrible vengeance; yet for thine own glory (O merciful Lord) suffer not the enemy of thy Son Christ, the Romish antichrist, thus wretchedly to delude and draw from thee our poor brethren, for whom thy Son once died, that by

his cruelty, after so clear light, they should be made captives to dumb idols and devilish inventions of popish ceremonies thereunto pertaining. Suffer him not to seduce the simple sort with his fond opinion, that his false gods, blind mumbling, feigned religion, or his foolish superstition, doth give him such conquests, such victories, such triumphs, and so high hand over us. We know most certainly (O Lord) that it is not their arm and power, but our sins and offences, that hath delivered us to their fury, and hath caused thee to turn away from us. But turn again, O Lord, let us fall into thy hands; otherwise (seeing thy justice must punish us) let us fall into thy hands (as David did choose) by dearth, famine, or pestilence, or what way thou likest; lest these vain idolaters rejoice at the miserable destruction of those men whom they make proselytes, and from thy doctrine apostates. But, holy Lord, thy holy will be fulfilled: this is thy righteous judgment to punish us with the tyrannical yoke of blindness, because we have cast away from us the sweet yoke of the wholesome word of thy Son our Saviour. Yet consider the horrible blasphemies of thine and our enemies; they name a cake their God, their Christ, and altogether they know nothing of thy power; they say in their hearts, There is no God, which either can or will deliver us; wherefore, O heavenly Father, the governor of all things, the avenger of the cause of the poor, the fatherless, the widow, and the oppressed, look down from heaven, with the face of thy fatherly mercies, and forgive us all former offences, and for thy Son Christ's sake have mercy upon us, which by the force and cruelty of wicked and blasphemous idolaters without causes approved, are haled and pulled from our own houses; are slandered, slain, and murdered as rebels and traitors, like persons pernicious, pestiferous, seditious, pestilent, and

full of mortal poison, to all men contagious, where we do meddle no further, but against the hellish powers of darkness, against the spiritual craftiness in heavenly things, which would deny the will of our Christ unto us; we do contend no further, but only for our Christ crucified, and the only salvation by his blessed passion, acknowledging none other God, none other Christ or Saviour, but only that the ever-living Lord and our most merciful Father, and thy dear Son our Saviour, who is in the same glory with thee in the highest heavens; therefore, O Lord, for thy glorious name's sake, for Jesus Christ's sake, by whom thou hast promised to grant all righteous requests, make the wicked idolaters to wonder and stand amazed at thy almighty power, use thy wonted strength to the confusion of thine enemies and to the help and deliverance of thy persecuted people; all thy saints do beseech thee therefore, the young infants which have somewhat tasted of thy sweet word, by whose mouth thou hast promised to make perfect thy praises, whose angels do alway behold thy face, who besides the loss of us their parents are in danger to be compelled and driven (without thy great mercies) to serve dumb and insensible idols, do cry and call to thee; their pitiful mothers, with lamentable tears, lie prostrate before the throne of thy grace. Thou, Father of the fatherless, judge of the widows, and avenger of all the oppressed, let it appear, O Lord omnipotent, that thou dost hear, in due season avenge and punish all wrongs offered to all thy little ones that do believe in thee. Do this, O Lord, for thy name's sake. Arise up, O Lord, and thine enemies shall be scattered and confounded. So be it, O Lord most merciful, at thy time appointed.

Another godly Prayer to be read at all Times.

HONOUR and praise be given to thee, O Lord God Almighty, most dear Father of heaven, for all thy mercies and loving kindness shewed unto us, in that it hath pleased thy gracious goodness freely and of thine own accord to elect and choose us to salvation before the beginning of the world; and even like continual thanks be given to thee, for creating of us after thine own image; for redeeming us with the precious blood of thy dear Son, when we were utterly lost; for sanctifying us with thy holy Spirit in the revelation and knowledge of thy holy word; for helping and succouring us in all our needs and necessities; for saving us from all dangers of body and soul; for comforting us so fatherly in all our tribulations and persecutions; for sparing us so long, and giving us so large a time of repentance. These benefits, O most merciful Father, like as we acknowledge to have received them of thy only goodness, even so we beseech thee, that for thy dear Son Jesus Christ's sake, to grant us always thy holy Spirit, whereby we may continually grow in thankfulness towards thee, to be led into all truth, and comforted in all our adversities. O Lord, strengthen our faith, kindle it more in ferventness and love towards thee and our neighbours, for thy sake. Suffer us not, dearest Father, to receive thy word any more in vain, but grant us always the assistance of thy grace and holy Spirit, that in heart, word, and deed we may sanctify, and do worship to thy holy name. Help to amplify and increase thy kingdom, and whatsoever thou sendest we may be heartily well content with thy good pleasure and will. Let us not lack the thing (O Father), without the which we cannot serve thee, but bless thou so all the works of our hands, that we may have sufficient, and not to

be chargeable, but rather helpful unto others: be merciful, O Lord, to our offences, and, seeing our debt is great, which thou hast forgiven us in Jesus Christ, make us to love thee and our neighbours so much the more. Be thou our Father, our Captain, and Defender in all temptations; hold thou us by thy merciful hands, that we may be delivered from all inconveniences, and end our lives in the sanctifying and honour of thy holy name, through Jesu Christ our Lord and only Saviour. Amen.

Let thy mighty hand and outstretched arm, O Lord, be still our defence, thy mercy and loving kindness in Jesu Christ thy dear Son our salvation, thy true and holy word our instruction, thy grace and holy Spirit our comfort and consolation unto the end, and in the end. Amen.

O Lord, increase our faith.

A short and pithy Defence of the Doctrine of the holy Election and Predestination of God, gathered out of the first Chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians. By J. BRADFORD.

THERE is neither virtue nor vice to be considered according to any outward action, nor according to the will and wisdom of man, but according to the will of God. Whatsoever is conformable thereto, the same is virtue, and the action that springeth thereof is laudable and good, howsoever it appear otherwise to the eyes and reason of man, as was the lifting up of Abraham's hand to have slain his son. (Gen. xxii.) Whatsoever is not conformable to the will of God, that same is vice, and the action springing thereof is to be disallowed and taken for evil; and that so much the more and greater evil, by how much it is not consonant and agreeing to God's will, although it seem far otherwise to man's wisdom, as was Peter's

wish of making three tabernacles (Matt. xvii.), and the request of some which would have had fire to have come down from heaven upon a zeal to God, &c. (Luke, ix.)

Now the will of God is not so known as in his word; therefore according to it must vice and virtue, good and evil, be judged; and not according to the judgment, wisdom, reason, and collection of any man, or of the whole world, if all the angels in heaven should take their part.

But this word of God, which is written in the canonical books of the Bible, doth plainly set forth unto us, that God hath of his own mercy and good will, and to the praise of his grace and glory in Christ, elected some and not all, whom he hath predestinated unto everlasting life in the same Christ; and in his time calleth them, justifieth them, and glorifieth them, so that they shall never perish and err to damnation finally.

Therefore to affirm, teach, and preach this doctrine, hath in it no hurt, no vice, no evil; much less then hath it any enormity (as some do affirm) to the eyes and spirit of them which are guided, and will be, by the word of God.

That God, the eternal Father of mercies, before the beginning of the world, hath of his own mercy and good will, and to the praise of his grace and glory, elected in Christ some, and not all of the posterity of Adam, whom he hath predestinated unto eternal life, and calleth them in his time, justifieth them, and glorifieth them, so that they shall never perish or err to damnation finally; that this proposition is true, and according to God's plain and manifest word, by the help of his holy Spirit, which in the name of Jesus Christ I humbly beseech his mercy plenteously to give to me at this present and for ever, to the sanctification of his holy name; by the

help, I say, of his holy Spirit, I trust so evidently to declare, that no man of God shall be able by the word of God ever to impugn it, much less to confute it.

In the first chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians, the Apostle saith thus: "Blessed be God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which hath blessed us with all manner of blessings in heavenly things by Christ, according as he hath elect or chosen us in him before the foundation of the world was laid, that we should be holy and without blame before him through love, and hath predestinated us (or ordained us) through Jesus Christ, to be heirs unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherewith he hath made us accepted in the Beloved, by whom we have received redemption through his blood, and the forgiveness of our sins, according to the riches of his grace, which grace he hath shed on us abundantly in all wisdom and understanding, and hath opened unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in himself, to have it declared when the time was full come, that he might gather together all things by (or in) Christ, as well the things that be in heaven, as the things that be in earth, even in (or by) him; by (or in) whom we are made heirs, being thereto predestinated, according to the purpose of Him which worketh all things according to the degree (or counsel) of his own will, that we which hoped before (you) in Christ, should be unto the praise of his glory; in whom ye also hoped, after that ye heard the word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation, wherein ye also believing, were sealed with the holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption (or full fruition) of the purchased possession unto the praise of his glory."

These be the words of Paul, which I have faithfully translated according to the very text in the Greek, as by the judgment of all that be learned, I desire herein to be tried, out of the which words of Paul we may well perceive every thing affirmed in my proposition, as I will give occasion plainly to them that will to see it.

First, that the cause of God's election is of his good will, the Apostle sheweth in saying, that it is through his love whereby we are holy and without blame, also according to the good pleasure of his will, according to his good pleasure purposed in himself, according to his purpose which worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

Secondly, that election was before the beginning of the world, the Apostle plainly sheweth, in saying, that we were chosen before the foundation of the world was laid; and afterwards in calling it the mystery of his will purposed with himself in time to be declared.

Thirdly, that election is in Christ, the Apostle doth so flatly and plainly set it forth, that I need not here to repeat it. We (saith he) are chosen in him; we are heirs by him; we are accepted by him; we are gathered together in him, &c.

Fourthly, that election is of some of Adam's posterity, and not of all; we may plainly see it, if we consider, that he maketh the true demonstration of it, believing, hoping, and having the earnest of the Spirit. In whom ye hoped (saith he) after ye heard the word, &c.; in whom ye believed, were sealed up, &c. Again, in attributing to the elect, forgiveness of sins, holiness, blameless living, being in Christ, &c. That we should be holy, saith he, &c. we have received forgiveness of sins, &c. Who seeth not that, these are not common to all men? All men have not faith, saith Paul, 2 Thess. iii. None believed (saith Luke) but such as were ordained to eternal life

(Acts, xiii.): none believe but such as be born of God (1 John, i.): none believe truly but such as have good hearts, and keep God's seed, to bring forth fruits by patience. (Matt. xiii.)

So that it is plain (faith being a demonstration of God's election to them that be of years of discretion) that all men are not elect, because all men believe not; for he that believeth in the Lord, shall be as Mount Sion (Psalm cxxv.), that is, he shall never be removed; for if he be removed, that is, finally perish, surely he never truly believed. But what go I about to lighten a candle in the clear sun-light, when our Saviour plainly saith that all be not chosen, but few? Many be called (saith he, Matt. xx.), but few be chosen. And in the second chapter to the Ephesians the Apostle plainly saith, that the great riches of God's mercies, through his exceeding great love, hath saved them before their parents and many other gentiles, which were excluded from Christ, and strangers from the promise, hopeless, godless, &c. Wherethrough we may be occasioned to cry, Oh! the depths of the judgments of God (Rom. ii.), which is just in all his doings, and holy in all his works, extending his mercy after his good pleasure and will above all his works. (Psalm cxliv.)

Fifthly, that God hath predestinated these thus elect unto everlasting life in Christ, the Apostle doth also in the words before written declare in saying, And hath predestinated us through Jesus Christ to be heirs unto himself. Again, By him (saith he) ye are made heirs, and predestinate to the praise of his glory. So saith the Apostle (Rom. viii.), Whom he hath predestinated, them he hath predestinated to be like fashioned unto the shape of his Son. And Christ therefore saith, Rejoice in this, your names are written in heaven. (Luke, x.)

Sixthly, that the end of election is to the praise of

God's glory and grace, the Apostle sheweth here in saying, we are predestinated to be holy and without blame before God, &c. ; in saying, we are predestinated to the glory of his grace ; and in saying also, unto the praise of his glory, so that nothing can be more manifest.

Seventhly, that predestination is not without vocation in God's time, and justification, the Apostle here doth teach, in bringing us to the consideration of hearing the word of truth, believing and receiving the holy Spirit, remission of sins, &c. In whom (saith he) ye have hoped, after that ye heard the word of truth, &c. Again, By whom ye have redemption, that is, remission of sins, through the shedding of his blood, &c. also he hath in his full time declared the mystery of his will, &c. Unto the Romans the Apostle sheweth it most manifestly, in saying, Whom he hath predestinated, them he calleth, whom he calleth, them he justifieth ; whereby we may see that predestination or election is not universal of all, for all be not justified.

Eighthly, and last of all, that election is so certain, that the elect and predestinate to eternal life shall never finally perish or err to damnation, the Apostle doth here also very plainly shew, in saying, that they are predestinate to the praise of God's grace ; he saith not, to the praise of his justice, to the praise of his wisdom, to the praise of his power (although he might most truly say so), but he saith, to the praise of his grace, which were not grace, if there were any respect at all of works on our behalf ; for then were grace not grace. (Rom. xi.) If there should be any condemnation of the elect and predestinate to eternal life, it must needs be because of their sins ; but where were the praise of God's grace then, which is the end of God's election ? Shall we not by this means make God's election without an

end, and so without a head, and so no election at all, as some would have further than they elect themselves? Let such fear they shall not find the benefit of God's election, because they seek it as the Israelites did, and not as the elect, which not only find it, but also obtain it. (Rom. xi.) The other are blinded, as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of unquietness, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear even to this day, &c. (Psalm lxi.) Again, he sheweth the certainty of salvation to them that be elected, in saying, that they be accepted in the Beloved, once accepted and beloved in Christ, and ever beloved; for whom he loveth, he loveth to the end (John, xiii.); and God's gifts are such that he cannot repent him of them (Rom. xi.); and therefore saith Christ, I know whom I have chosen, attributing to election the cause of final perseverance: by which thing Judas was seen not to be elected to eternal life, although he was elected to the office of an Apostle, as Saul was elected to the office of a King: which kind of election is to be discerned in reading the Scriptures, from this kind of election the which I speak of now, that is, from election to eternal life in Christ. Thirdly, he sheweth the certainty of salvation of the elect, by calling them heirs. For if we be heirs of God, then are we fellow-heirs with Christ, to be afflicted and glorified with Christ (Rom. viii.); and therefore saith he, according to the decree of his own will. Lo! he calleth it a decree or counsel, which shall stand; as Isaiah saith, the counsel of the Lord shall stand. (Isa. xlvi.) Fourthly, he sheweth this certainty, by saying, that they are elect and predestinated to the praise of God's glory, which we should more care for, than for the salvation of all the world. This glory of the Lord is set forth, as well in them that perish, and are reprobates, as in the elect: and

therefore St. John, bringing in the place of Isaiah, speaking of the reprobate, saith (John, xii.), that Isaiah spake that when he saw the glory of the Lord. This glory of the Lord to be set forth by us, is a great mercy and benefit of God: I am assured, that if the very devils and reprobates did not repine hereat, but were thankful that they might be ministers in any point to set forth God's glory; I am assured (I say) that they should find no hell nor torments: their hell and torments come of the love they have to themselves, and of the malice, envy, and hatred they have against God and his glory. Let them tremble and fear, that may not always wish the glory of the Lord, in election and reprobation.

Let not their eyes be evil, because God is good, and doth good to whom it pleaseth him (Rom. ix.); wrong he doth to no man, nor can do, for then he were not righteous, and so no God; he cannot condemn the just, for then were he untrue, because his word is contrary; he cannot condemn the penitent and believer, for that were against his promise. Let us therefore labour, study, cry, and pray for repentance and faith, and then cannot we be damned, because we are the blessed of the Father before all worlds; and therefore we believe, therefore we repent. (Matt. xxv.) And forasmuch as it pertaineth to us which be within, to see and to speak of those things which are given unto us of God in Christ (1 Cor. ii.), let us labour hereabouts, and leave them that be without to the Lord, which will judge them in his time. (1 Cor. v.) The Apostle prayeth for the Ephesians, for none other wisdom and revelation from God, than whereby they might know God (Eph. i.), and have their minds illuminated, to see what they should hope for by their vocation, and how rich the glory of his inheritance is upon his saints. (Col. ii.) Further than this, I think it unseemly for us to

search, until we have sought out, how rich God's goodness is, and will be to us his children; the which we can never do; but the more we go thereabouts, and the more we taste his goodness, the more we shall love him, and loath all things that displease him. This (I say) let us do, and not be too busy bodies in searching the majesty and glory of God, or in nourishing in any wise the doubting of our salvation, whereto we are ready enough, and the devil goeth about nothing else so much as that; for by it we are dull to do good to other, we are so careful for ourselves. By it we are more dull to do good to ourselves, because we stand in doubt whether it profiteth us or no; by it we dishonour God, either in making him as though he were not true, or else as though our salvation came not only and altogether from him, but hanged partly on ourselves; by it the devil will bring men at length to despair and hatred of God. Doubt once of thy salvation, and continue therein, and surely he will ask no more. It was the first thing wherewith he tempted Christ: If thou be the Son of God, &c. (Matt. iv.) It is the first and principal dart that he casteth at God's elect; but as he prevailed not against Christ, no more shall he do against any of his members, for they have the shield of faith, which quencheth his fiery darts (Eph. vi.); they praise God night and day (Luke, xviii.); how then should they perish? The angels of the Lord pitch their tents round about them (Psa. xxxiv.), how then should Satan prevail? They are borne in the hands of the angels, lest they should hurt their feet at any time; God hath given commandment to his angels over them (Psa. xcii.); the angels are ministers unto them (Heb. i.); their names are written in the book of life, and therefore Christ bade them rejoice (Luke, x.), as Paul doth the Philippians, in the fourth chapter, for nothing shall sepa-

rate them from the love wherewith God loveth them in Christ Jesus (Rom. viii.), who saith, that it is impossible for them to err finally to damnation (Matt. xxiv.), for he is their light to illumine their darkness (Psa. xviii.); they are given to him to keep, and he is faithful over all God's children. He saith, he will keep them so, that they shall never perish. (John, vi. x.) After they believe, they are entered already into everlasting life (Heb. iii.), Christ hath set them there already (John, v. vi.); he hath committed them into his Father's hand by prayer, which we know is sure (John, xvii. Heb. v.); and therefore death, hell, devils, nor all power, sins, nor mischief, shall never pull us out of our Head's hands (Rom. viii.), whose members we are; and therefore receiving of his Spirit, as we do (1 Cor. vi.), we cannot but bring forth the fruits thereof, though now and then the flesh fail us (1 Cor. i.); but the Lord, even our Lord, be praised, which is stronger in us than he which is in the world (1 John); he always putteth under his hand (Psa. lxxvii.), that we lie not still as the reprobate, whose piety is as the morning dew (Hosea, vi.), soon come, and soon gone, and therefore they cannot continue to the end. Cannot! no, they will not, if they could, because they hate God and his glory, and therefore all them that seek it and set it forth; whereas the elect love all men, and seek to do all men good in God, suspending their judgments of others, that they may stand or fall to the Lord, and not to them. (Rom. xiv.)

Hitherto out of this one place of Paul to the Ephesians, if the matter of election and predestination be so fully set forth to God's glory and to the comfort of his church, how may we suppose is this matter set forth in the whole body and books of the canonical Scripture, whereto I had rather send thee,

good reader, with this candle-light which I have now given thee, than in a matter so manifest to make more ado than needeth.

Another Treatise of Election and free Will. By
J. BRADFORD.

THAT there is and always hath been with God, even before the world was made, an election in Christ of all those that shall be saved, many places in the Scriptures do teach; as in the Eph. i.; Rom. viii. ix. xi.; 1 Thess. i.; Matt. xx. xxii. xxiv.; Mark, xiii.; Titus, i.; Acts, xiii.; Phil. ii.; Luke, x. xviii.; Rev. iii. xiii. xvii. xxi. xxii.; John, vi. viii. x. xiii. xvii. and almost every where in the New Testament. In no case therefore it may be denied of any that is godly, although he cannot attain to God's wisdom, justice, and mercy in it; for that were to see God's fore-parts. (Exod. xxxiii.) We must grant it therefore, because the word of God doth not only teach it, but also it standeth with the very nature of God; that to him not only men but all things also that have been or shall be for ever, in all creatures are not only certain, but so certain, that they cannot but be accordingly, and serve his providence; for else God were not God, if any thing were, hath been, or could be, without his knowledge, yea, certain knowledge; which knowledge in God may not be separated of any man from his wisdom, and so not from his will, except we would make two gods, as did the Manichees, one the author of all good, and another the author of all evil; both which (say they) were eternal, and without beginning: which their opinion is devilish, and against the word of God most manifestly, which affirmeth in many places, that there is no more gods but one, as any other that have power to do good or evil absolutely, or of themselves.

But lest some men which are too curious should hereout gather, that then all things come by fatal necessity, as the Stoics thought, or by compulsion and co-action, as other think ; and therefore say they, all God's precepts requiring that which we cannot do are in vain ; I think it good to speak something hereof.

First, the Stoics' opinion is to be condemned as concerning fatal necessity, for that it tieth and bindeth God to the second causes, and maketh him, which is a most free agent, bound and tied, so that he cannot work, but as the second cause moveth him. For they did imagine a perpetual connexion and knitting together of causes by a perpetual order, which is contained in nature ; whereas we should certainly know that it is God which is the ruler and arbiter of all things, which of his wisdom hath foreseen and determined all things that he will do, and now of his power doth in his time put the same in execution, according as he hath decreed with himself. Herein to tarry any longer I need not, for that I think there be none now which be of his opinion, to attribute things to fortune, a word unseemly for Christians.

Secondly, that all things are done by co action or compulsion, is false, and out of God's providence and predestination cannot be gathered or maintained, for there must be a difference put between necessity and constraint. All things that have been done, be, or shall be, in consideration of God's providence, as it is with God, are of necessity, but yet not of compulsion or constraint: as for example, you shall see that necessity is one thing, and constraint is another thing ; God is good of necessity, but who now will say then that he is so by co-action, or enforced thereto ? The devil is naught of necessity, but not by co-action ; good men do well of necessity, but not by compul-

sion; wicked men do evil of necessity, but not of constraint. A thing that is done willingly, is not to be said to be done by constraint: God is good willingly, but not by compulsion; the devil is naught willingly, but not of enforcing; good men do good willingly, but not constrainedly; wicked men do transgress willingly, but not compelled; so that it is plain, though all things be done of necessity, yet are they not of compulsion and enforcement. By reason whereof a man that will be diligent in looking hereon, may see matter enough to purge God from being the author of all evil or of any evil; although he be the author of all things and of all actions, which are to be construed according to the will of the doers; and so may we see one action to be both good and evil, in respect of God's will and Satan's will. For inasmuch as a thing is done according to God's will, the same is good, for his will is good; and inasmuch as a thing is done according to Satan's will, it is evil, because his will is evil.

But now to the third thing, that is, whether God's precepts, requiring that which is not in our powers, be frustrate or no, although all things are done of necessity, and by God's providence. To the understanding hereof, two things are to be considered: first, we must think of God, not as he is in himself, but as by his word he teacheth us; secondly, the state of man before his fall is to be compared with the state of man presently, as he is now brought into this world. For the first, although it be most true, that to God all things are so certain as before is spoken, yet in that God hath opened to us by his word so much of his will, as we should with diligence search and observe, we may not think otherwise, but that whatsoever is done against that word, the same is sin and evil in him, whosoever he be that doth thereagainst; although the same transgression, God

doth and can use to serve his providence accordingly: of which providence we may not otherwise judge, than his word giveth us leave; that is, we must do nothing to serve it, but as his word teacheth. If Adam had been ruled hereby, then he had not eaten the apple, for in that he obeyed not the word of God, which he knew, easily we may perceive, that he did not eat the apple to obey God's providence, which he knew not. So that evident it is, Adam's fall to be sin and evil, and he himself with the serpent to be the author thereof, God not allowing or approving the evil, which is to be construed according to the will of the doer; which will in Adam was naught, although the action God turned to serve his providence, thereby setting forth his wonderful wisdom, power, and goodness; whereat we ought rather with reverence to wonder, than by wandering further than beseebeth us to call into question why God did so: which why, no man is able to understand, and therefore we should bid our busy brain sit down, and not to covet again to be like to God, as Adam did, and therefore he fell so foul as he did.

For the second man's state, I mean before his fall and his state now, thus let us think, namely, that God made man after his image, that is, endued man with a soul immortal, wise, righteous, and holy; for the image of God is not concerning the body, which man hath common with the beasts of the earth, but it is from above, and of God's breathing. So that Adam's transgressing God's precept did not according as he should and might have done, but according as he should not have done, and might have avoided, if that he had not received the persuasion and counsel of the serpent: which God permitted him to do, thereby to declare, that perfect justice, wisdom, and holiness is not nor cannot be in any creature which is not God also; and therefore

Christ being God was made man, that in man there might be this perfection and justice, which is in Christ our Lord, and in Adam we could never have had, which wisdom of God we shall joyfully one day behold, if we will now restrain our busy brain and curiosity from searching further than we should do. But to return again : Adam (I say) being made after God's image, which he received for us all to have derived the same unto us all by natural propagation, by transgressing the commandments, lost and mangled so the same image of God in himself and in us all, that for immortality came death ; for wisdom came foolishness ; for righteousness came unrighteousness ; for holiness came corruption ; concerning God's judgment and in God's sight, although there remained in him concerning man's judgment and the sight of the world, life, wisdom, righteousness, and holiness, the which all we by propagation do from our mother's womb receive, so that we may well see our state now to be far from the state we had before Adam's fall ; and therefore God's law requireth nothing of us, but that which was in our nature before the fall, which we see is impossible for us to pay accordingly ; and yet God, not unjust in that he asketh of us nothing thereby, but the self-same thing which he gave us in our creation. The law then and the precepts of God were given after the fall of man, not that man should thereby get life and the thing which was lost by sin (for the blessed Seed was promised for the recovering hereof and to him that pertained), but that man by it might know sin, and what he had lost ; thereby to desire more deeply the promised Seed, by whom as we be received, so our evils be not imputed, and that we being renewed by his holy Spirit and new seed, should as new-born babes desire, and by will begin to do the law of God, which after our deliverance forth of this

corrupt body, and man of sin, by death, we shall without all let fully accomplish, and at the length receive the body to be spiritual (as Paul saith) and holy, ready to obey and serve the Spirit, as a helper, rather than a hinderer. Oh! happy day, when wilt thou appear!

By this which I have already spoken, I think the diligent reader may see, how that there is election of God's children, and how that God's providence stretcheth itself to all things, so that all things in respect thereof come of necessity; but yet nothing thereby to be done by constraint and enforcement, wherethrough God is seen to be the author of all things, and yet of no evil or sin.

The state of man before his fall and after, with the cause of God's law and precepts given to man, I have briefly touched: now it resteth that I should speak something of free will, what it is, and how far we may grant that man hath free will.

That this may be understood, as I would have the end wherefore God gave his law to be considered, namely, not for man to get thereby eternal life, which appertained to the promised seed; but to shew man what sin is, and what by sin he lost, that he might by his inability be driven to desire of very necessity the promised Messias, and so by him to receive the Spirit; wherethrough being regenerate, he might learn to love the law, to take it as a directory and rule to live by, and to hedge in his old man from controlling; this gear (I say) as I would have it considered, if we will understand man's free will, so would I have this marked, namely, the difference betwixt the life which we lost, and had in our first creation, and now have by birth before regeneration. In our first creation we had a life, not only with the creatures, but also with God, which life utterly Adam lost, as he declareth by the running away to

hide himself from God ; and this he lost for us also as well as for himself, in respect whereof the Scripture calleth us dead. Concerning this life, therefore, that is with God, we have no will at all, much less any free will : for how can a dead man have any will ? The will therefore we have is only for this life and with men ; that is, it is not good and free, but in respect of men, and in this life ; in respect of God and life with him, all our will is as we are even dead ; yea, and the will we have for this present life, if a man will consider the God of this world, and how we are his slaves by birth, and continually till we be regenerate, and how ready our affections are to serve his purpose ; I think none will say otherwise but that man's will unregenerate is none otherwise free than pleaseth his master, who must needs serve, spite of his head, our God ; and therefore all to be done by God's providence, as I said before, without any imputation of evil to our good and most holy Father. Yea, but (saith one) what free will hath man that is regenerate ? This will I briefly shew, when that I have spoken of justification, the which precedeth regeneration, from which we may discern it, but not divide it, no more than heat from the fire.

Justification in Scripture is taken for the forgiveness of our sins, and consisteth in the forgiveness of our sins. This is only God's work, and we nothing else but patients, and not agents. After this work, in respect of us and our sense, cometh regeneration, which altogether is God's work also ; for as to our first birth we bring nothing (bring, quoth I ; yes, we bring, to let it, many things ; but to further it, nothing at all), so do we bring nothing that can help to our justification, as St. Austin full well saith ; He that made thee without thee, shall he not justify thee without thee ? which the Papists have perverted,

reading it affirmatively, without interrogation, as though we brought something to our justifying; whereas it (I mean justification) is a much more excellent work than the work of our creation, and therefore too arrogant are they which will not give all to God in it, as they do in their creation. Good men fly from that pride, and are content to give no less to God, justifying and regenerating them, than they do to their parents for their first generation. Afore we be justified and regenerated of God, we are altogether dead to God and to all goodness in his sight, and therefore we are altogether patients till God have wrought this his only work, justification and regeneration; which work, in respect to us, and our imperfection and falls, in that it is not so full and perfect but it may be more and more, therefore by the spirit of sanctification, which we receive in regeneration as the seed of God, we are quickened to labour with the Lord, and to be more justified, that is, by faith and the fruits of faith, to ourselves and others, to declare the same, and so to increase from virtue to virtue, from glory to glory, having always need to have our feet washed, although we be clean notwithstanding.

Now to the question: a man regenerate (which we ought to believe of ourselves, I mean that we are so by our baptism, the sacrament thereof requiring no less faith); a man, I say, regenerate, that is, born of God, hath the Spirit of God: and as a man born of flesh and blood hath the spirit thereof, whereby as he can stir up himself to do more and more the deeds of the flesh, so the other can, by the Spirit of God in him, stir up in himself the gifts and graces of God, to glorify God accordingly. Howbeit, here let us remark, that as the old man is a perpetual enemy to the new-born man, so accordingly to his strength the works of the new man are

letted and made ineffectual. Therefore God hath taught us to pray, and promised his help, which he commonly in manner giveth by his cross; whereby the old man is weakened, and the new receiveth strength more and more, desiring a dissolution and an utter destruction of the old man by death, that it might go to God from whence it came, and to his home, even heaven, where in the last day it shall receive the old Adam, now so schooled that it will never more be but a faithful friend to serve and praise the Lord for evermore.

Thus have you now, what free will the regenerate children of God have, for whose sakes the Gospel and sweet free promises are given, and to the regenerate new man they properly do pertain; as doth the law with all comminations, and the conditional promises (I mean promises hanging upon condition on our worthiness) pertain properly to the old and unregenerate man, so that when he kicketh, he must by them be bridled and kept down; when the inward man would be comforted, he must not have the law, nor her comminations and conditional promises, but the Gospel and her most sweet free promises. So shall we walk neither on the right nor on the left hand, but keep the right way to heavenward, even Christ our Lord and Captain, as his soldiers, servants, and lively members; neither despairing, nor carnally living, but fearing and rejoicing, as is appertaining, which God grant for his mercy's sake. Amen.

And thus, my dearly beloved, I have sent to you briefly my mind herein according to your desire. Because I have had little time and many other letters, I shall heartily pray you to take this in good part, and with the more indifferency and attention to read it; for my desire was to write fully and speedily, therefore it perchance hath the more obscurity, and

desireth a friendly reader, construing all to the best, and brotherly admonition where cause may appear.

A brief Sum of the Doctrine of Election and Predestination.

God's foresight is not the cause of sin or excusable necessity to him that sinneth; the damned therefore have not nor shall have any excuse, because God foreseeing their condemnation, or through their own sin, did not draw them, as he doth his elect, unto Christ. But as the elect have cause to thank God for ever for his great mercies in Christ; so the other have cause to lament their own wilfulness, sin, and contemning of Christ, which is the cause of their reprobation, and wherein we should look upon reprobation; as the goodness of God in Christ is the cause of our election and salvation, wherein we should look upon God's election. He that will look upon God or any thing in God, simply and barely as it is in God, the same shall be stark blind. Who can see God's goodness, as it is in God? who can see his justice, as it is in him? If therefore thou wilt look upon his goodness, not only look upon his works, but also upon his word; even so if thou wilt look upon his justice, do the like. Then shalt thou see that election is not to be looked on but in Christ, nor reprobation but in sin. When the second cause is sufficient, should not we think that they are too curious that will run to search the first cause, further than God doth give them leave by his word? the which first cause, because they cannot comprehend, therefore do they deny it. God be merciful to us for his name's sake, and give us to love and live his truth, to seek peace and pursue it; because God of his goodness, for the comfort of his children and certainty of their salvation, doth open unto them

something the first cause of their salvation, that is, his goodness before the beginning of the world to be looked upon in Christ; a man may not therefore be so bold as to wade so in condemnation further than God revealeth it. And forasmuch as he hath not revealed it but in sin, therefore let us not look on it otherwise. Seek to be delivered from sin, and fear not reprobation; but if thou wilt not, thou shalt find no excuse in the last day. Say not but thou art warned.



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FRUITFUL TREATISE,

AND

FULL OF HEAVENLY CONSOLATION,

AGAINST THE

FEAR OF DEATH.

Make no tarrying to turn unto the Lord, and put not off from day to day; for suddenly shall his wrath come, and in the day of vengeance he shall destroy thee. Stand fast in the way of the Lord, be steadfast in thine understanding, and follow the word of peace and righteousness.—ECCLESIASTICUS, v.

A TREATISE
AGAINST THE FEAR OF DEATH.

BEING minded, through the help of God, for mine own comfort and encouraging of others, to speak something of death (at whose door though I have stood a great while, yet never so near to man's judgment as I do now), I think it most requisite to call and cry for thy help, O blessed Saviour Jesus Christ, which hast destroyed death by thy death, and brought in place thereof life and immortality, as by the Gospel it appeareth; grant to me true and lively faith, wherethrough men pass from death to eternal life, that of practice and not of naked speculation I may something write concerning death (which is dreadful out of thee, and in itself), to the glory of thy holy name, to mine own comfort in thee, and to the edifying of all them, to whom this my writing shall come to be read or heard. Amen.

There be four kinds of death; one which is natural, another which is spiritual, a third which is temporal, and a fourth which is eternal. Concerning the first and the last, what they be I need not to declare; but the second and third perchance of the simple, for whose sake especially I write, are not so soon espied.

By a spiritual death therefore, I mean such a death as, the body living, the soul is dead: whereof the Apostle maketh mention in speaking of widows, which living daintily, being alive in body, are dead in soul. (2 Tim. v.) Thus you see what I mean by the spiritual death. Now by a temporal death, I mean such a death wherethrough the body and affections thereof are mortified, that the spirit may live: of which kind of death the Apostle speaketh

in exhorting us to kill our members (Col. iii.); and thus much of the kinds of death, wherein the judgment of the world is not to be approved, for it careth less for spiritual death than for a natural death, it esteemeth less eternal death than temporal death, or else men would leave sin, which procureth both the one and the other (I mean spiritual and eternal death), and choose temporally to die, that by natural death they might enter into the full fruition of eternal life, which none can enjoy nor enter into, that here will not temporally die, that is, mortify their affections, and crucify their lusts and concupiscences; for by obeying them at the first came death, as we may read Gen. iii. If Eve had not obeyed her desire in eating the forbidden fruit, whereby she died spiritually, none of these kinds of death had ever come unto man, nor been known of us. Therefore (as I said) we must needs here temporally die, that is, mortify our affections, to escape the spiritual death, and by natural death, not only escape eternal death of soul and body, but also by it, as by a door, enter into eternal life, which Christ Jesus our Saviour hath procured and purchased to and for all that be in him, translating eternal death into a sleep, or rather into a deliverance of soul and body from all kind of misery and sin. By reason whereof we may see, that to those that be in Christ, that is, to such as do believe (which believers, I mean, are discerned from others by not walking after the flesh, but after the spirit), to those I say, death is no damage, but an advantage; no dreadful thing, but rather desirable, and of all messengers most merry, whiles he is looked upon with the eyes of faith in the Gospel. But more of this hereafter.

Thus have I briefly shewed thee the kinds of death, what they be, whence they come, and what remedy for them. But now forasmuch as I am purposed hereafter to entreat only of the first kind of

death, that is, of natural death, something to comfort myself and others against the dread and pains of the same, I will speak of it as God shall instruct me, and as I accustom with myself to muse on it now and then, the better to be prepared against the hour of temptation.

I have shewed how that this natural death came by spiritual death, that is, by obeying our affections in the transgressions of God's precepts; but through the benefit of Christ, to such as be in him and die temporally, that is, to such believers as labour to mortify their affections, it is no destruction, but a plain dissolution, both of soul and body, from all kind of perils, dangers, and miseries; and therefore to such is not to be dreaded, but to be desired, as we see in the Apostle, which desired to be dissolved (Phil. i.), and in Simeon, which desired to be loosed, saying, Dismiss or loose me, O Lord. (Luke, ii.) By which words, he seemeth plainly to teach, that this life is a bondage, and nothing to be desired, as now I will something shew.

First, consider the pleasures of this life what they be, how long they last, how painfully we come by them, what they leave behind them, and thou shalt even in them see nothing but vanity. As for example: how long lasteth the pleasure that man hath in the act of generation? How painfully do men behave themselves before they attain it? How doth it leave behind it a certain loathsomeness and fulness? I will speak nothing of the sting of conscience, if it be come by unlawfully. Who well seeing this, and forecasting it aforehand, would not forego the pleasures willingly, as far as need will permit and suffer? If then in this one, whereunto nature is most prone, and hath most pleasure in, it be thus; alas! how can we but think so of other pleasures?

Put the case, that the pleasures of this life were permanent during this life, yet in that this life itself

is nothing in comparison, and therefore is full well compared to a candle-light, which is soon blown out; to a flower, which fadeth away; to a smoke, to a shadow, to a sleep, to a running water, to a day, to an hour, to a moment, and to vanity itself; who would esteem these pleasures and commodities, which last so little a while? Before they be begun, they are gone and past away. How much of our time spend we in sleeping, in eating, in drinking, and in talking? Infancy is not perceived, youth is shortly overblown, middle age is nothing, old age is not long; and therefore (as I said) this life, through the considerations of the pleasures and commodities of it, should little move us to love it, but rather to loath it. God open our eyes to see these things, and to weigh them accordingly. Secondly, consider the miseries of this life, that if so be the pleasures and commodities in it should move us to love it, yet the miseries might countervail and make us to take it as we should do; I mean, rather to desire to be loosed and dismissed hence, than otherwise. Look upon your bodies, and see in how many perils and dangers you are; your eyes are in danger of blindness and blear-eyedness; your ears in danger of deafness; your mouth and tongue of cankers, tooth-ache, and dumbness; your head in danger of rheums and megrims; your throat in danger of hoarseness; your hands in danger of gouts and palsies, &c. But who is able to express the number of diseases whereto man's body is in danger, seeing that some have written that more than three hundred diseases may happen unto man? I speak nothing of the hurt that may come to our bodies by prisons, venomous beasts, water, fire, horses, men, &c.

Again, look upon your soul, see how many vices you are in danger of, as heresy, hypocrisy, idolatry, covetousness, idleness, security, envy, ambition,

pride, &c. How many temptations may you fall into? But this shall you better see by looking on your old falls, folly, and temptations, and by looking on other men's faults, for no man hath done any thing so evil, but you may do the same. Moreover, look upon your name, and see how it is in danger to slanders and false reports; look upon your goods, see what danger they are in, for thieves, for fire, &c.; look upon your wife, children, parents, brethren, sisters, kinsfolks, servants, friends, and neighbours, and behold how they also are in danger, both soul, body, name, and goods, as you are; look upon the commonweal and country; look upon the church, upon the ministers and magistrates, and see what great dangers they are in, so that if you love them, you cannot, but for the evil which may come to them, be heavy and sad. You know it is not in your power, nor in the power of any man, to hinder all evil that may come. How many perils is infancy in danger of? What danger is youth subject unto? Man's state is full of cares; age is full of diseases and sores. If thou be rich, thy care is the greater; if thou be in honour, thy perils are the more; if thou be poor, thou art the more in danger to oppression. But, alas! what tongue is able to express the miserableness of this life? the which considered should make us little to love it.

I can compare our life to nothing so fitly as to a ship in the midst of the sea. In what danger is the ship and they that be in it? Here are they in danger of tempests, there of quicksands; on this side of pirates, on that side of rocks; now may it leak, now may the mast break, now may the master fall sick, now may diseases come among the mariners, now may there dissension fall among themselves. I speak nothing of want of fresh water, meat, drink, and such other necessaries. Even such another thing is

this life. Here is the devil, there is the world; on this side is the flesh, on that side is sin; which throughly cleaveth unto our ribs, and will do so long as we be in this flesh, and natural life; so that none but blind men can see this life to be so much and so greatly to be desired; but rather as the men that sail are most glad when they approach to the haven, even so should we be most glad when we approach to the haven, that is, death, which setteth us a land whose commodities no eye hath seen, no tongue can tell, no heart can conceive, in any point as it should. (1 Cor. ii.) Happy, oh! happy were we, if we saw these things accordingly! God open our eyes to see them. Amen.

If any man would desire testimonies of these things, although experience, a sufficient mistress, is to be credited, yet will I here mark certain places whereunto the reader may resort, and find no less than I say, but rather much more, if that with diligence he read and weigh the places. Job, v. calleth this life a warfare. In the eighth chapter he painteth it out something lively, under divers similitudes. St. James compareth it to a vapour. (James, iv.) All the book of Ecclesiastes teacheth it to be but vanity. St. John saith it is altogether put in evil. (John, viii.) David saith, the best thing in this life is but vanity, labour, and sorrow. (Psa. xc.) But what go I hereabout, seeing that almost every leaf in the Scripture is full of the brevity and misery of this life; so that I think, as St. Austin doth write, that there is no man that hath lived so happily in this world, that would be content, when death cometh, to go back again by the same steps whereby he hath come into the world and lived, except the same be in despair, and look for nothing after this life but confusion.

Thus I trust you see, that though the commodities of this life were such as could cause us to love

it, yet the brevity, vanity, and misery of it is such, as should make us little to regard it, which believe and know death to be the end of all miseries to them that are in Christ, as we all ought to take ourselves to be, being baptized in his name (for our baptism requireth this faith under pain of damnation), although we have not observed our profession as we should have done, if so be we now repent, and come to amendment. To such (I say) as are in Christ, death is to be desired, even in respect of this, that it delivereth us from so miserable a life and so dangerous a state as we now be in. So that I may well say they are senseless, without wit, void of love to God, void of all hatred and sense of sin, wherewith this life floweth (1 Pet. i. Rev. vii.), that rather desire not to depart hence out of all these miseries, than here still to remain to their continual grief.

But if these things will not move us, I would yet we beheld the commodities whereunto death bringeth us. If we be not moved to leave this life in respect of the miseries whercof it is full, yet we should be moved to leave it in respect of the infinite goodness which the other life, whereto death bringeth us, hath most plentifully. Men, though they love things, yet for things which are better, can be content to forego them; even so we now, for the good things in the life to come (if we consider them), shall and will be content to forego the most commodious things in this present life. Here we have great pleasure in the beauty of the world, and of the pleasures, honours, and dignities of the same; also in the company of our friends, parents, wife, children, subjects; also in plenty of riches, cattle, &c.; and yet we know that never a one of these is without his discommodity, which God sendeth, lest we should love them too much, as, if you will weigh things, you shall easily perceive. The sun, though it be fair and cheerful,

yet it burneth sometimes too hot. The air, though it be light and pleasant, yet sometimes it is dark and troublous; and so of other things. But be it so, that there were no discommodities mingled with the commodities, yet (as I said before) the brevity and short time that we have to use them should assuage their dulcetness. But if this were not also, but that the pleasures of this life were without discommodity, permanent and without peril (whereof they be full), yet are they nothing at all to be compared to the commodities of the life to come. What is this earth, heaven, and shape of the world, wherein beasts have places, and wicked men, God's enemies, have abiding and liberty, in comparison of the new heaven and earth wherein righteousness shall dwell? in comparison of the place where angels and archangels, and all God's people, yea, God himself, hath his abiding and dwelling? What is the company of wife, children, &c. in comparison to the company of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, confessors, virgins, and all the saints of God? What is the company of any in this world, in comparison to the company of the angels, archangels, cherubims, seraphims, powers, thrones, dominions, yea, of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost? What are the riches and pleasures of this life, in comparison of the felicity of everlasting life, which is without all discommodities, perpetual, without all peril and jeopardy, without all grief and molestation? Oh! the mirth and melody! oh! the honour and glory! oh! the riches and beauty! oh! the power and majesty! oh! the sweetness and dignity of the life to come! The eye hath not seen, the ear hath not heard, nor the heart of man is not able to conceive in any thing, any part of the eternal felicity and happy state of heaven: therefore the saints of God

have desired so earnestly and so heartily to be there. Oh! how amiable are thy tabernacles! said David. (Psa. lxxxiv.) My soul hath a desire to enter into the courts of the Lord; my heart and my soul rejoice in the living God. Blessed are those that dwell in thy house, that they may always be praising thee; for one day in thy courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of ungodliness; for the Lord God is a light and defence. And again (Psa. xxiv.), As the hart desireth the water-brooks, so longeth my soul after thee, O God. My soul is athirst for God, yea, even for the living God. When shall I come to appear before the presence of God? And (Psa. lxiii.), My soul thirsteth for thee in a barren and dry land, where no water is. They, God's people I mean (Rom. viii.), desire the day of their redemption, and they still cry, Let thy kingdom come; they cry (Rev. xxii.), Come, Lord Jesus, come; they lift up their heads (Phil. i.), looking for his appearing, which will make their vile bodies like to his own glorious and immortal body; for when he shall appear, they shall be like unto him; the angels will gather them together, and they shall meet him in the clouds, and be always with him; they shall hear this joyful voice (Matt. xxv.), Come, ye blessed of my Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning. Then shall they be like unto his angels (Rev. vii.), then shall they shine like the sun in the kingdom, then shall they have crowns of glory, and be endued with white garments of innocence and righteousness, and palms of victory in their hands. Oh! happy, happy is he, that may with them see that immortal and incorruptible inheritance, which then we shall enjoy for ever.

Thus you see (I hope) sufficiently, that in respect

of heaven and eternal bliss (whereunto by the haven of death we land), this life, though there were no evil in it, is not to be loved, but rather, we that be pilgrims in it should desire with Paul and Simeon to be loosed and dissolved, that we might be with God. Here our bodies (as before is spoken) are in danger of innumerable evils; but there our bodies shall be, not only without all danger, but also be like the glorious and immortal body of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now our bodies be dark, then shall they be most clear and light, as we see Christ's face did shine in his transfiguration, like to the sun. (Matt. xxvii.) Now our bodies be vile, miserable, mortal, and corruptible; but then shall they be glorious, happy, immortal, and incorruptible. (1 Cor. xv.) We shall be like unto Christ our Saviour; even as he is, so shall we be. (1 John, iii.) As we have borne the image of the earthly, so shall we bear the image of the heavenly. Here our souls are in great darkness, and dangers of many evils; but there they shall be in great light, safe security, and secure felicity; we shall see God face to face; where now we see him but as in a glass through a dark speaking, there shall we behold him even as he is, and be satisfied without loathsomeness of his presence; yea, we shall be endued with most perfect knowledge. Where now we know but partly, there shall we know as we be known. Here our commodities are measurable, short, uncertain, and mingled with many incommodities; but there is mirth without measure, all liberty, all light, all joy, rejoicing, pleasure, health, wealth, riches, glory, power, treasure, honour, triumph, comfort, solace, love, unity, peace, concord, wisdom, virtue, melody, meekness, felicity, beatitude, and all that ever can be wished or desired, and that in most security and perpetuity that may be conceived or thought, not only of men, but also of angels; as

witnesseth he that saw it (I mean Paul), who was carried up into the third heaven. The eye hath not seen (saith he), the ear hath not heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man the felicity that God hath prepared for them that love him. (1 Cor. ii.) There the archangels, angels, powers, thrones, dominions, cherubims, seraphims, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, virgins, confessors, and righteous spirits, cease not to sing night and day, Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts; honour, majesty, glory, empire, and dominion, be unto thee, O Lord God, the Creator, O Lord Jesu the Redeemer, O holy Spirit the Comforter. (Rev. iv.) For the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be seven-fold, even as the light of seven days (Isa. xxx.) in his blessed kingdom, where and when he will bind up the wounds of his people, and heal their plagues. Oh! that we might have some lively sight hereof, that we might rejoice over the undefiled and immortal inheritance, whereunto God hath called us, and which he doth keep for us in heaven; that we might hear the sweet song of his saved people, crying, Salvation be unto Him that sitteth on the throne of our God, and unto the Lamb; that we might with the elders and angels sing and say, Praise, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be to thee our God for evermore; that we might be covered with a white stole, and have a palm in our hands, to stand before God's throne night and day, to serve him in his temple, and to have him dwell in us; that we might hear the great voice saying from heaven, Behold the tabernacle of the Lord is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself will be with them, their God. Oh! happy were they that now might have a little show of that

holy city, New Jerusalem, descending from heaven, prepared of God as a bride decked for her husband, which he shewed to his servant John (Rev. xxii.) : truly this should we see, if we were with him in the Spirit ; but this cannot be, so long as we are in the flesh. Alas then, and well away, that we love this life as we do : it is a sign we have little faith, for else how could we but night and day desire the messenger of the Lord (death I mean) to deliver us out of all miseries, that we might enter into the fruition of eternal felicity.

But here will some man say, Oh ! Sir, if I were certain that I should depart from this miserable life into that so great felicity, then could I be right glad and rejoice (as you will me), and bid death welcome ; but I am a sinner, I have grievously transgressed and broken God's will, and therefore I am afraid I shall be sent into eternal woe, perdition, and misery. Here, my brother, thou doest well that thou doest acknowledge thyself a sinner, and to have deserved eternal death ; for doubtless, if we say we have no sin, we are liars, and the truth is not in us. (1 John, i.) A child of a night's birth is not pure in God's sight. (Job, xxv.) In sin were we born, and by birth or nature we are the children of wrath, and firebrands of hell ; therefore confess ourselves to be sinners we needs must. For if the Lord will observe any man's iniquities, none shall be able to abide it : yea, we must needs all cry, Enter not into judgment, O Lord ; for in thy sight no flesh nor man living can be saved. (Psa. cxxv. cxli.) In this point therefore thou hast done well to confess that thou art a sinner.

But now where thou standest in doubt of pardon of thy sins, and thereby art afraid of damnation, my dear brother, I would have thee answer me one question, that is, whether thou desirest pardon or no ; whether thou dost repent or no ; whether thou dost

unfeignedly purpose, if thou shouldest live, to amend thy life, or no; if thou dost even before God so purpose, and desirest his mercy, then hearken (my good brother) what the Lord sayeth unto thee; I am he, I am he, that for my own sake will do away thine offences; if thy sins be as red as scarlet, they shall be made as white as snow; for I have no pleasure in the death of a sinner. (Isa. xliii. 1.) As surely as I live, I will not thy death, but rather that thou shouldest live, and be converted. (Ezek. xxxiii.) I have so loved the world, that I would not spare my dearly beloved Son (John, iii.), the image of my substance, and brightness of my glory, by whom all things were given; but gave him for thee, not only to be man, but also to take thy nature, and to purge it from mortality, sin, and all corruption, and to adorn and endue it with immortality and eternal glory, not only in his own person, but also in thee and for thee, whereof now by faith I would have thee certain, as in very deed thou shalt at length feel and fully enjoy for ever. (Phil. ii.) This, my Son, I have given to the death, and that a most shameful death, even of the cross, for thee, to destroy death, to satisfy my justice for thy sins; therefore believe, and according to thy faith, so be it unto thee. Hearken what my Son himself saith unto thee (Matt. xi.), Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you (John, iii.); I came not into the world to damn the world, but to save it (Luke, v.); I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. I pray not, saith he (John, xv.), for these mine Apostles only, but also for all them that by their preaching shall believe in me. Now what prayed he for such? Father (saith he), I will that where I am they may also be, that they may see and enjoy the glory I have, and always had with thee. Father, save them, and keep them in thy truth.

Father (saith he), I sanctify myself, and offer up myself for them. Lo! thus thou hearest how my Son prayeth for thee. Mark now what my Apostle Paul saith: We know, saith he (Heb. v.), that our Saviour Christ's prayers were heard (1 Tim. i.); also this is a true saying, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. Hearken what he saith to the jailor (Acts, xvi.), Believe in the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved (Heb. ix.), for he by his own self hath made purgation for our sins. To him, saith Peter (Acts, viii.), beareth all the Prophets witness, that whosoever believeth in his name shall receive remission of their sins. Believe, man; pray (Mark, vi.), Lord, help mine unbelief (Luke, xvii.); Lord, increase my faith; ask, and thou shalt have. Hearken what St. John saith: If we confess our sins, God is righteous to forgive us all our iniquities, and the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ shall wash us from all our sins: for if we sin, we have an advocate (saith he) with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins. (1 John, i. ii.) Hearken what Christ is called (Luke, i.): Call his name Jesus, saith the angel, for he shall save his people from their sins; so that where abundance of sin is, there is abundance of grace; say therefore, Who shall lay any thing to my charge? It is God that absolveth me; who then shall condemn me? It is Christ which is dead for my sins, yea, which is risen for my righteousness, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father, and prayeth for me. (Rom. viii.) Be certain therefore, and sure of pardon of thy sins; be certain and sure of everlasting life. Do not now say in thy heart, Who shall descend into the deep? that is, doubt not of pardon of thy sins, for that is to fetch up Christ; neither say thou, Who shall ascend up into heaven? that is, doubt not of eternal bliss, for that is to put Christ out of heaven: but mark

what the Lord saith unto thee, The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart, and this is the word of faith which we preach: if thou confess with thy mouth that Jesus Christ is the Lord, and believe with thy heart, that God raised him up from the dead, thou shalt be safe. (Rom. x.) If thou believe that Jesus Christ died, and rose again, even so shalt thou be assured (saith the Lord God) that dying with Christ I will bring thee again with him. (1 Thess. iv.)

Thus, dear brother, I thought good to write to thee in the name of the Lord, that thou, fearing death for nothing else but because of thy sins, mightest be assured of pardon of them, and so embrace death as a dear friend, and insult against his terror, sting, and power, saying, Death, where is thy sting? hell, where is thy victory? (1 Cor. xv.) Nothing in all the world so displeaseth the Lord as to doubt of his mercy. In the mouth of two or three witnesses, we should be content; therefore in that thou hast heard so many witnesses, how that indeed desiring mercy with the Lord, thou art not sent empty away, give credit thereto, and say with the good Virgin Mary, Behold thy servant (O Lord); be it unto me according to thy word. (Luke, i.) Upon the which word, see thou set thine eye only and wholly. For otherwise, here thou seest not God thy Father, but in his word, which is the glass wherein now we behold his grace and fatherly love towards us in Christ; and therefore herewith we should be content, and give more credit to it, than to all our senses, and to all the world besides. The word, saith our Saviour (John, xii.), shall judge: according to it therefore, and not according to any exterior or interior show, judge both of thyself and of all other things else, concerning thyself, if thou desire indeed God's mercy, and lament that thou

hast offended. Lo! it pronounceth that there is mercy with the Lord for thee, and plenteous redemption. (Psa. cxxx.) It telleth thee which wouldest have mercy at the Lord's hand, that the Lord willeth the same, and therefore thou art happy, for he would not thy death. It telleth thee, that if thou acknowledge thy faults unto the Lord, he will cover them in his mercy. Again, concerning death, it telleth thee, that it is but a sleep, that it is but a passing unto thy Father, that it is but a deliverance out of misery, that it is but a putting off mortality and corruption, that it is a putting on of immortality and incorruption; that it is a putting away of an earthly tabernacle, that thou mayest receive an heavenly house or mansion (2 Cor. v.); that this is but a calling of thee home from the watching and standing in the warfare of this miserable life. According to this (the word I mean), do thou judge of death, and thou shalt not be afraid of it, but desire it as a most wholesome medicine, and a friendly messenger of the Lord's justice and mercy. Embrace him therefore, make him good cheer, for of all enemies he is the least. An enemy, quoth I? nay, rather of all friends he is the best; for he bringeth thee out of all danger of enemies, into that most sure and safe place of thy unfeigned Friend for ever.

Let these things be often thought upon. Let death be premeditated, not only because he cometh uncertainly (I mean for the time, for else he is most certain), but also because he helpeth much to the contempt of this world, out of the which, as nothing will go with thee, so nothing canst thou take with thee; because it helpeth to the mortifying of the flesh, which when thou feedest, thou dost nothing else but feed worms; because it helpeth to the well disposing and due ordering of the things thou hast in this life; because it helpeth to repentance, to bring thee unto

the knowledge of thyself, that thou art but earth and ashes, and to bring thee the better to know God. But who is able to tell the commodities that come by the often and true consideration of death? whose time is therefore left unto us uncertain and unknown (although to God it be certain, and the bounds thereof not only known, but appointed of the Lord, over the which none can pass, Job, xxiv.); because we should not prolong and put off from day to day the amendment of our life, as did the rich man (Luke, xii.), under hope of long life. And seeing it is the ordinance of God, and cometh not but by the will of God, even unto a sparrow, much more then unto us, which are incomparably much more dear than many sparrows; and in that this will of God is not only just, but also good (for he is our Father), let us, if there were nothing else but this, submit ourselves, our senses, and judgments, unto the pleasure of Him, being content to come out of the room of our soldiership, whensoever he shall send for us by his pursuivant, death. Let us render to him, that which he hath lent us so long (I mean life), lest we be counted unthankful. And in that death cometh not but by sin, forasmuch as we have sinned so often, and yet the Lord hath ceased from exacting this tribute and punishment of us until this present, let us with thankfulness praise his patience, and pay our debt, not doubting but that he, being our Father and our almighty Father, can and will, if death were evil unto us (as God knoweth it is a chief benefit unto us by Christ), convert and turn it into good. But death being, as before I have shewed, not to be dreaded, but to be desired, let us lift up our heads in thinking on it, and know that our redemption draweth nigh. (Luke, xxi.) Let our minds be occupied in the consideration, or often contemplation of the four last articles of our belief, that

is, the communion of saints or holy catholic church ; remission of sins, resurrection of the flesh, and the life everlasting.

By faith in Christ, be it never so faint, little, or cold, we are members in very deed, of the catholic and holy church of Christ, that is, we have communion or fellowship with all the saints of God that ever were, be, or shall be. Whereby we may receive great comfort ; for though our faith be feeble, yet the church's faith (whereof our Saviour Christ is the head) is mighty enough ; though our repentance be little, yet the repentance of the church, wherewith we have communion, is sufficient ; though our love be languishing, yet the love of the church and of the Spouse of the church is ardent, and so of all other things we want. Not that I mean this, as though any man should think that our faith should be in any, or upon any other, than only upon God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost ; neither that any should think I mean thereby any other merits or mean to salvation, than only the merits and name of the Lord Jesus ; but that I would the poor Christian conscience, which by baptism is brought into God's church, and made a member of the same through faith, should, not for his sin's sake, or for the want of any thing he hath not, despair ; but rather should know, that he is a member of Christ's church and mystical body, and therefore cannot but have communion and fellowship of both ; that is, of Christ himself, being the Lord, husband, and head thereof, and of all that ever hath been, be, or shall be members of it, in all good things that ever they have had, have, or shall have. Still doth the church pray for us by Christ's commandment : Forgive us our sins, lead us not into temptation, deliver us from evil ; yea, Christ himself doth pray for us, being members of his body, as we be indeed, if that we believe,

though it be never so little. God grant this faith unto us all, and increase it in us. Amⁿ. Out of this church no Pope nor prelate can cast us, or excommunicate us indeed, although exteriorly they segregate us from the society of God's saints. But enough of this.

As I would have us often to muse upon the catholic church, or communion of saints (whereof we may not doubt, in what state soever we be, under pain of damnation, being baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost), so would I have us to meditate upon the other articles following, that is, remission of sins, resurrection of the flesh, and life everlasting. It is an article of our faith to believe, that is, to be certain that our sins are pardoned; therefore doubt not thereof, lest thou become an infidel. Though thou have sinned never so sore, yet now despair not, but be certain that God is thy God, that is, that he forgiveth thee thy sin. Therefore (as I said) doubt not thereof, for in so doing thou puttest a sallet on the head of thy soul, that the dew of God's grace cannot indeed drop into it, but slip by as fast as it droppeth. Therefore without that sallet or soul-nightcap, be bareheaded; that is, hope still in the mercy of the Lord, and so mercy shall compass thee on every side. (Cant. v.)

In like manner, the article of the resurrection of the flesh have often in thy mind, being assured by this, that thy carcass and body shall be raised up again in the last day, when the Lord shall come to judgment, and shall be made incorruptible, immortal, glorious, spiritual, perfect, light, and even like to the glorious body of our Saviour Jesu Christ. (Phil. iii.) For he is the first-fruits of the dead; and as God is all in all, so shall he be unto thee in Christ. Look therefore upon thine own estate; for as he is, so shalt thou be. As thou hast borne the image of

the earthly Adam, so shalt thou bear the image of the heavenly (1 Cor. xv.); therefore glorify thou now God, both in soul and body. Wait and look for this day of the Lord with groaning and sighing. Gather together testimonies of this which I do omit for time's sake.

Last of all, have often in thy mind life everlasting, whereunto thou art even landing. Death is the haven that carrieth thee unto this land, where is all that can be wished, yea, above all wishes and desires; for in it we shall see God face to face, which thing now we can in no wise do, but must cover our faces, with Moses and Elias, till the face or fore-parts of the Lord be gone by. (Exod. xxxiv.) Now must we look on his back-parts, beholding him in his word, and in his creatures, and in the face of Jesus Christ our Mediator; but then we shall see him face to face, and we shall know, as we are known. (1 Cor. xiii.) Therefore let us often think on these things, that we may have faith lustily and cheerfully to arrive at the happy haven of death, which you see is to be desired, and not to be dreaded, to all those that are in Christ, that is, to such as do believe indeed, which are discerned from those that only say they do believe by dying temporally, that is, by labouring to mortify through God's spirit the affections of the flesh; not that they should not be in them, but that they should not reign in them, that is, in their mortal bodies, to give over themselves to serve sin, whose servants we are not, but are made servants unto righteousness (Rom. vi.), being now under grace, and not under the law, and therefore hath God mercifully promised that sin shall not reign in us; the which he continually grant for his truth, power, and mercy's sake. Amen.

TWO NOTABLE
SERMONS,
BY THAT WORTHY MARTYR OF CHRIST,
JOHN BRADFORD;
THE ONE OF
REPENTANCE,
AND THE OTHER OF
THE LORD'S SUPPER.



To the Christian Reader, THOMAS SAMPSON wisheth the Felicity of speedy and full Conversion to the Lord.

GODLY learned men do write and publish books to profit the age in which they do live, and their posterity. This desire was in the Author of this Treatise, Master John Bradford, who was the preacher and publisher of this Sermon of Repentance. And now, to the end that we which do live on earth after him, and are the posterity, may take as much or more profit by it than they did, to and for whom in his lifetime he did both preach and publish it, the same his labour is by new imprinting published again. Nothing is added to this Sermon, or altered in it, only to the Sermon of Repentance, before printed, is added another sermon of the Lord's Supper, which he also made, and was never printed before. And aptly shalt thou see, good reader, these two Sermons joined together; for in diligent perusing of the last, thou shalt see how necessarily he draweth the doctrine of repentance to them all which do with due preparation receive the holy sacrament of Christ. I do not know which of the sermons I should most praise; I wish that by reading both, thou mayest make thy great profit. In both these sermons thou shalt read Bradford preaching repentance with his own pen.

They are counted the most profitable teachers, which have themselves good experience by practice in themselves, of that which they do teach to others; such as may safely say, Brethren, be ye followers of me, and look on them which walk so as ye have us for an example. (Phil. iii. 17.) And surely such a pattern was Master Bradford in his lifetime, of this doctrine of repentance, which in both these sermons

he teacheth, that I which did know him familiarly, must needs give to God this praise for him, that among men I have scarcely known one like unto him : I did know when and partly how it pleased God by effectual calling to turn his heart unto the true knowledge and obedience of the most holy Gospel of Christ our Saviour : of which God did give him such an heavenly hold and lively feeling, that as he did then know that many sins were forgiven him, so surely he declared by deeds, that he loved much. (Luke, vii.) For where he had both gifts and calling to have employed himself in civil and worldly affairs profitably ; such was his love of Christ, and zeal to the promoting of his glorious Gospel, that he changed not only this course of his former life, as the woman did (Luke, vii.), but even his former study, as Paul did change his, for profession and study.

Touching the first, after that God touched his heart with that holy and effectual calling, he sold his chains, rings, broaches, and jewels of gold, which before he used to wear, and did bestow the price of these his former vanity in the necessary relief of Christ's poor members, which he could hear of or find lying sick, or pining in poverty. Touching the second, he so declared his great zeal and love to promote the glory of the Lord Jesus, whose goodness and saving health he had tasted, that to do the same more pithily, he changed his study, and being in the Inner Temple in London, at the study of the common laws, he went to Cambridge to study divinity, where he heard D. Martin Bucer diligently, and was right familiar and dear unto him. In this godly course he did by God's blessing so profit, that that blessed martyr, D. Ridley, then Bishop of London, did as it were invite him and his godly companion, Master Thomas Horton, to become Fellows

of Pembroke Hall, in Cambridge; and afterwards the said D. Ridley called our Bradford to London, gave him a prebend in Paul's church, lodged him in his own house there, and set him on work in preaching. And besides often preaching in London and at Paul's cross, and sundry places in the country, and specially in Lancashire, he preached before King Edward the Sixth, in the Lent, the last year of his reign, upon the second Psalm; and there is one sermon, shewing the tokens of God's judgment at hand for the contempt of the Gospel, as that certain gentlemen, upon the Sabbath-day, going in a wherry to Parr's garden to the bearbaiting, were drowned; and that a dog was met at Ludgate, carrying a piece of a dead child in his mouth; he with a mighty and prophetic spirit said, "I summon you all, even every mother's child of you, to the judgment of God, for it is at hand," as it followed shortly after in the death of King Edward. In which state and labour of preaching he continued till the cruelty of the Papists cut him off, as thou mayest read in the history of his life and death, compiled by that faithful servant of the Lord Jesus, John Fox.

Indeed he had many pullbacks, but God still helped forward his chosen servant in that trade of life to which he had called him, in which he ran forward so happily, that he did outrun me and other his companions. For it pleased God with great speed to make him ready and ripe to martyrdom, in which through Christ he hath now gained the crown of life. But in all stops and stays he was much helped forward by a continual meditation and practice of repentance and faith in Christ, in which he was kept by God's grace, notably exercised all the days of his life. Even in this mean time he heard a sermon which that notable preacher, Master Latimer, made before King Edward the Sixth, in which he did

earnestly speak of restitution to be made of things falsely gotten ; which did so strike Bradford to the heart for one dash with a pen, which he had made without the knowledge of his master (as full often I have heard him confess with plenty of tears), being clerk of the treasurer of the King's camp beyond the seas, and was to the deceiving of the King, that he could never be quiet till, by the advice of the same Master Latimer, a restitution was made ; which thing to bring to pass, he did willingly forbear and forego all the private and certain patrimony which he had on earth. Let all bribers and polling officers, which get to themselves great revenues in earth by such slippery shifts, follow this example, lest in taking a contrary course they take a contrary way, and never come where Bradford now is.

But besides this, our Bradford had his daily exercises and practices of repentance ; his manner was to make to himself a catalogue of all the grossest and most enormous sins which in his life of ignorance he had committed, and to lay the same before his eyes when he went to private prayer, that by the sight and remembrance of them he might be stirred up to offer to God the sacrifice of a contrite heart, seek assurance of salvation in Christ by faith, thank God for his calling from the ways of wickedness, and pray for increase of grace ; to be conducted in holy life, acceptable and pleasing to God. Such a continual exercise of conscience he had in private prayer, that he did not count himself to have prayed to his contentation, unless in it he had felt inwardly some smiting of heart for sin, and some healing of that wound by faith, feeling the saving health of Christ, with some change of mind into the detestation of sin, and love of obeying the good will of God : which things do require that inward entering into the secret parlour of our hearts, of which Christ

speaketh, and is that smiting of the breast which is noted in the publican (Matt. vii.), and is the same to the which the Psalmist exhorteth those men loose in sin. (Psa. iv. 5.) Tremble ye, and sin not; speak in yourselves, that is, enter into an account with yourselves, when you are on your couches, that is, when ye are solitary and alone; and be quiet or silent, that is, when ye have thus secretly and deeply considered of your case and dealing; ye shall cease to think, speak, and do wickedly. Without such an inward exercise of prayer, our Bradford did not pray to his full contentation, as appeared by this: he used in the morning to go to the common prayer in the college where he was, and after that, he used to make some prayer with his pupils in his chamber. But not content with this, he then repaired to his own secret prayer, and exercise in prayer by himself; as one that had not yet prayed to his own mind; for he was wont to say to his familiars, I have prayed with my pupils, but I have not yet prayed with myself. Let those secure men mark this well, which pray without touch of breast, as the Pharisees did, and so that they have said an ordinary prayer, or heard a common course of prayer, they think they have prayed well, and as the term is, they have served God well; though they never feel sting for sin, taste of groaning, or broken heart, nor of the sweet saving health of Christ, thereby to be moved to offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving, nor change or renewing of mind; but as they came secure in sin and senseless, so they do depart without any change or affecting of the heart; which is even the cradle in which Satan rocketh the sins of this age asleep, who think they do serve God in these cursory prayers, made only of custom; when their heart is as far from God as was the heart of the Pharisee. Let us learn by Bradford's example to pray better, that

is, with the heart, and not with the lips alone; as Cyprian saith, "Because God is the hearer of the heart, and not of the voice;" that is to say, not of the voice alone without the heart, for that is but lip-labour. This conscience of sin and exercise in prayer had Bradford, clean contrary to that cursed custom of those graceless men, which do joy to make large and long accounts of their lewdness, and glory therein, so feeling their delights with their lives past, as a dog returneth to smell to his cast gorge, and the horse to his dung; such as the Prophet (Isa. xxxix.) saith, They declare their sins as Sodom, they hide them not; woe be to their souls. It goeth with them as in the days of Jeremiah it went with those (Jer. iii. 3): Thou hadst a whore's forehead; thou wouldest not be ashamed. God give these men better grace, else let them be assured they shall find woe! woe! to their very souls.

Another of his exercises was this: he used to make unto himself an ephemeris or a journal, in which he used to write all such notable things as either he did see or hear each day that passed: but whatsoever he did hear or see, he did so pen it, that a man might see in that book the signs of his smitten heart; for if he did see or hear any good in any man, by that sight he found and noted the want thereof in himself, and added a short prayer, craving mercy, and grace to amend; if he did hear or see any plague or misery, he noted it as a thing procured by his own sins, and still added, Lord! have mercy upon me. He used in the same book to note such evil thoughts as did rise in him, as of envying the good of other men, thoughts of unthankfulness, of not considering God in his works, of hardness and unsensibleness of heart, when he did see other moved and affected. And thus he made to himself and of himself a book of daily practices of repentance.

Besides this, they which were familiar with him might see how he, being in their company, used to fall often into a sudden and deep meditation, in which he would sit with fixed countenance and spirit moved, yet speaking nothing a good space; and sometimes in this silent sitting, plenty of tears should trickle down his cheeks; sometimes he would sit in it, and come out of it, with a smiling countenance. Oftentimes have I sitten at dinner and supper with him in the house of that godly harbourer of many preachers, and servants of the Lord Jesus, I mean Master Elsyng, when either by occasion of talk had, or of some view of God's benefits present, or some inward cogitation and thought of his own, he hath fallen into these deep cogitations, and he would tell me in the end such discourses of them, that I did perceive that sometimes his tears trickled out of his eyes, as well for joy as for sorrow. Neither was he only such a practiser of repentance in himself, but a continual provoker of others thereunto, not only in public preaching, but also in private conference and company. For in all companies where he did come, he would freely reprove any sin and misbehaviour which appeared in any person, especially swearers, filthy talkers, and popish praters. Such never departed out of his company unreprieved; and this he did with such a divine grace and Christian majesty, that ever he stopped the mouths of the gainsayers; for he spake with power, and yet so sweetly, that they might see their evil to be evil, and hurtful unto them, and understand that it was good indeed to the which he laboured to draw them in God.

To be short, as his life was, such was his death. His life was a practice and example, a provocation to repentance; at his death, as the aforesaid history witnesseth, when he was burned in Smithfield, and the flame of fire did fly about his ears, his last speech

publicly noted and heard was this : Repent, England ! Thus was our Bradford a preacher, and an example of that repentance which he did preach. Jonah preached to Nineveh repentance ; and all Nineveh, the king, princes, people, old and young, repented. To England Bradford did preach, and yet doth preach, repentance ; and surely England hath now much more cause to repent, than it had when Bradford lived and preached repentance. For all states and sorts of persons in England are now more corrupt than they were then.

Let therefore now Bradford's sermon, his life, his death, move thee, O England, to repent at thy peril. I wish and warn, that as in Nineveh, so in England, all from the highest to the lowest do unfeignedly repent, they which are of the court, they which are of the church, they which are of the city, they which are of the country, princes, prelates, and people ; let all and every one repent, and depart from that evil which he hath in hand, and turn wholly to the Lord. And I do humbly beseech thy Majesty, O glorious Lord Jesus ! which didst come to bless Israel, turning every one of them from their sins, to work now by thy Spirit in our hearts the same sound repentance which thy holiness did preach to men, when thou saidst, *Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand.* This work in us, O gracious God our Saviour. Amen.

And now, reader, I leave thee to the reading and practising of that repentance which Bradford here teacheth.

To the Christian Reader, JOHN BRADFORD wisheth the true Knowledge and Peace of Jesus Christ, our alone and omni-sufficient Saviour.

GREAT and heavy is God's anger against us, as the most grievous plague of the death of our late King (a prince of all that ever was since Christ's ascension into heaven in any region peerless) now fallen upon us doth prognosticate. For when God's judgment hath begun with his child, this our dear dearing, let other men think as they can, I surely cannot be persuaded otherwise, but that a grievous and bitter cup of God's vengeance is ready to be poured out for us Englishmen to drink of. The whelp God hath beaten to fray the bandog. Judgment is begun at God's house. In God's mercy to himwards he is taken away, that his eyes should not see the miseries which we shall feel. (Heb. xi.) He was too good to tarry with us, so wicked, so froward, so perverse, so obstinate, so malicious, so hypocritical, so covetous, unclean, untrue, proud, and carnal a generation. I will not go about to paint us out in our colours. All the world which never saw England, by hearsay seeth England; God by his plagues and vengeance, I fear me, will paint us out, and point us out. We have so mocked with him and his Gospel, that we shall feel it is no bourding with him.

Of long time we have covered our covetousness and carnality under the cloak of his Gospel, so that all men shall see us to our shame, when he shall take his Gospel away, and give it to a people that will bring forth the fruits of it. Then shall we appear as we be. To let his Gospel tarry with us, he cannot; for we despise it, contemn it, are glutted with it. We disdain his manna, it is but a vile meat,

think we. We would be again in Egypt, and sit by the greasy fleshpots; to eat again our garlic, onions, and leeks. Since God's Gospel came among us, we say now, we had never plenty, therefore again let us go and worship the Queen of heaven. (Jer. vii. 4.) Children begin to gather sticks, the fathers kindle the fire, and the women make the cakes, to offer to the Queen of heaven, and to provoke the Lord to anger. (Jer. iv.) The earth cannot abide now the words and sermons of Amos; the cause of all rebellion is Amos, and his preaching. (Amos, vii.) It is Paul and his fellows that make all out of order; the Gospel is now the outcast and curse of the realm, and so are the preachers, therefore out of the doors with them. So that I say God cannot let his Gospel tarry with us, but must needs take it away to do us some pleasure therein, for so shall we think for a time; as the Sodomites thought, when Lot departed from them; as the old world thought, when Noah crept into his ark; as the Jerusalemites thought, when the Apostles went thence to Peltis; then were they merry, then was all pastime; when Moses was absent, then went they to eating and drinking, and rose up again to play (Exod. iii.); then was all peace, all was well, nothing amiss. But, alas! suddenly came the flood, and drowned them; God's wrath waxed hot against them; then was weal away, mourning, and woe; then was crying out, wringing of hands, rending of clothes, sobbing and sighing for the miseries fallen, out of which they could not escape. But oh! ye mourners and cryers out, ye renders of clothes, why mourn ye? What is the cause of your misery? The Gospel is gone, God's word is little preached, you were not disquieted with it; Noah troubleth you not, Lot is departed, the Apostles are gone. What now is the cause of these your miseries? Will you at the length confess

it is your sins? Nay, now it is too late, God called upon you, and you would not hear him, therefore yell and cry out now, for he will not hear you. You bowed your ears from hearing of God's law, therefore your prayer is execrable.

But to come again to us Englishmen: I fear me, I say, for our unthankfulness sake, for our impiety and wickedness, as God hath taken away our King, so will he take away his Gospel; yea, so we would have it, then should all be well, think many. Well, if he take that away, for a time perchance we shall be quiet, but at length we shall feel the want to our woe; at length he will have at us, as at Sodom, at Jerusalem, and other places. And now he beginneth to brew such a brewing, wherein one of us is like to destroy another, and so make an open gap for foreign enemies to devour us, and destroy us. The father is against the son, the brother against the brother, and, Lord, with what conscience! Oh! be thou merciful unto us! and in thine anger remember thy mercy; suffer thyself to be entreated, be reconciled unto us, nay, reconcile us unto thee. Oh! thou God of justice! judge justly. Oh! thou Son of God! which comest to destroy the works of Satan, destroy his furies now smoking, and almost set on fire in this realm. We have sinned, we have sinned, and therefore thou art angry. Oh! be not angry for ever. Give us peace, peace, peace in the Lord; set us to war against sin, against Satan, against our carnal desires, and give us the victory this way. This victory we obtain by faith; this faith is not without repentance, as her gentleman usher before her. Before her, I say, in discerning true faith from false faith; lip faith, Englishmen's faith; for else it springs out of true faith.

This usher then, Repentance, if we truly possessed, we should be certain of true faith, and so

assured of the victory over death, hell, and Satan. His works then, which he hath stirred up, would quail. God would restore us politic peace, right should be right, and have right; God's Gospel should tarry with us, religion should be cherished, superstition suppressed, and so we yet something happy, notwithstanding the great loss of our most gracious liege sovereign Lord. All this would come to pass, you see, if the gentleman usher I speak of, I mean, Repentance, were at inn with us. As, if he be absent, we may be certain that Lady Faith is absent. Wherefore we cannot but be vanquished of the world, the flesh, and the devil, and so will Satan's works prosper, though not in all things to blear our eyes, yet in that thing which he most of all desireth; therefore to repentance for ourselves privately, and for the realm and church publicly, every one should labour to stir up both ourselves and others. This, to the end that for my part I might help, I have presently put forth a sermon of repentance, which hath lain by me half a year at the least, for the most part of it. For the last summer, as I was abroad preaching in the country, my chance was to make a sermon of repentance, the which was earnestly of divers desired of me, that I should give it them written, or else put it forth in print. The which thing to grant as I could not (for I had not written it), so I told them, that had so earnestly desired it. But when no way would serve, but I must promise them to write it as I could, I consented to their request that they should have it at my leisure. This leisure I prolonged so long that as (I ween) I offended them, so did I please myself, as one more glad to read other men's writings, than in such sort to publish mine own for other men to read; not that I would others not to profit by me, but that I, knowing how slender my store is, would be loth for the enemies

to have just occasion of evil speaking, and wresting that which simply is spoken. But when I considered this present time, to occasion men now to look upon all things in such sort as might move them to godliness, rather than to any curious questioning, I for the satisfying of my promise, and profiting of the simple, ignorant, and rude, have now caused this sermon to be printed; the which I beseech God, for his Christ's sake, to use as a mean, whereby of his mercy it may please him to work in me and many others true hearty repentance for our sins, to the glory of his name.

Thus fare thou well in the Lord. This 12th of July 1553.

A fruitful Sermon of Repentance, made by the constant Martyr of Christ, JOHN BRADFORD, 1553.

THE life we have at this present is the gift of God, in whom we live, move, and are, and therefore he is called *Jehovah*. For the which life as we should be thankful, so we may not in any wise use it after our own fancy, but to the end for the which it is given and lent us; that is, to the setting forth of God's praise and glory, by repentance, conversion, and obedience to his good will and holy laws, whereunto his long-suffering doth (as it were) even draw us, if our hearts by impenitency were not hardened. And therefore our life in the Scripture is called a walking; for as the body daily draweth more and more near its end, that is, the earth; even so our soul draweth daily more and more near unto death, that is, salvation or damnation, heaven or hell.

Of which thing, in that we are most careless, and very fools (for we, alas! are the same to-day we were yesterday, and not better or nearer to God, but rather nearer to hell, Satan, and perdition, being

covetous, idle, carnal, secure, negligent, proud, &c.), I think my labour cannot be better bestowed, than with the Baptist, Christ Jesus, and his Apostles, to harp on this string, which of all other is most necessary, and that in these days most especially. What string is that? saith one. Forsooth, brother, the string of repentance, the which Christ our Saviour did use first in his ministry; and as his minister at this present, I will use to you all, *Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.* (Matt. iv.) This sentence, thus pronounced and preached by our Saviour Jesus Christ, as it doth command us to repent, so to the doing of the same, it sheweth us a sufficient cause to stir us up thereunto, namely, for that the kingdom of heaven (which is a kingdom of all joy, peace, riches, power, and pleasure) is at hand, to all such as do so, that is, as do repent; so that the meaning hereof is, as though our Saviour might thus speak presently: Sirs, for that I see you all walking the wrong way, even to Satan and unto hell-fire, by following the kingdom of Satan, which now is coloured under the vain pleasures of this life, and foolishness of the flesh most subtilly, to your utter undoing and destruction, behold and mark well what I say unto you, *The kingdom of heaven*, that is, another manner of joy and felicity, honour and riches, power and pleasure, than you now perceive or enjoy, is even at hand, and at your backs, as, if you will turn again, that is, repent you, you shall most truly and pleasantly feel, see, and inherit. Turn again therefore. I say, that is, *repent*, for this joy I speak of, even *the kingdom of heaven, is at hand.*

Here we may note, first, the corruption of our nature, in that to this commandment, *Repent you*, he addeth a clause, *for the kingdom of heaven is at hand*; for by reason of the corruption and sturdiness of our nature, God unto all his commandments

commonly either addeth some promise to provoke us to obedience, or else some such sufficient cause as cannot but tickle us up to hearty labouring for the doing of the same, as here, to the commandment of doing penance, he addeth this ætiology, or cause, saying, *For the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*

Again, in that he joineth to the commandment the cause, saying, *For the kingdom of heaven is at hand*, we may learn, that of the kingdom of heaven, none (to whom the ministry of preaching doth appertain) can be a partaker, but such as repent, and do penance. Therefore, dearly beloved, if you regard the kingdom of heaven, in that you cannot enter therein, except you repent, I beseech you all, of every estate, as you would your own weal, to repent and do penance: the which thing that ye may do, I will do my best now to help you by God's grace.

But first, because we cannot well tell what repentance is, through ignorance and for lack of knowledge and false teaching, I will (to begin withal) shew you what repentance is. Repentance, or penance, is no English word, but we borrow it of the Latinists, to whom penance is a forethinking in English; in Greek, a being wise afterwards; in Hebrew, a conversion or turning; the which conversion or turning, in that it cannot be true and hearty, unto God especially, without some good hope or trust of pardon for that which is already done and past, I may well in this sort define it, namely, that penance is a sorrowing or forethinking of our sins past, an earnest purpose to amend, or turning to God, with a trust of pardon.

This definition may be divided into three parts: first, a sorrowing for our sins; secondly, a trust of pardon, which otherwise may be called a persuasion of God's mercy by the merits of Christ, for the for-

giveness of our sins; and thirdly, a purpose to amend or conversion to a new life; the which third or last part cannot be called properly a part; for it is but an effect of penance, as towards the end ye shall see by God's grace. But lest such as seek for occasion to speak evil should have any occasion, though they tarry not out the end of this sermon; I therefore divide penance into the three foresaid parts, of sorrowing for our sins, of good hope or trust of pardon, and of a new life. Thus you now see what penance is, a sorrowing for sin, a purpose to amend, with a good hope or trust of pardon.

This penance not only differeth from that which men commonly have taken to be penance, in saying and doing our enjoined Lady Psalters, seven psalms, fastings, pilgrimages, alms-deeds, and such-like things, but also from that which the more learned have declared to consist of three parts, namely, contrition, confession, and satisfaction.

Contrition they call a just and a full sorrow for their sin. For this word, just and full, is one of the differences between contrition and attrition.

Confession they call a numbering of all their sins in the ear of their ghostly father; for as (say they) a judge cannot absolve without knowledge of the cause or matter, so cannot the priest or ghostly father absolve from other sins, than those which he doth hear.

Satisfaction they call amends-making unto God for their sins, by their undue works, *opera indebita*, works more than they need to do, as they term them. This is their penance which they preach, write, and allow. But how true this grace is, how it agreeth with God's word, how it is to be allowed, taught, preached, and written, let us a little consider. If a man repent not until he have a just and full sorrowing for his sins (dearly beloved), when shall he re-

pent? for inasmuch as hell-fire, and the punishment of the devils, is a just punishment for sin; inasmuch as in all sin there is a contempt of God, which is all goodness, and therefore there is a desert of all illness; alas! who can bear or feel this just sorrow, this full sorrow for our sins, this their contrition, which they do so discern from their attrition? Shall not man by this doctrine rather despair than come by repentance? If a man repent not until he have made confession of all his sins in the ear of his ghostly father: if a man cannot have absolution of his sins until his sins be told by tale and number in the priest's ear, in that, as David saith, none can understand, much less then utter all his sins; who can understand his sins? In that David of himself complaineth elsewhere how that his sins have overflowed his head, and as a heavy burden do oppress him, alas! shall not a man by this doctrine be utterly driven from repentance? Though they have gone about something to make plaster for their sores, of confession or attrition to assuage their gear, bidding a man to hope well, of his contrition, though it be not so full as is required, and of his confession, though he have not numbered all his sins, if so be that he do so much as in him lieth, dearly beloved, in that there is none but that, herein he is guilty; for who doth as much as he may? Trow ye, that this plaster is not like salt for sore eyes? Yes, undoubtedly, when they have done all they can for the appeasing of consciences in these points, this is the sum, that we yet should hope well, but yet so hope that we must stand in a mammering and doubting whether our sins be forgiven. For to be certain of forgiveness of sins, as our creed teacheth us, they count it a presumption. Oh! abomination, and that not only herein, but in all their penance as they paint it.

As concerning satisfaction by their *opera indelita*,

undue works, that is, by such works as they need not to do, but of their own voluntariness and wilfulness (wilfulness indeed), who seeth not monstrous abomination, blasphemy, and even open fighting against God? For if satisfaction can be done by man, then Christ died in vain for him that so satisfieth; and so reigneth he in vain, so is he a bishop and a priest in vain. God's law requireth love to God with all our heart, soul, power, might, and strength (Deut. vi. 2. Matt. xxii. Mark, xx. Luke, x.), so that there is nothing can be done to Godward which is not contained in this commandment, nothing can be done over and above this. Again, Christ requireth to manward, *that we should love another as he loved us.* (John, iii.) And trow we that we can do any good thing to our neighbourward which is not herein comprised?

Yea, let them tell me when they do any thing, so in the love of God and their neighbour, but that they had need to cry, *Forgive us our sins.* (Matt. ii.) So far are we off from satisfying, doth not Christ say, *When you have done all things that I have commanded you, say that you be but unprofitable servants.* (Luke, xvii.) Put nothing to my word, saith God. (Deut. iv. 1.) Yes, works of supererogation (yea, superabomination), say they. *Whatsoever things are true* (saith the Apostle Paul), *whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things pertain to love, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, have you them in your mind, and do them, and the God of peace shall be with you.* I mean, this well looked on will pull us from popish satisfactory works, which do deface Christ's treasure and satisfaction.

In heaven and in earth was there none found that could satisfy God's anger for our sins, or get heaven

for man, but only the Son of God, Jesus Christ, the lion of the tribe of Judah, who by his blood hath wrought the work of satisfaction, and alone is worthy all honour, glory, and praise, for he hath opened the book with the seven seals.

Dearly beloved, therefore abhor this abomination, even to think that there is any other satisfaction to Godward for sin, than Christ's blood only. Blasphemy it is, and that horrible, to think otherwise. *The blood of Christ purifieth* (saith St. John) *from all sin*, and therefore he is called the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world, because there was never sin forgiven of God, nor shall be, from the beginning unto the end of the world, but only through Christ's death, prate the Pope and his prelates as please them, with their pardons, purgations, placeboes, trentals, dirges, works of supererogation, superabomination, &c.

I am he (saith the Lord) *which putteth away thine offences, and that for mine own sake, and will no more remember thine iniquities. Put me in remembrance* (for we will reason together), *and tell me what thou hast for thee, to make thee righteous. Thy first father offended sore, &c.* (Isa. xlv.) And thus writeth St. John: *If any man sin, we have an advocate* (saith he) *with the Father, even Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation or satisfaction for our sins.* As in the fourth chapter he saith, that God hath sent his Son to be a propitiation or satisfaction for our sins, according to that which Paul writeth, where he calleth Christ a merciful and faithful priest, to purge the people's sins (Heb. ii.); so that blind buzzards and perverse Papists they be, which yet will prate our merits or works to satisfy for our sins, in part or in whole, before baptism or after. For to omit the testimonies I brought out of John and Paul, which the blind cannot but see, I pray you remember

the text out of Jeremiah, which even now I rehearsed, being spoken to such as were then the people of God, and had been a long time, but yet were fallen into grievous sins after their adoption into the number of God's children. *It is for mine own sake* (saith God) *that I put away thy sins.* Where is your parting of the stake now? If it be for God's own sake, if Christ be the propitiation, then recant, except you will become idolaters, making your works God and Christ. Say as David teacheth us, *Not to us, Lord, not to us, but to thy name be the glory.*

And it is to be noted, that God doth cast in their teeth, even the sin of their first father, lest they should think that yet perchance for the righteousness and goodness of their good fathers, their sins might be the sooner pardoned, and so God accept their works.

If they had taken satisfaction for that which is done to the congregation publicly, by some notable punishment, as in the primitive church was used to open offenders, sparkles whereof and some traces yet remain, when such as have sinned in adultery go about the church with a taper in their shirts; or if they had made satisfaction for restitution to manward of such goods as wrongfully are gotten, the which true penance cannot be without; or if by satisfaction they had meant a new life to make amends to the congregation thereby, as by their evil life they did offend the congregation, in which sense the Apostle seemeth to take that which he writeth in 2 Cor. vii. where the old interpreter calleth *apologium*, satisfaction, which rather signifieth a defence or answering again; if, I say, they had taken satisfaction any of these ways, then they had done well, so that the satisfaction to God had been left alone to Christ.

Again, if they had made confession either for that which is to God privately, either for that which

is to the congregation publicly, either for that which is a free consultation with some one learned in God's book, and appointed thereto, as first it was used, and I wish were now used amongst us; either for that which is a reconciliation of one to another, it had been something; yea, if they had made it for faith, because it is a true demonstration of faith, as in Paul we may see, when he calleth Christ the captain of our confession, that is, of our faith (Rom. i.), and so confessors were called in the primitive church, such as manfully did witness their faith with the peril of their lives; if, I say, they had taken it thus, then had they done right well.

And so contrition, if they had left out their subtle distinction between it and attrition, by this word just or full, making it a hearty sorrow for their sins, then we would never have cried out against them therefor. For we say penance hath three parts; contrition, if you understand it for a hearty sorrowing for sin; confession, if you understand it for faith of free pardon in God's mercy by Jesus Christ; and satisfaction, if you understand it not to Godwards (for that only to Christ must be left alone), but to manward in restitution of goods wrongfully or fraudulently gotten, of name hindered by our slanders, and in newness of life; although, as I said before, and anon will shew more plainly by God's grace, that this last is no part of penance indeed, but a plain effect or fruit of true penance.

I might here bring in examples of their penance, how perilous it is to be embraced; but let the example of their grandsire Judas serye, in whom we see all the parts of their penance, as they describe it, and yet notwithstanding he was damned. He was sorry enough, as the effect shewed; he had their contrition fully, out of the which he confessed his fault, saying, *I have betrayed innocent blood,* and

thereunto he made satisfaction, restoring the money he had received. But yet all was but lost, he hanged up himself, his bowels burst out, and he remaineth a child of perdition for ever. I would wish that this example of Judas, in whom we see the parts of their penance, contrition, confession, and satisfaction, would move them to penance, and to describe it a little better, making hope or trust of God's free mercy a piece thereof, or else with Judas they will mar all.

Perchance these words, contrition, confession, and satisfaction, were used as I have expounded them at the first. But in that we see so much danger and hurt by using them without expositions, either let us join to them open expositions always, or else let us not use them at all, but say as I write, that penance is a hearty sorrow for our sins, a good hope or trust of pardon through Christ, which is not without an earnest purpose to amend, or a new life. This penance is the thing whereto all the Scripture calleth us. This penance do I now call you all unto; this must be continually in us, and not for a Lent season, as we have thought; this must increase daily more and more in us; without this, we cannot be saved.

Search therefore your hearts all swearers, blasphemers, liars, flatterers, filthy or idle talkers, jesters, bribers, covetous persons, drunkards, gluttons, whoremongers, thieves, murderers, slanderers, idle livers, negligent in their vocation, &c. All such and all other as lament not their sins, as hope not in God's mercy for pardon, and purpose not heartily to amend, to leave their swearing, drunkenness, whoredom, covetousness, idleness, &c.; all such, I say, shall not nor cannot enter into God's kingdom, but hell-fire is prepared for them, weeping, and gnashing of teeth, whereunto, alas! I fear me, very many

many will needs go, in that very many will be as they have been, let us even, to the wearying of our tongue to the stumps, preach and pray never so much to the contrary; and that even in the bowels of Jesus Christ, as now I beseech you all, all, and every mother's child, to repent and lament your sin, to trust in God's mercy, and to amend your lives.

Now methinks ye are somewhat astonished, whereby I gather that presently you desire this repentance, that is, this sorrow, good hope, and newness of life; the which that you may the rather attain, and get to your comforts, as I have gone about to be a mean to stir up in you (by God's grace) this desire of repentance, so through the same grace of God will I go about now to shew you, how you may have your desire in this behalf.

And first, concerning this part, namely, sorrow for your sins and hearty lamenting of the same; for this, if you desire the having of it, you must beware that you think not that of yourselves, or of your own free will, by any means you can get it. You may easily deceive yourselves, and mock yourselves, thinking more of yourselves than is seemly. All good things, and not pieces of good things, but all good things, saith St. James, come from God, the Father of light. If therefore penance be good (as it is good), then the parts of it be good: from God therefore do they come, and not of our free will. It is the Lord that mortifieth, that bringeth down, that humbleth, saith the Scripture in sundry places. *After thou hadst stricken my thigh* (saith Jeremiah. xxxi.) *I was ashamed*, Lo! he saith, *After thou hadst stricken me*, and therefore prayeth he; even in the last words almost he writeth, *Turn us, Lord, and we shall be turned* (Lam. i.); the which thing David useth very often. Wherefore, first of all, if thou wouldest have this part of penance, as for the whole, because it is

God's gift (Acts, ii. 2 Tim. ii.), so for this part go thou unto God, and make some little prayer, as thou canst, unto his mercy for the same, in this or like sort:

Merciful Father of our Saviour Jesus Christ, because I have sinned, and done wickedly, and through thy goodness have received a desire of repentance, whereto this thy long-sufferance doth draw my hard heart, I beseech thee, for thy mercy's sake in Christ, to work the same repentance in me, and by thy Spirit, power, and grace, so to humble, mortify, and tear my conscience for my sins to salvation, that in thy good time thou mayest comfort and quicken me again, through Jesus Christ, thy dearly beloved Son. Amen.

After this sort, I say, or otherwise, as thou thinkest good, if thou wilt have this first part, contrition or sorrow for thy sins, do thou beg it of God through Christ. And when thou hast asked it, as I have laboured to drive thee from trusting in thyself, so now I go about to move thee from flattering of thyself, from sluggishness and negligence, to be diligent to use these means following.

Unto prayer, which I would thou shouldest first use as thou canst; secondly, get thee God's law as a glass to look in, for in it and by it cometh the true knowledge of sin, without which knowledge there can be no sorrow. For how can a man sorrow for his sins, which knoweth not his sins? As when a man is sick, the first step to health, is to know his sickness; even so to salvation, the first step is to know thy damnation due for thy sins.

The law of God therefore must be gotten and well looked in, that is, we must look in it spiritually, and not corporally or carnally, as that outward word or letter doth declare and utter; and so our Saviour teacheth us in Matthew, expounding the sixth and

seventh commandments, not only after the outward deed, but also after the heart; making there the anger of the heart a kind of murder, lusting after another man's wife, a kind of adultery.

And this is one of the differences between God's laws and man's laws; that of this (man's law I mean) I am not condemnable, so long as I observe outwardly the same. But God's law goeth to the root, and to the heart, condemning me for the inward motion, although outwardly I live most holily. As for example: if I kill no man, though in my heart I hate, man's law condemneth me not, but otherwise doth God's law. And why? for it seeth the fountain whence the evil doth spring. If hatred were taken out of the heart, then loftiness in looks, detraction in tongue, and murder by hand, could never ensue. If lusting were out of the heart, curiosity in countenance, wantonness in words, indecent boldness in body, would not appear.

In that therefore this outward evil springs out of the inward corruption, seeing God's law also is a law of liberty, as saith St. James (chap. ii.), and spiritual, as saith St. Paul (Rom. vii.), perfectly and spiritually it is to be understood, if we will truly come to the knowledge of our sins. For of this inward corruption, reason knoweth but little or nothing. I had not known, saith Paul (Rom. vii.), that lusting (which to reason, and to them which are guided only by reason, is thought but a trifle), I had not known, saith he, this lusting to have been sin, if the law had not said, *Non concupisces, Thou shalt not lust.*

To the knowledge therefore of our sins (without which we cannot repent, or be sorry for our sin), let us secondly get us God's law as a glass to look in, and that not only literally, outwardly, or partly, but also spiritually, inwardly, and throughly. Let us con-

sider the heart, and so shall we see the foul spots we are stained withal, at least inwardly; whereby we the rather may be moved to hearty sorrow and sighing. For, as St. Austin saith, it is a glass which feareth nobody; but even look what a one thou art, so it painteth thee out.

In the law we see it is a foul spot, not to love the Lord our God with all (all I say) our heart, soul, power, might, and strength, and that continually.

In the law it is a foul spot, not only to make to ourselves any graven image or similitude, to bow thereto, &c. but also not to frame ourselves wholly after the image whereto we are made, not to bow to it, to worship it.

In the law we see that it is a foul spot, not only to take God's name in vain, but also not earnestly, heartily, and even continually to call upon his name only, to give thanks unto him, to believe, to publish, and live his holy word.

In God's law we see it is a foul spot to our souls, not only to be an open profaner of the Sabbath-day, but also not to rest from our own words and works, that the Lord might both speak and work in us and by us; not to hear his holy word, not to communicate his sacraments, not to give occasion to others to holiness by our example in godly works, and reverent esteeming of the ministry of his word.

In God's law we see it is a foul spot to our souls, not only to be an open disobeyer of our parents and magistrates, masters, and such as be in any authority over us, but also not to honour such even in our hearts, not to give thanks to God for them, not to pray for them, to aid, to help, or relieve them, to bear with their infirmities, &c.

In God's law we see it is a foul spot in our souls, not only to be a mankiller in hatred, malice, proud looks, brags, backbiting, railing, or bodily slaughter.

but also not to love our neighbours, yea, our enemies, even in our hearts, and to declare the same in all our gestures, words, and works.

In God's law we see it a foul spot to our souls, not only to be a whoremonger in lusting in our hearts, in wanton looking, in unclean and wanton talking, in actual doing dishonestly with our neighbour's wife, daughter, servant, &c.; but also not to be chaste, sober, temperate in heart, looks, tongue, apparel, deeds, and to help others thereunto accordingly, &c.

In God's law we see it is a foul spot to our souls, not only in heart to covet, in look or word to flatter, lie, colour, &c. in deed, to take away any thing which pertaineth to another, but also in heart, countenance, word, and deed, not to keep, save, and defend that which pertaineth to thy neighbour, as thou wouldest thine own.

In God's law we may see it a foul spot, not only to lie or bear false witness against any man, but also not to have as great care over thy neighbour's name, as over thine own.

Sin in God's law it is we may see, and a foul spot, not only to consent to evil, lust, or carnal desires, but even the very natural or carnal lusts and desires themselves, for so I may call them, nature itself being now so corrupted, are sin and self-love, and many such-like. By reason whereof I trow there is none that looketh well herein; but though he be blameless to the world, and fair to the show, yet certainly inwardly his face is foul arrayed, and so shameful, saucy, manged, and scabbed, that he cannot but be sorry at the contemplation thereof, and that so much more, by how much he continueth to look in this glass accordingly.

And thus much concerning the second mean to the stirring up of sorrow for sin, that next unto

prayer we should look in God's law spiritually; the which looking, if we use with prayer, as I said, let us not doubt but at the length God's Spirit will work as now to such as believe; for to the unbelievers all is in vain, their eyes are stark blind, they can see nothing; to such as believe (I say), I trust something is done even already. But if neither by prayer, nor by looking in God's law spiritually, as yet thy hard unbelieving heart feeleth no sorrow nor lamenting for thy sins; thirdly, look upon the tag tied to God's law: for as to man's law there is a tag tied, that is, a penalty; so is there to God's law a tag tied, that is, a penalty, and that no small one, but such a great one as cannot but make us to cast our currish tails between our legs, if we believe it, for all is in vain if we be faithless, not to believe before we feel.

This tag is God's malediction or curse: *Maledictus omnis* (saith it) *qui non permanet in omnibus quæ scripta sunt in libro legis, ut faciat eam.* Lo! accursed, saith he, is all, no exception, all, saith God, which continueth not in all things (for he that is guilty of one, is guilty of the whole, saith St. James), in all things therefore (saith the Holy Ghost) which are written in the book of the law to do them. He saith not to hear them, to talk of them, to dispute of them, but to do them.

Who is he now that doth these? *Rara avis*, few such birds, yea, none at all. For all are gone out of the way, though not outwardly by word or deed, yet inwardly, at the least by default and wanting of that which is required; so that a child of one night's age is not pure, but (by reason of birth-sin) in danger of God's malediction; much more then we, which, alas! have drunken in iniquity, as it were, water, as Job saith. (Chap. xv.) But yet, alas! we quake not.

Tell me now, good brother, why do you so lightly

consider God's curse, that for your sins past you are so careless as though you had made a covenant with death and damnation, as the wicked did in Isaiah's time? What is God's curse? At the Pope's curse with book, bell, and candle, oh! how trembled we which heard it, but only though the same was not directed unto us, but unto others. For this God's curse, which is incomparably more fell and importable, and is directed to us, yea, bending over us all by reason of our sins, alas! how careless are we! Oh! faithless hard hearts! oh! Jezabel's guests! rocked and laid in a sleep in her bed! (Rev. iii.) Oh! wicked wretches! which being come into the depth of sin, do contemn the same. Oh! sorrowless sinners, and shameless stinking harlots!

Is not the anger of a king death? And is the anger of the King of all kings a matter to be so lightly regarded as we do regard it, which for our sins are so wretchless, that we slug and sleep it out? As wax melteth away at the heat of the fire (saith David), so do the wicked perish at the face or countenance of the Lord. If, dearly beloved, his face be so terrible and intolerable for sinners and the wicked, what trow we his hand is? At the face or appearing of God's anger, the earth trembleth, but we, earth, earth, yea, stones, iron, flints, tremble nothing at all. If we will not tremble in hearing, woe unto us, for then we shall be crushed in pieces in feeling. If a lion roar, the beasts quake; but we are worse than beasts, which quake nothing at the roaring of the lion; I mean the Lord of hosts. And why? because the curse of God, hardness of heart, is already fallen upon us, or else we could not but lament and tremble for our sins, if not for the shame and foulness thereof, yet at the least, for the malediction and curse of God, which hangeth over us for our sins.

Lord, be merciful unto us, for thy Christ's sake,

and spare us; in thine anger remember thy mercy towards us. Amen.

And thus much for the third thing, to the moving of us to sorrow for our sins, that is, for the tag tied to God's law, I mean, for the malediction and curse of God. But if our hearts be so hard, that through these we yet feel not hearty sorrow for our sins, let us fourthly set before us examples past and present, old and new, that thereby the Holy Spirit may be effectual to work in his time this work of sorrowing for our sin.

Look upon God's anger for sin in Adam and Eve, for eating a piece of an apple. Were not they, the dearest creatures of God, cast out of paradise? were not they subject to mortality, travail, labour, &c.? was not the earth accursed for their sins? do not we all, men in labour, women in travailing with child, and all in death, mortality, and misery, even in this life, feel the same? and was God so angry for their sin, and he being the same God, will he say nothing to us for ours, (alas!) much more horrible than the eating once of one piece of one apple?

In the time of Noah and Lot, God destroyed the whole world with water, and the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, Zeboim and Admah, with fire and brimstone from heaven for their sins, namely, for their whoredoms, pride, idleness, unmercifulness to the poor, tyranny, &c. In which wrath of God even the very babes, birds, fowls, fishes, herds, trees, and grass perished; and think we that nothing will be spoken to us, much worse and more abominable than they? For all men may see, if they will, that the whoredoms, pride, unmercifulness, tyranny, &c. of England far passeth in this age any age that ever was before. Lot's wife looking back was turned into a salt stone; and will our looking back again, yea, our running back again to our wickedness, do us no hurt?

If we were not already more blind than beetles, we would blush. Pharaoh's heart was hardened, so that no miracle could convert him; if ours were any thing soft, we would begin to sob.

Of five hundred thousand men, alone but twain entered into the land of promise, because they had ten times sinned against the Lord, as he himself saith (Numb. xiv.); and trow we that God will not swear in his wrath, that we shall never enter into his rest, which have sinned so many ten times as we have toes and fingers, yea, hairs of our heads and beards (I fear me), and yet we pass not.

The man that sware, and he that gathered sticks on the Sabbath-day, were stoned to death; but we think our swearing is no sin, our bibbing, rioting, yea, whorehunting on the Sabbath-day, pleaseth God, or else we would something amend our manners. (1 Kings, v.)

Eli's negligence in correcting his sons, nipped his neck in two; but ours, which pamper up our children like puppets, will put us to no plunge. Eli's sons, for disobeying their father's admonition, brought over them God's vengeance; and will our stubbornness do nothing?

Saul's malice to David, Ahab's displeasure against Naboth, brought their blood to the ground for dogs to eat; yea, their children were hanged up and slain for this gear; but we continue in malice, envy, and murder, as though we were able to wage war with the Lord.

David's adultery with Bathsheba was visited on the child born, on David's daughter defiled by her brother, and on his children, one slaying another, his wives defiled by his own son, on himself driven out of his realm in his old age, and otherwise also, although he most heartily repented his sin; but we are more dear unto God than David, which yet was

a man after God's own heart, or else we could not but tremble, and begin to repent.

The rich glutton's gay paunch-filling, what did it? It brought him to hell; and have we a placard that God will do nothing to us?

Achan's subtil theft provoked God's anger against all Israel; and our subtilty, yea, open extortion, is so fine and politic that God cannot espy it.

Gehazi's covetousness, brought it not the leprosy upon him and on all his seed? Judas also hanged himself. But the covetousness of England is of another cloth and colour. Well, if it were so, the same tailor will cut it accordingly.

Ananias and Sapphira, by lying, linked to themselves sudden death; but ours now prolongeth our life the longer, to last in eternal death.

The false witnesses of the two judges against Susanna lighted on their own pates; and so will ours do at length.

But what go I about to avouch ancient examples, where daily experience doth teach? The sweat the other year, the storms the winter following, will us to weigh them in the same balances. The hanging and killing of men themselves, which are (alas!) too rife in all places, require us to register them in the same rolls. At the least in children, infants, and such-like, which yet cannot utter sin by word or deed, we see God's anger against sin in punishing them by sickness, death, mishap, or otherwise, so plainly that we cannot but groan and grunt again, in that we have gushed out this gear more abundantly in word and deed.

And here with me a little look on God's anger yet so fresh, that we cannot but smell it, although we stop our noses never so much; I pray God we smell it not more fresh hereafter; I mean it forsooth (for I know you look for it) in our dear late sovereign

lord the King's Majesty. You all know he was but a child in years; defiled he was not with notorious offences. Defiled, quoth he? nay, rather adorned with so many goodly gifts and wonderful qualities, as never prince was from the beginning of the world, should I speak of his wisdom, of his ripeness in judgment, of his learning, of his godly zeal, heroical heart, fatherly care for his commons, nursely solicitude for religion, &c. Nay, so many things are to be spoken in commendation of God's exceeding graces in this child, that, as Sallust writeth of Carthage, I had rather speak nothing than too little, in that too much is too little. This gift God gave unto us Englishmen before all nations under the sun, and that of his exceeding love towards us. But, alas and well away, for our unthankfulness sake, for our sin's sake, for our carnality, and profane living, God's anger hath touched not only the body, but also the mind of our King by a long sickness, and at length hath taken him away by death, death, cruel death, fearful death.

Oh! if God's judgment be begun in him, which, as he was the chiefest, so I think the holiest and godliest in the realm of England, alas! what will it be on us, whose sins are overgrown to our heads, that they are climbed up into heaven! I pray you, my good brethren, know that God's anger for our sins towards us cannot but be great; yea, we see it was so great, that our good King could not bear it. What followed to Jewry after the death of Josias? God save England, and give us repentance. My heart will not suffer me to tarry longer herein. I trow this will thrust out some tears of repentance.

If therefore to prayer for God's fear, the looking in God's glass, and the tag thereto, will not burst open thy blockish heart, yet I trow the tossing to and fro of these examples, and especially of our late

King, and this troublesome time, will tumble some tears out of thine heart, if thou still pray for God's Spirit accordingly. For who art thou (think always with thyself), that God should spare thee more than them whose examples thou hast heard? What friends hast thou? Were not of these kings, prophets, apostles, learned, and come of holy stocks? I deceive myself (think thou with thyself) if I believe that God, being the same God that he was, will spare me, whose wickedness is no less, but much more than some of theirs. He hateth sin now as much as ever he did. The longer he spareth, the greater vengeance will fall; the deeper he draweth his bow, the sorer will the shaft pierce.

But if yet thy heart be so hardened, that all this gear will not move thee, surely thou art in a very evil estate, and remedy now know I none. What! said I, none? know I none? Yes; there is one which is suresby, as they say, to serve, if any thing will serve. You look to know what this is; forsooth, the passion and death of Jesus Christ. You know the cause why Christ became man, and suffered as he suffered, was the sins of his people, that he might save them from the same. Consider the greatness of the sore, I mean sin, by the greatness of the surgeon and of the salve. Who was the surgeon? No angel, no saint, no archangel, no power, no creature in heaven or in earth, but only He by whom all things were made, all things are ruled, also even God's own dearling and only beloved Son becoming man.

Oh! what a great thing is this that could not be done by the angels, archangels, potentates, powers, or all the creatures of God, without his own Son, who yet must needs be thrust out of heaven, as a man would say, to take our nature, and become man. Here have ye the surgeon; great was the cure that this mighty Lord took in hand.

Now what was the salve? Forsooth, dear gear, and of many compositions; I cannot recite all, but rather must leave it to your hearty consideration. Three-and-thirty years was he curing our sores: he sought it earnestly by fasting, watching, praying, &c. The same night that he was betrayed, I read how busy he was about a plaster in the garden, when he, lying flat on the ground, praying with tears, and that of blood, not a few, but so many as did flow down on the ground again, crying in this sort: *Father*, saith he, *if it be possible, let this cup depart from me*; that is, if it be possible that else the sin of mankind can be taken away, grant that it may be so. Thou heardest Moses crying for the idolaters; thou heardest Lot for the Zoarites; Samuel, David, and many others, for the Israelites: and, dear Father, I only am thine own Son, as thou hast said, in whom thou art well pleased; wilt thou not hear me? I have by the space of three-and-thirty years done always thy will; I have so humbled myself, that I would become an abject among men to obey thee; therefore, dear Father, if it be possible, grant my request, save mankind now without any further labour, salves, or plasters. But yet (saith he), *Not as I will, but as thou wilt*.

But, Sir, what heard he? Though he sweat blood and water in making his plaster for our sore of sin, yet it framed not. Twice he cried without comfort; yea, though to comfort him God sent an angel, we yet know that this plaster was not allowed for sufficient, until hereunto Christ Jesus was betrayed, forsaken of all his disciples, forsworn of his dearly beloved, bound like a thief, belied on, buffeted, whipped, scourged, crowned with thorns, derided, crucified, racked, nailed, hanged up between two thieves, cursed and railed upon, mocked in misery, and had given up the ghost. Then bowed

down the head of Christ, that is, God the Father, which is the head of Christ; then allowed he the plaster to be sufficient and good for the healing of our sore, which is sin. Now would God abide our breath, because the stink, that is, damnation or guiltiness, was taken away by the sweet savour of the breath of this Lamb thus offered once for all?

So that here, dearly beloved, we as in a glass may see to the bruising of our blockish hard hearts God's great judgment and anger against sin. The Lord of lords, the King of kings, the brightness of God's glory, the Son of God, the darling of his Father, in whom he is well pleased, hangeth between two thieves, crying for thee and me, and for us all, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Oh! hard hearts that we have, which make tuts for sin. Look on this; look in the very heart of Christ, pierced with a spear, wherein thou mayest see and read God's horrible anger for sin. Woe to thy hard heart that pierced it.

And thus much for the first part of repentance; I mean, for the means of working contrition: first, use prayer; then look on God's law; thirdly, see his curse; fourthly, set examples of his anger before thee; and, last of all, set before thee the death of Christ. From this and prayer cease not until thou feel some hearty sorrow for thy sin; the which when thou feelest, then labour for the other part, that is, faith, on this sort.

As first, in contrition, I willed thee not to trust to thy free will for the attaining of it, so do I will thee in this. Faith is so far from the reach of man's free will, that to reason it is plain foolishness; thou must first go to God, whose gift it is; thou must, I say, get thee to the Father of mercy, whose work it is, that, as he hath brought thee down by contrition, and humbled thee, so he would give thee faith, raise thee up, and exalt thee.

On this manner therefore with the Apostles, and the poor man in the Gospel, that cried, Lord, increase our faith ; Lord, help my unbelief ; pray thou and say, O merciful God, and dear Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in whom as thou art well pleased, so hast thou commanded us to hear him ; forasmuch as he often biddeth us to ask of thee, and thereto promiseth that thou wilt hear us, and grant us that which in his name we shall ask of thee. Lo ! gracious Father, I am bold to beg of thy mercy, through thy Son Jesus Christ, one sparkle of true faith, and certain persuasion of thy goodness and love towards me in Christ, wherethrough I being assured of the pardon of all my sins, by the mercies of Christ, thy Son, may be thankful to thee, love thee, and serve thee, in holiness and righteousness all the days of my life.

On this sort I say, or otherwise, as God shall move thee, pray thou first of all, and look thou for thy request at God's hand, and without any doubting, though forthwith thou feelest not the same ; for oftentimes we have things of God given us long before we feel them as we would do. Now unto this prayer, use thou these means following :

After prayer for faith, which I would should be first ; secondly, because the same springeth out of the hearing, not of masses, matins, canons, councils, doctors, decrees, but out of the hearing of God's word ; get thee God's word, but not that part which serveth specially to contrition, that is, the law, but the other part, which serveth specially to consolation and certain persuasion of God's love towards thee, that is, the Gospel or publication of God's mercy in Christ ; I mean, the free promises.

But here thou must know, that there are two kinds of promises ; one which is properly of the law, another which is properly of the Gospel. In the

promises of the law we may indeed behold God's mercy, but so that it hangeth upon the condition of our worthiness ; as, if thou love the Lord with all thy heart, &c. thou shalt find mercy. This kind of promises, though it declare unto us God's love, which promiseth where he needeth not, yet unto him that seeleth not Christ, which is the end of the law, they are so far from comforting, that utterly with the law they bring man to great despair, so greatly are we corrupt, for none so loveth God as he ought to do. From these therefore get thee to the other promises of the Gospel, in which we may see such plenty and frank liberality of God's goodness, that we cannot but be much comforted, though we have very deeply sinned.

For these promises of the Gospel do not hang on the condition of our worthiness, as the promises of the law do, but they depend and hang on God's truth ; that as God is true, so they cannot but be performed to all them which lay hold on them by faith, I had almost said, which cast them not away by unbelief.

Mark in them therefore two things, namely, that as well they are free promises without any condition of our worthiness, as also that they are universal, offered to all ; all, I say, which are not so stubborn as to keep still their hands, whereby they should receive this alms in their bosoms by unbelief. As concerning infants and children, you know I now speak not, but concerning such as be of years of discretion ; and now you look that I should give you a taste of these promises, which are both free and universal, excepting none but such as except themselves. Well, you shall have one or two for a say.

In the third of John, saith our Saviour, *So God loved the world, that he would give his darling, his own only Son, that all that believe in him*

should not perish, but have everlasting life. Lo! Sir, he saith not that some might have life; but all, saith he. And what all? all that love him with all their hearts, all that have lived a godly life. Nay, all that believe in him; although thou hast lived a most wicked and horrible life, if now thou believe in him, thou shalt be saved. Is not this sweet gear?

Again saith Christ, *Come unto me all ye that labour and are laden, and I will refresh you.* Let us a little look on this letter. Come unto me. Who should come? Lords, priests, holy men, monks, friars; yea, coblers, tinkers, whores, thieves, murderers also, if they lament their sins. *Come unto me* (saith he) *all ye that labour and are laden*, that is, which are afraid of your sins. And what wilt thou do, Lord? And *I will refresh you*, saith he. Oh! what a thing is this! *And I will refresh you.* Wot you who spake this? He that never told a lie; he is the truth, there was never guile found in his mouth, and now will he be untrue to thee, good brother, which art sorry for thy grievous sins? No, forsooth! Heaven and earth shall pass and perish, but his word shall never fail. Saint Paul saith, *God would have all men saved.* Lo! he exempteth none. And to Titus, *The grace of God bringeth salvation to all men.* As from Adam all have received sin to damnation, so by Christ all have grace offered to salvation, if they reject not the same. I speak not now of infants, I say, nor I need not to enter into the matter of predestination. In preaching of repentance, I would gather where I could with Christ. As surely as I live (saith God), I will not the death of a sinner. Art thou a sinner? Yea. Lo! God sweareth he will not thy death. How canst thou now perish? Consider with thyself what profit thou shouldest have to believe this to be true to others, if not to thyself also. Satan doth so. Rather con-

sider with Peter, that the promise of salvation pertaineth not only to them which are nigh; that is; to such as are fallen a little, but also to all whom the Lord hath called, be they never so far off.

Lo! now by me the Lord calleth thee, thou man, thou woman, that art very far off. The promise therefore pertaineth to thee; needs must thou be saved, except thou with Satan say God is false; and yet if thou do so, God is faithful, and cannot deny himself, as thou shalt feel by his plagues in hell, for so dishonouring God to think that he is not true. Will he be found false now? The matter hangeth not on thy worthiness, but it hangeth on God's truth. Clap hold on it, and I warrant thee Christ is the propitiation for our sins, yea, for the sins of the whole world; believe this, man, I know thou believest it; say therefore in thy heart, still, Lord, increase my faith; Lord, help my unbelief. Blessed are they which see not (by reason) this gear, but yet believe; hope, man, past all hope, as Abraham did.

And thus much for a taste of these promises which are every where not only in the New Testament, but also in the Old. Read the latter end of Leviticus, xxvi. the prophet Isaiah, xxx. where he saith, God tarrieth, looking for thee to shew thee mercy; also the 40th, and so on to the 60th. Read also the 2d Kings, xxiv. Psa. xxxiii. Joel, ii. &c.

Howbeit, if this gear will not serve, if yet thou feelst no faith, no certain persuasion of God's love, then unto prayer add diligent considering of the free and universal promises of the Gospel. Thirdly, set before thee those benefits which God hath tofore given thee, and presently giveth thee. Consider how he hath made thee a man or a woman, which might have made thee a toad, a dog. And why did he this? Verily, because he loved thee. And trowest

thou, that if he loved thee when thou wast not, to make thee such a one as he most graciously hath made thee, will he not now love thee, being his handy work? Doth he hate any thing that he made? is there unableness with him? doth he love for a day, and so farewell? No, forsooth, he loveth to the end, his mercy endureth for ever. Say therefore with Job, To the work of thy hands put thy helping hand. Again, hath he not made thee a Christian man or woman, where if he would, he might have made thee a Turk or Pagan? This thou knowest he did of love. And dost thou think his love is lessened, if thou lament thy sin? is his hand shortened for helping thee? can a woman forget the child of her womb? and though she should do it, yet will not I forget thee, saith the Lord. He hath given thee limbs to see, hear, go, &c.; he hath given thee wit, reason, discretion, &c.; he hath long spared thee, and borne with thee, when thou never purposedst to repent; and now thou repenting, will he not give thee mercy? Wherefore doth he give thee to live at this present to hear me speak this, and me to speak this, but of love to us all? Oh! therefore let us pray him, that he would add to this, that we might believe these love-tokens that he loveth us, and indeed he will do it. Lord, open our eyes, in thy gifts to see thy gracious goodness. Amen.

But to tarry in this I will not. Let every man consider God's benefits past and present, public and private, spiritual and corporal, to the confirming of his faith concerning the promises of the Gospel, for the pardon of his sins. I will now go about to shew you a fourth means to confirm your faith in this gear even by examples. Of these there are in the Scriptures very many, as also daily experience doth diversly teach the same, if we were diligent to observe things accordingly; wherefore I will be more brief

herein, having respect to time, which stealeth fast away.

Adam in paradise transgressed grievously, as the painful punishment, which we all as yet do feel, proveth, if nothing else. Though by reason of his sin he displeased God sore, and ran away from God, for he would have hid himself, yea, he would have made God the causer of his sin, in that he gave him such a mate, so far was he from asking mercy; yet all this notwithstanding, God turned his fierce wrath neither upon him nor Eve, which also requireth not mercy, but upon the serpent Satan, promising unto them a seed, Jesus Christ, by whom they at the length should be delivered. In token whereof, though they were cast out of paradise for their nurture, to serve in sorrow which would not serve in joy; yet he made them apparel to cover their bodies, a visible sacrament and token of his invisible love and grace concerning their souls. If God was so merciful to Adam, which so sore brake his commandment, and rather blamed God than asked mercy; trowest thou, O man, that he will not be merciful to thee, which blamest thyself, and desirest pardon?

To Cain he offered mercy, if he would have asked it. What hast thou done? (saith God :) the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me out of the earth. O merciful Lord, should Cain have said, I confess it! But, alas! he did not so, and therefore said God, *Now*, that is, in that thou desirest not mercy, now, I say, be thou accursed, &c. Lo! to the reprobate he offered mercy, and will he deny it to thee, which art his child?

Noah, did not he sin, and was drunk? Good Lot also both in Sodom dissembled a little with the angels, prolonging the time, and out of Sodom he fell very foul (Gen. xix.), as did Judah and the patriarchs against Joseph; but yet I ween they found mercy.

Moses, Miriam, Aaron, though they stumbled a little, yet received they mercy; yea, the people in the wilderness often sinned and displeased God, so that he was purposed to have destroyed them. Let me alone, saith he to Moses, that I may destroy them; but Moses did not let him alone, for he prayeth still for them, and therefore God spareth them. If the people were spared through Moses' prayer, they not praying with him, but rather worshipping their golden calf, eating, drinking, and making jolly good cheer, why shouldest thou doubt whether God will be merciful to thee, having, as indeed thou hast, one much better than Moses to pray for thee (Numb. xiv.), and with thee, even Jesus Christ, who sitteth on the right hand of his Father, and prayeth for us, being no less faithful in his Father's house, the church, than Moses was in the synagogue? David the good king had a foul foil when he committed whoredom with his faithful servant's wife, Bathsheba, whereunto he added also a mischievous murder, causing her husband, his most faithful soldier, Uriah, to be slain with an honest company of his most valiant men of war, and that with the sword of the uncircumcised.

In this his sin, though a great while he lay asleep, (as many do now-a-days, God give them good waking!) thinking, that by the sacrifices he offered, all was well, God was content; yea at length, when the Prophet by a parable had opened the poke, and brought him in remembrance of his own sin in such sort, that he gave judgment against himself, then quaked he, his sacrifices had no more taken away his sins, than our Sir John's trentals and wagging of his fingers over the heads of such as he asleep in their sins (out of the which, when they are awaked, they will well see that it is neither mass nor matins, blessing nor crossing, will serve); then, I say, he cried

out, saying, I have sinned, saith he, against my Lord and good God, which hath done so much for me; I caused indeed Uriah to be killed; I have sinned, I have sinned. What shall I do? I have sinned, and am worthy of eternal damnation. But what saith God by his Prophet? *The Lord hath taken away thy sins; thou shalt not die.* O good God, he said, but I have sinned, but yet from his heart and not from the lips only, as Pharaoh and Saul did, and incontinently he heareth, *Thou shalt not die; the Lord hath taken away thy sins,* or rather, hath laid them upon another, yea, translated them upon the back of his Son Jesus Christ, who bare them, and not only them, but thine and mine also, if that we will now cry but from our hearts, *We have sinned;* good Lord, we have done wickedly, enter not into judgment with us, but be merciful unto us after thy great mercy, and according to the multitude of thy compassions do away our iniquities, &c. For indeed God is not the God of David only; he is the God of all, so that he or she, whosoever they be, that call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved. In confirmation whereof this history is written, as are also the other which I have recited, and many more which I might recite. As of Manasses, the wicked king, which slew Isaiah the Prophet, and wrought very much wickedness, yet the Lord shewed mercy upon him, being in prison, as his prayer doth teach us. Nebuchadnezzar, though for a time he bare God's anger, yet at the length he found mercy. The city of Nineveh also found favour with God, as did many other, which I will omit for time's sake, and will bring forth one or two out of the New Testament, that we may see God to be the same God in the New Testament, that he was in the Old.

I might tellyou of many, if I should speak of the lunatic, such as were possessed with devils, lame, blind,

dumb, deaf, lepers, &c. but time will not suffice me; one or two therefore shall serve. Mary Magdalen had seven devils, but yet they were cast out of her and of all others; she was the first that Christ appeared unto after his resurrection. Thomas would not believe Christ's resurrection, though many told him which had seen and felt him, by reason whereof a man might have thought that his sins would have cast him away. Except I should see and feel, saith he, I will not believe. Oh! wilful Thomas, I will not, saith he. But Christ appeared unto him, and would not loose him, as he will not do thee, good brother, if that with Thomas thou wilt keep company with the disciples, as Thomas did. Peter's fall was ugly; he accursed himself if ever he knew Christ, and that for fear of a girl, and this not once, but even three divers times, and that in the hearing of Christ his Master; but yet the third time Christ looked back, and cast on him his eye of grace, so that he went out, and wept bitterly. And after Christ's resurrection not only did the angels will the woman to tell Peter that Christ was risen, but Christ himself appeared to him severally, such a good Lord is he. The thief hanging on the cross said but this: *Lord, when thou comest into thy kingdom, remember me*; and what answer had he? *This day, saith Christ, shalt thou be with me in paradise*. What a comfort is this! in that he is now the same Christ to thee and me and us all, if we will run unto him; for he is the same Christ to-day and to-morrow until he come to judgment. Then indeed he will be inexorable, but now is he more ready to give than thou to ask. If thou cry, he heareth thee, yea, before thou cry. (Isaiah.) Cry therefore, be bold, man; he is not partial. Call, saith he, and I will hear thee. Ask, and thou shalt have; seek, and thou shalt find, though not at the first, yet at the length. (Matt. vii.)

If he tarry awhile, it is but to try thee ; he is coming, and will not be long. (Heb. x.)

Thus have you four means which you must use to the attainment of faith or certain persuasion of God's mercy towards you, which is the second part of penance, namely, prayer, the free and universal promises of God's grace, the recordation of the benefits of God, past and present, the examples of God's mercy, which, although they might suffice, yet will I put one more to them, which alonely of itself is full sufficient. I mean the death of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, which, if thou set before the eyes of thy mind, it will confirm thy plackard ; for it is the great seal of England, as they say, yea, of all the world, for the confirmation of all patents and perpetuities of the everlasting life, whereunto we are all called.

If I thought these which I have before recited were not sufficient to confirm your faith of God's love towards such as do repent, I would tarry longer herein : but because both I have long been, and also I trust you have some exercise of conscience in this daily (or else you are to blame), I will but touch and go. Consider with yourselves what we are, misers, wretches, and enemies to God ; consider what God is, even he which hath all power, majesty, might, glory, riches, &c. perfectly of himself, and needeth nothing, but hath all things ; consider what Christ is, concerning his Godhead, co-equal with his Father, even he by whom all things were made, are ruled and governed ; concerning his manhood, the only darling of his Father, in whom is all his joy. Now Sir, what a love is this, that this God, which needeth nothing, would give wholly his own self to thee his enemy, wreaking his wrath upon himself in this his Son, as a man may say, to spare thee, to save thee, to win thee, to buy thee, to have thee,

to enjoy thee for ever. Because thy sin had separated thee from him, to the end thou mightest come est-soons into his company again, and therein remain, he himself became, as a man would say, a sinner, or rather sin itself, even a malediction or curse, that we sinners, we accursed by our sin, might by his oblation or offering for our sins by his curse, be delivered from sin and malediction. For by sin he destroyed sin, killing death, Satan, and sin, by their own weapons, and that for thee and me (man), if we cast it not away by unbelief. Oh! wonderful love of God! who ever heard of such a love, the Father of heaven, for us his enemies, to give his own dear Son Jesus Christ, and that not only to be our brother, to dwell among us, but also to the death of the cross for us! Oh! wonderful love of Christ to us all! that was content and willing to work this feat for us. Was there any love like to this love?

God indeed hath commended his charity and love to us herein, that when we were very enemies unto him, he would give his own Son for us; that we, being men, might become, as you would say, gods, God would become man; that we, being mortal, might become immortal, the immortal God would become mortal man; that we, earthly wretches, might be citizens of heaven, the Lord of heaven would become, as a man would say, earthly; that we, being accursed, might be blessed, God would be accursed; that we, by our father Adam being brought out of paradise into the puddle of all pain, might be redeemed, and brought into paradise again, God would be our Father and an Adam thereunto; that we, having nothing, might have all things, God having all things, would have nothing; that we, being vassals and slaves to all, even to Satan the fiend, might be lords of all, and of Satan; the Lord of all would become a vassal and a slave to us all, and in danger

of Satan. Oh! love incomprehensible! who can otherwise think now, but if the gracious good Lord disdained not to give his 'own Son, his own heart's joy, for us his very enemies, before we thought to beg any such thing at his hands, yea, before we were, who, I say, can think otherwise, but that with him he will give us all good things? If when we hated him and fled away from him, he sent his Son to seek us, who can think otherwise than that now, we loving him and lamenting because we love him no more, but that he will for ever love us? He that giveth the more to his enemies, will not he give the less, trow you, to his friends? God hath given his own Son, than which nothing is greater, to us his enemies; and we now being become his friends, will he deny us faith and pardon of our sins, which, though they be great, yet in comparison they are nothing at all? Christ Jesus would give his own self for us when we willed it not, and will he now deny us faith, if we will it? This will is his earnest, that he hath given us truly to look indeed for the thing willed. And look thou for it indeed; for as he hath given thee to will, so will he give thee to do.

Jesus Christ gave his life for our evils, and by his death delivered us. Oh then, in that he liveth now, and cannot die, will he forsake us? His heart's blood was not too dear for us when we asked it not; what can then be now too dear for us asking it? is he a changeling? is he mutable as man is? can he repent him of his gifts? did he not foresee our falls? Paid not he therefore the price? Because he saw we should fall sore, therefore would he suffer sore; yea, if his suffering had not been enough, he would yet once more come again. God the Father, I am sure, if the death of his Son incarnate would not serve, would himself and the Holy Ghost also become incarnate, and die for us. This death of Christ there-

fore look on as the very pledge of God's love towards thee, whosoever thou art, how deep soever thou hast sinned. See God's hands are nailed, they cannot strike thee; his feet also, he cannot run from thee; his arms are wide open to embrace thee, his head hangs down to kiss thee, his very heart is open, so that therein see, toote, look, spy, peep, and thou shalt see nothing therein but love, love, love to thee; hide thee therefore, lay thy head there with the Evangelist.

This is the cleft of the rock where Elias stood. This is the pillow of down for all aching heads. Anoint thy head with this oil, let this ointment embalm thy head and wash thy face. Tarry thou here, and cock-sure thou art, I warrant thee. Say with Paul, *What can separate me from the love of God?* Can death, can poverty, sickness, hunger, or any misery persuade thee now that God loveth thee not? Nay, nothing can separate thee from the love wherewith God hath loved thee in Christ Jesus; whom he loveth he loveth to the end: so that now where abundance of sin hath been in thee, the more is the abundance of grace. But to what end? Forsooth, that as sin hath reigned to death, as thou seest, to the killing of God's Son, so now grace must reign to life, to the honouring of God's Son, who is now alive, and cannot die any more.

So that they which by faith feel this, cannot any more die to God, but to sin, whereunto they are dead and buried with Christ. As Christ therefore liveth, so do they, and that to God, to righteousness and holiness. The life which they live is in the faith of the Son of God; whereby you see that now I am slipt into that which I made the third part of penance, namely, newness of life, which I could not so have done if that it were a part of itself indeed, as it is an effect or fruit of the second part,

that is, of faith or trust in God's mercy : for he that believeth, that is, is certainly persuaded sin to be such a thing that it is the cause of all misery, and of itself so greatly angereth God, that in heaven nor in earth nothing could appease his wrath, save alone the death and precious bloodshedding of the Son of God, in whom is all the delight and pleasure of the Father ; he, I say, that is persuaded thus of sin, the same cannot but in heart abhor and quake to do or say, yea, to think any thing willingly which God's law teacheth him to be sin.

Again : he that believeth, that is, is certainly persuaded God's love to be so much towards him, that wherethrough sin he was lost, and made a firebrand of hell, the eternal Father of mercy, which is the omni-sufficient God, and needeth nothing to us, or of any thing that we can do to deliver us out of hell, and to bring us into heaven, did send even his own most dear Son out of his bosom, out of heaven into hell, as a man would say, to bring us, as I said, from thence into his own bosom and mercy, we being his very enemies ; he, I say, that is thus persuaded of God's love towards him, and of the price of his redemption, by the dear blood of the Lamb immaculate, Jesus Christ, the same man cannot but love God again, and of love do that, and heartily desire to do better, the which might please God. Trow you, that such a one knowing this gear by faith will willingly walter and wallow in his wilful lusts, pleasures, and fantasies ? Will such a one as knoweth by faith Christ Jesus to have given his blood to wash him from his sins, play the sow, to walter in his puddle of filthy sin and vice again ; nay, rather than he will be defiled again by wilful sinning, he will wash often the feet of his affections, watching over that vice still sticking in him, which as a spring continually sendeth out poison enough to

drown and defile him, if the sweet water of Christ's passion in God's sight did not wash it, and his blood satisfy the rigour of God's justice due for the same. This blood of Christ, shed for our sins, is so dear in the sight of him that believeth, that he will abhor in his heart to stamp it and tread it under his feet. He knoweth now by his belief that it is too much, that hitherto he hath set too little by it, and is ashamed thereof; therefore for the residue of his life he purposeth to take better heed to himself than before he did: because he seeth by his faith the grievousness of God's anger, the foulness of his sin, the greatness of God's mercy, and of Christ's love towards him, he will now be heedful to pray to God to give him his grace accordingly, that as with his eyes, tongue, hands, feet, &c. he hath displeased God, doing his own will; even so now with the same eyes, tongue, ears, hands, feet, &c. he may displease his own self, and do God's will; willingly will he not do that which might renew the death of the Son of God? He knoweth he hath too much sin unwillingly in him, so that thereto he will not add willing offences.

This willing and witting offending and sinning, whosoever doth flatter himself therein, doth evidently demonstrate and shew, that he never yet indeed tasted of Christ truly; he was never truly persuaded or believed how foul a thing sin is, how grievous a thing God's anger is, how joyful and precious a thing God's mercy in Christ is, how exceeding broad, wide, high, and deep Christ's love is. Perchance he can write, prate, talk, and preach of this gear; but yet he in part by faith never felt this gear. For if he did once feel this gear indeed, then would he be so far from continuing in sin willingly and wittingly, that wholly and heartily he would give over himself to that which is contrary; I mean, to

a new life, renewing his youth, even as the eagle doth.

For as we being in the servitude of sin, demonstrate our service by giving over our members to the obeying of sin, from iniquity to iniquity; even so we, being made free from sin by faith in Jesus Christ, and endued with God's Spirit, a spirit of liberty, must needs demonstrate this freedom and liberty, by giving over our members to the obedience of the Spirit; by the which we are led and guided from virtue to virtue, and all kinds of holiness. As the unbelievers declare their unbelief by the working of the evil spirit in them outwardly the fruits of the flesh, even so the believers declare their faith by the working of God's good spirit in them outwardly the fruits of the Spirit. For as the devil is not dead in those which are his, but worketh still to their damnation; so is not God dead in them which be his, but worketh still to their salvation; the which working is not the cause of the one or the other being in any, but only a demonstration, a sign, a fruit of the same, as the apple is not the cause of the apple-tree, but a fruit of it. (Matt. vii.)

Thus then you see briefly that newness of life is not indeed a part of penance, but a fruit of it, a demonstration of the justifying faith, a sign of God's good spirit possessing the heart of the penitent, as the old life is a fruit of impenitency, a demonstration of a lip-faith or unbelief, a sign of Satan's spirit possessing the heart of the impenitent, which all those be that be not penitent. For mean I know none. He that is not penitent, the same is impenitent; he that is not governed by God's spirit, the same is governed by Satan's spirit; for all that be Christ's are governed with the spirit of Christ, which spirit hath his fruits. All other that be not Christ's are

the devil's. He that gathereth not with Christ, scattereth abroad.

Therefore, dearly beloved, I beseech you to consider this gear, and deceive not yourselves; if you be not Christ's, then pertain you to the devil, of which thing the fruits of the flesh do assure you, as whoredom, adultery, uncleanness, wantonness, idolatry, witchcraft, envy, strife, contention, wrath, sedition, murder, drunkenness, gluttony, blasphemy, slothfulness, idleness, bawdy talking, slandering, &c. If these apples grow out of the apple-trees of your heart, surely, surely the devil is at inn with you; you are his birds, whom when he hath well fed, he will broach you and eat you, chew you and chump you, world without end, in eternal woe and misery. But I am otherwise persuaded of you all; I trust you be all Christ Jesus's people and children, yea, brethren by faith.

As ye see your sins in God's law, and tremble, sigh, sorrow, and sob for the same, even so you see his great mercies in his Gospel and free promises, and therefore are glad, merry, and joyful, for that you are accepted into God's favour, have your sins pardoned, and are endued with the good Spirit of God, even the seal and sign manual of your election in Christ before the beginning of the world; the which Spirit, for that he is the Spirit of life, given to you, to work in you, with you, and by you, here in this life, sanctification and holiness, whereunto you are called, that ye might be holy, even as your heavenly Father is holy. I beseech you all, by admonition and warning of you, that you would stir up the gift of God given to you, generally and particularly, to the edifying of his church, that is, I pray you that you would not molest the good Spirit of God, by rebelling against it when it provoketh and calleth you to go on forwards, that he which is

holy, might yet be more holy, he which is righteous, might be more righteous, as the evil spirit moveth and stirreth up the filthy to be yet more filthy, the covetous to be more covetous, the wicked to be more wicked.

Declare you now your repentance by works of repentance; bring forth fruits, and worthy fruits; let your sorrowing for your evils demonstrate itself by departing from the evils you have used; let your certainty of pardon of your sins through Christ, and your joy in him, be demonstrated by pursuing of the good things which God's word teacheth you. You are now in Christ Jesus God's workmanship, to do good works, which God hath prepared for you to walk in. For the grace of God, that bringeth salvation unto all men, hath appeared, and teacheth us that we should deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and that we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope and glorious appearing of the mighty God, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, which gave himself for us, to redeem us from all unrighteousness, and to purge us a peculiar people unto himself, fervently given unto good works. Again (Titus, iii.): for we ourselves also were in times past unwise, disobedient, deceived, serving lusts and divers pleasures, living in maliciousness and envy, full of hatred, and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour to manward appeared, not by the deeds of righteousness, which we wrought, but of his mercy, he saved us by the fountain of the new birth, and with the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, that we once justified by his grace should be heirs of eternal life through hope. This is a true saying; but I will make an end, for I am too tedious.

Dearly beloved, repent your sins, that is, be sorry for that which is past; believe in God's mercy for pardon, how deeply soever you have sinned, and both purpose and earnestly pursue a new life, bringing forth worthy and true fruits of repentance. As you have given over your members from sin to sin, to serve the devil, your tongues to swear, to lie, to flatter, to scold, to jest, to scoff, to bawdy talk, to vain jangling, to boasting, &c.; your hands to picking, groping, idleness, fighting, &c.; your feet to skipping, going to evil, to dancing, &c.; your ears to hear fables, lies, vanities, and evil things, &c. so now give over your members to godliness, your tongues to speak, your ears to hear, your eyes to see, your mouths to taste, your hands to work, your feet to go about such things as may make to God's glory, sobriety of life, and love to your brethren, and that daily more and more diligently; for in a stay to stand you cannot, either better or worse you are to-day than you were yesterday. But better I trust you be, and will be, if you mark well my theme, that is, *Repent you*; the which thing that you would do, as before I have humbly besought you, even so now yet once more I do again beseech you, and that for the tender mercies of God in Christ Jesus our Lord, *Repent you, repent you, for the kingdom of heaven* (that is, a kingdom full of all riches, pleasures, mirth, beauty, sweetness, and eternal felicity) *is at hand*. The eye hath not seen the like, the ear hath not heard the like, the heart of man cannot conceive the treasures and pleasures of his kingdom, which is now at hand, to such as repent, that is, to such as are sorry for their sins, believe God's mercy through Christ, and earnestly purpose to lead a new life. The God of mercy, through Christ his Son, grant us his holy Spirit, and work

in our hearts this sorrow, faith, and new life, which through his grace I have spoken of, both now and for ever. Amen.

Another Sermon, made also by the said Master JOHN BRADFORD, upon the Supper of the Lord.

THERE are two sacraments in Christ's church; the one of initiation, that is, wherewith we be enrolled, as it were, into the household and family of God, which sacrament we call baptism; the other wherewith we be conserved, fed, kept, and nourished, to continue in the same family, which is called the Lord's Supper, or the body and blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ, broken for our sins, and shed for our transgressions.

Of the former sacrament, that is, of baptism, to speak now I am not purposed, because occasion and time serve not so thereto; of the second therefore will I speak something by God's grace, if that first you remember this, that baptism in Christ's church, now since Christ's death, is come in place of circumcision, which was in the same church afore Christ's coming: whereby we may see that Christian parents seem to be no less bound to offer their infants and babes to be baptized, that they may be taken and accounted of us as members of Christ's mystical body, whereunto they are received and sealed, than were the Hebrews their children to be taken as pertaining to the covenant and league with God, wherein they were enrolled, alonely the circumstance of the eighth day, not necessary to be observed, being now abrogated. (Gal. iv.)

But to come again: of the Lord's supper I am purposed presently to speak, through the help of

God, because we are assembled in Christ (I hope) to celebrate the same. Now that the things which I shall speak may be better observed and carried away of you, I will tell you how and in what sort I will speak of it. Three things would I have marked, as the principles and scopes whereto I will refer all that I shall at this time speak thereof. They be these: Who, what, and wherefore; that is (to make it more plain), who did institute this thing which we are about to celebrate? This is the first. The second is, what the thing is which is instituted? And the last is, wherefore and to what end it was instituted, whereby we shall be taught how to use it.

For the first, who did institute this sacrament and supper? You all do know that things are more esteemed sometimes for the dignity and authority of the person, sometimes for the wisdom of the person, sometimes for the power and magnificence of the person, and sometimes for the tender love and kindness of the person.

If need were, I could by examples set forth every one of these; but I hope it is not necessary. Now then, how can the thing, which we be about to celebrate, but be esteemed of every one highly, in that the Author of it doth want no dignity, no authority, no wisdom, no power, no magnificence, no holiness, no tender love and kindness, but hath all dignity, authority, wisdom, power, magnificence, holiness, tender love, mercy, glory, and all that can be wished absolutely. He is God eternal, co-equal, and substantial with the Father, and with the Holy Ghost, the image of the substance of God, the wisdom of the Father, the brightness of his glory, by whom all things were made, are ruled, and governed; He is the King of all kings, and the Lord of all lords; He is the Messiah of the world, our most dear and loving brother, Saviour, mediator, advocate, inter-

cessor, husband, priest. So that the thing which cometh from him cannot but be esteemed, loved, and embraced, if dignity, authority, wisdom, power, glory, goodness, and mercy like us; yea, if any thing that can be wished like us, then cannot this which our Lord did institute, but like us, and that so much the more, by how much it is one of the last things which he did institute and command. God open our eyes to see these things accordingly, so shall we come with more reverence to this table of the Lord, which thing he grant for his mercy's sake. Amen. And thus much for the first who did institute this sacrament.

Now to the second, what the sacrament is. If we shall ask our eyes, our nose, our mouth, our taste, our hands, and the reason of man, they will all make a consonant answer, that it is bread and wine. And verily, herein they speak the truth and lie not, as by many things may be proved, although the Papists prate their pleasure to the contrary.

And here, my dearly beloved, I think I shall not be either tedious or unprofitable unto you, if that I tarry a little in shewing this verity, that the substance of bread and wine remains in the sacrament after the words of consecration (as they call them) be spoken: whereby we may learn how shameless beasts they be, which would enforce men to believe transubstantiation, which is an error whereupon in a manner dependeth all Popery. For it is the stay of their priesthood, which is neither after the order of Aaron, nor after the order of Melchisedeck, but after the order of Baal, which thing is something seen by their number. For the false prophets and priests of Baal were always many more in number, when the wicked were in authority, than the true priests and prophets of the Lord, as the holy histories of the Bible do teach. Read 1 Chron. xviii.

That in the Supper of the Lord, or in the sacrament of Christ's body, which the Papists call the sacrament of the altar, as though that were Christ's sacrament, which thing they can never prove; for it being perverted and used to a contrary end, as of sacrificing propitiatorily for the sins of the quick and of the dead, of idolatry, by adorning or worshipping it by godly honour, &c. is no more Christ's sacrament, but a horrible profanation of it; and therefore as Christ called God's temple, which was called a house of prayer, for the abusing and profaning of it by the priests, a den of thieves; so this which the Papists call the sacrament of the altar, full truly may we call an abominable idol; and therefore I would all men should know that the sacrament of the altar, as the Papists now do abuse it, omitting certain substantial points of the Lord's institution, and putting in the stead thereof their own dregs and dreams, is not the sacrament of Christ's body, nor the Lord's Supper, whereof, when we speak reverently, as our duty is, we would not that men should think we speak it of the popish mass: that, I say, in the Supper of the Lord, or in the sacrament of Christ's body, there remaineth the substance of bread and wine, as our senses and reason too teach, these many things also do teach the same.

First, the Holy Ghost doth plainly tell us, by calling it often bread, after the words of consecration, as 1 Cor. x. *Is not the bread which we break a partaking of the body of Christ?* saith Paul. Lo! plainly he saith, *the bread which we break*, not only calling it bread, but adding thereto breaking, which cannot be attributed either to Christ's body, whereof no bone was broken, either to any accident, but must needs be of a substance, which substance, if it be not Christ's body, cannot be but bread. As in the 11th chapter four times he plainly calleth it, *He that*

eateth of this bread, he that receiveth this bread, &c. And in the Acts of the Apostles we read how that (in speaking of the communion) *they met together to break bread, &c.* So that it is plain that the substance of bread and wine doth remain (in the Supper) after the words of consecration, as also may appear plainly by Christ's own words, which calleth that which he gave them in the cup wine, or the fruit of the vine, as both Matthew and Mark do write: whereby we see that there is no transubstantiation of the wine, and therefore may we also see, that there is no transubstantiation of the bread.

As for the Papists' cavilling, how that it hath the name of bread, because it was bread, as Simon the leper was called still leprous, though he was healed, or as Moses' rod, being turned into a serpent, was called a rod still (Matt. xxvi. Exod. vii.), it proveth nothing; for there was in the one a plain sight, and the senses certified, that Simon was no leper, and in the other plain mention that the rod was turned into a serpent. But concerning the sacrament, neither the senses see any other thing than bread, neither is there any mention made of turning; and therefore their cavil is plainly seen to be but a cavil, and of no force. But to come again to bring more reasons against transubstantiation.

Secondly, that the substance of bread remaineth still, the very text doth teach (Matt. xxvi. Mark, xiv. Luke, xxii. 1 Cor. ii.); for the Evangelist and the Apostle St. Paul do witness that Christ gave that to his disciples, and called it his body, which he took, on which he gave thanks, and which he brake; but he took bread, gave thanks on bread, and broke bread; *ergo*, he gave bread, and called bread his body, as he called the cup the New Testament; so that it followeth by this, that there is no transubstantiation. And this reason I myself have promised in

writing to prove by the authority of the fathers, namely, Irenæus, Tertullian, Origen, Cyprian, Epiphanius, Jerome, Augustine, Theodoret, Cyril, Bede, if so be I may have the use of my books.

Thirdly, that in the sacrament there is no transubstantiation of the bread, by this reason I do prove; likeas by our Saviour Christ the Spirit of truth spake of the bread, *This is my body*, so saith the same Spirit of truth of the same bread, that we many are one body and one bread, &c. (1 Cor. x.) So that as it appeareth the sacrament not to be the church by transubstantiation, even so is it not Christ's natural body by transubstantiation.

Fourthly, I prove that there is no transubstantiation, by Luke and Paul's words spoken over the cup. For no less are they effectual to transubstantiate the cup, than their words spoken of the bread are operatorious and mighty to transubstantiate the bread; for as they say of the bread, *This is my body*, so say they of the cup, *This cup is the New Testament*, which thing is absurd to be spoken or thought either of the cup, or of the thing in the cup, by transubstantiation; yea, rather in saying these words, *This cup is the New Testament*, we are taught by their coupling this word *cup* to the demonstrative *this*, how we should in these words, *This is my body*, know that this word *this* doth there demonstrate bread.

Fifthly, that the substance of bread remaineth in the sacrament, as the reasons before brought forth do prove, so doth the definition of a sacrament; for the fathers do affirm it to consist of an earthly thing and of an heavenly thing, of the word and of the element, of sensible things and of things which be perceived by the mind. But transubstantiation taketh clean away the earthly thing, the element, the sensible thing, and so maketh it no sacrament; and therefore the definition of a sacrament full well

teacheth, that bread, which is the earthly thing, the sensible thing, and the element, remaineth still, as St. Augustine saith. The word cometh to the element (he saith not, taketh away the element), and so it is made a sacrament.

Sixthly, the nature and property of a sacrament teacheth this also which I have affirmed. For as Cyprian writeth, that sacraments bear the names of the things which they signify, so doth St. Augustine teach, that if sacraments have not some signification with the things whereof they be sacraments, then are they no sacraments. Now in the Lord's supper this similitude is first in nourishing, that as bread nourisheth the body, so Christ's body broken feedeth the soul; secondly, in bringing together many into one, that as in the sacrament many grains of corn are made one bread, many grapes are made one liquor and wine, so the multitude, which worthily receive the sacrament, are made one body with Christ and his church. Last of all, in a still stronger likeness or similitude, that as bread eaten turneth into our nature, so we, rightly eating the sacrament by faith, turn into the nature of Christ; so that it is plain to them that will see, that to take the substance of bread away is clean against the nature and property of a sacrament.

I will speak nothing how that this their doctrine of transubstantiation, beside the manifold absurdities it hath in it (which to rehearse I omit), it utterly overthroweth the use of the sacrament, and is clean contrary to the end wherefore it was instituted, and so is no longer a sacrament, but an idol; and is the cause of much idolatry, converting the people's hearts from an heavenly conversation to an earthly, and turning the communion into a private action, and a matter of gazing and piping of, adoring and worshipping the work of men's hands for the living

God, which dwelleth not in temples made with men's hands, much less lieth he in pixes and chests, whose true worship is in spirit and verity, which God grant us all to render unto him continually. Amen.

The sacrament of baptism doth also teach us, that as the substance of the water remaineth there, so in the Lord's Supper remaineth the substance of bread after consecration. For as by baptism we are engrafted into Christ, so by the Supper we are fed with Christ. These two sacraments the Apostle gladly coupleth together, 1 Cor. x. and xii. *We are baptized into one body* (saith he), *and have drunk all of one spirit*, meaning it by the cup, as Chrysostom and other great and learned men do well interpret it. As therefore in baptism is given unto us the Holy Ghost, and pardon of our sins, which yet lie not lurking in the water, so in the Lord's Supper is given unto us the communion of Christ's body and blood, that is, grace, forgiveness of sins, innocency, life, immortality, without any transubstantiation, or including of the same in the bread. By baptism the old man is put off, and the new man put on; yea, Christ is put on, but without transubstantiating the water. (Gal. iii.) And even so it is in the Lord's Supper. We by faith spiritually in our souls do feed on Christ's body broken, do eat his flesh, and drink his blood, do dwell in him, and he in us, but without transubstantiation.

As for the cavil they make, that we are baptized into one body, meaning thereby the mystical body, and not the natural body of Christ, whereby they would enforce that we are fed with the natural body of Christ, but we are not engrafted into it, but into the mystical body, and so put away the reason aforesaid; as for this cavil, I say, we may soon avoid it, if so be that we will consider how that Christ, which is the head of the mystical body, is

not separate from the body; and therefore to be engrafted to the mystical body, is to be engrafted into the natural body of Christ, to be a member of his flesh, and bone of his bones, as Pope Leo full well doth witness, in saying, that *the body of the regenerate is made the flesh of Christ crucified*. And hereto I could add some reasons for the excellency of baptism. I trow it be more to be begotten than to be nourished. As for the excellent miracle of the paterfaction of the Trinity, and the descending of the Holy Ghost in baptism in a visible form, the like whereto was not seen in the Lord's Supper, I will omit to speak of further than that I would you should know how it were no mastery to set forth the excellency of this sacrament, as well as of the Supper.

It is a plain sign of antichrist, to deny the substance of bread and wine to be in the Lord's Supper after consecration; for in so doing and granting transubstantiation, the property of the human nature of Christ is denied; for it is not of the human nature, but of the divine nature, to be in many places at once. Now grant transubstantiation, and then Christ's natural body must needs be in many places, which is nothing else but to confound the two natures in Christ, or to deny Christ's human nature, which is the self-same that St. John saith, to deny Christ to be come in the flesh. And this whoso doth, by the testimony of St. John is an antichrist in his so doing, whatsoever otherwise he do prate. Read St. Augustine in his Epistle to Dardanus, and his 31st treatise upon St. John, and easily you shall see how that Christ's body must needs be in one place, but his truth is in all places.

If there be no substance of bread in the sacrament but transubstantiation, then Christ's body is received

of the ungodly, and eaten with their teeth, which is not only against St. Augustine calling this speech, *except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, &c.* a figurative speech; but also against the plain Scriptures, which affirm them to dwell in Christ and Christ in them, and they to have everlasting life that eat him, which the wicked have not, although they eat the sacrament. He that *eateth of this bread* (saith Christ) shall live for evermore: therefore they eat not Christ's body, but (as Paul saith) they eat in judgment and damnation, which I trow be another matter of thing than Christ's body. And this doth St. Augustine affirm, saying, none do eat Christ's body which is not in the body of Christ, that is (as he expoundeth it), in whom Christ dwelleth not, and he in Christ; which thing the wicked do not, because they want faith and the holy Spirit, which be the means whereby Christ is received.

To the things which I have brought hereforth to impugn transubstantiation, I could bring in the fathers to confirm the same, which succeeded continually many hundred years after Christ. Also I could shew that transubstantiation is but a new doctrine, not established before Satan (which was tied for a thousand years) was let loose: also I could shew that ever hitherto since it was established, in all times it hath been resisted and spoken against; yea, before this doctrine, the church was nothing so endowed with goods, lands, and possessions, as it hath been ever since. It hath brought no small gain, no small honour, no small ease to the clergy, and therefore no marvel, though they strive and fight for it. It is their *Maozim*, it is their *Helena*. God destroy it with the breath of his mouth, as shortly he will for his name's sake. Amen.

If time would serve, I could and would here tell you of the absurdities which come by this doctrine,

but for time's sake I must omit it. Only for God's sake see this, that this their doctrine of transubstantiation is an untruth, already I have proved; and forget not that it is the whole stay of all Popery, and the pillar of their priesthood, whereby Christ's priesthood, sacrifice, ministry, and truth is letted, yea, perverted and utterly overthrown. God our Father, in the blood of his Son Christ, open the eyes and minds of all our magistrates, and all other that bear the name of Christ, to see it in time to God's glory and their own salvation. Amen.

Now to return to the second matter, what the sacrament is, you see that to the senses and reason of man it is bread and wine, which is most true, as by the Scriptures and otherwise I have already proved, and therefore away with transubstantiation.

But here, lest we should make it no sacrament, for a sacrament consisteth of two things, and lest a man should by this gather, that we make it none other thing but bare bread and a naked sign, and so rail at their pleasure on us, saying, How can a man be guilty of the body and blood of Christ by unworthy receiving of it, if it be but bare bread and so forth? For this purpose I will now speak a little more hereabout by God's grace to stop their mouths, and to stir up your good hearts more to the worthy estimation and perception of this holy mystery. When a loving friend giveth to thee a thing, or sendeth to thee a token (as for example, a napkin or such-like), I think thou doest not as thou shouldest do, if that with the thing thou considerest not the mind of thy friend that sendeth or giveth the thing, and according thereunto esteemest and receivest it. And so of this bread, think I, that if thou do not rather consider the mind of thy lover Christ than the thing which thou seest; yea, if thou do not altogether consider Christ's mind, thou dealest dishonestly and strumpet-like with him.

For it is the property of strumpets to consider the things given and sent them, rather than the love and mind of the giver and sender; whereas, the true lovers do not consider in any point the things given or sent, but the mind of the party: so we, if we be true lovers of Christ, must not consider barely the outward thing which we see, and our senses perceive, but rather altogether we must and should see and consider the mind of Christ, and thereafter and according to it to esteem the sacrament.

But how shall we know the mind of Christ? Forsooth, as a man's mind is best known by his word, so by Christ's word shall we know his mind. Now his words be manifest and most plain. *This* (saith he) *is my body*, therefore accordingly should we esteem, take, and receive it. If he had spoken nothing, or if he had spoken doubtfully, then might we have been in some doubt. But in that he speaketh so plainly, saying, *This is my body*, who can, may, or dare be so bold as to doubt of it? He is the truth, and cannot lie; he is omnipotent, and can do all things, therefore it is his body. This I believe, this I confess, and pray you all heartily to beware of these and such-like words, that it is but a sign or a figure of his body; except you will discern betwixt signs which signify only, and signs which also do represent, confirm, and seal up, or (as a man may say) give with their signification. As for an example: an ivy-bush is a sign of wine to be sold; the budding of Aaron's rod did signify Aaron's priesthood allowed of the Lord; the reservation of Moses' rod did signify the rebellion of the children of Israel; the stones taken out of Jordan, Gideon's fleece of wool, &c. such as these be signs significative, and shew no gift. But in the other signs, which some call exhibitivè, is there not only a signification of the thing, but also a declaration of a

gift, yea, in a certain manner a giving also? As baptism signifieth not only the cleansing of the conscience from sin by the merits of Christ's blood, but also is a very cleansing from sin; and therefore it was said to Paul, that he should arise, and wash away his sins, and not that he should arise, and take only a sign of washing away his sins. In the Lord's Supper the bread is called a partaking of the Lord's body, and not only a bare sign of the Lord's body.

This I speak not as though the elements of these sacraments were transubstantiate, which I have already impugned, either as though Christ's body were in the bread or wine, either were tied to the elements, otherwise than sacramentally and spiritually, either that the bread and wine may not and must not be called sacramental and external figures, but that they might be discerned from significative and bare signs only, and be taken for signs exhibitivè and representative.

By this means a Christian conscience will call and esteem the bread of the Lord as the body of Christ; for it will never esteem the sacraments of Christ after their exterior appearance, but after the words of Christ, whereof it cometh that the fathers, as Chrysostom and others do speak with so full a mouth, when they speak of the sacrament, for their respect was to Christ's words. If the schoolmen which followed them had had the same spirit which they had, then would they never have consented to transubstantiation. For with great admiration some of the fathers do say that the bread is changed, or turned into the body of Christ, and the wine into his blood, meaning it of amputation or change, not corporal, but spiritual, figurative, sacramental, or mystical. For now it is no common bread nor common wine, being ordained to serve for the food of the soul. The schoolmen have understood it as

the Papists now preach, of a substantial changing, as though it were no great miracle that common bread should now be assumed into that dignity, that it should be called Christ's body, and serve for a celestial food, and be made a sacrament of his body and blood.

As before therefore I have spoken, I would wish that this sacrament should be esteemed and called of us Christian men, after Christ's words, namely, Christ's body, and the wine Christ's blood, rather than otherwise. Not that I mean any other presence of Christ's body than a presence of grace, a presence to faith, a presence spiritually, and not corporally, really, naturally, and carnally, as the Papists do mean. For in such sort Christ's body is only in heaven, on the right hand of God, the Father Almighty, whither our faith in the use of the sacrament ascendeth and receiveth whole Christ accordingly.

Yea, but one will say, that to call the sacrament on that sort is to give an occasion of idolatry to the people, which will take the sacrament which they see, simply for Christ's body, as by experience we are well taught; and therefore it were better to call it bread, and so less harm should be, especially in this age.

To this objection I answer, that indeed great idolatry is committed to and about this sacrament, and therefore men ought, as much as they can, to avoid from occasioning or confirming it. But inasmuch as the Holy Ghost is wiser than man, and had foresight of the evils that might be, and yet notwithstanding doth call it Christ's body, I think we should do evil, if we should take upon us to reform his speech. If ministers did their duties in catechizing and preaching, then doubtless to call the sacrament Christ's body, and to esteem it accordingly, could not give

occasion to idolatry, and confirm it; therefore woe unto them that preach not.

There be two evils about the sacraments, which to avoid, the Holy Ghost hath taught us; for lest we should with the Papists think Christ's body present in or with the bread really, naturally and corporally to be received with our bodily mouths (where there is no other presence of Christ's body than spiritual and to the faith), in many places he keepeth still the name of bread, as in the Epistle to the Corinthians, the tenth and eleventh chapters. And lest we should make too light of it, making it but a bare sign, and no better than common bread, the Holy Ghost calleth it Christ's body, whose speech I wish we would follow, and that not only as well to avoid the evil which is now-a-days most to be feared concerning the sacrament, I mean of contemning it, as also for that no faithful man cometh to the sacrament to receive bread simply, but rather, yea, altogether to communicate with Christ's body and blood; for else to eat and drink (as Paul saith), they have houses of their own. The contempt of the sacrament in the days of King Edward hath caused these plagues upon us presently, the Lord be merciful unto us. Amen. And thus much for the objection of calling the sacrament by the name of Christ's body.

Why (saith one) to call the sacrament Christ's body, and to make none other presence than by grace or spiritually to faith, which is of things hoped for, and of things which to the bodily senses do not appear, is to make no presence at all, or to make him none otherwise present, than he is in his word when it is preached, and therefore what need we to receive the sacrament; inasmuch as by this doctrine a man may receive him daily in the field, as well and as much as in the church, in the celebration and use of the sacrament?

To this objection I first answer, that indeed neither the Scripture nor Christian faith will give us leave to make any carnal, real, natural, corporal, or any such gross presence of Christ's natural body in the sacrament; for it is in heaven, and the heavens must have it (as saith Peter), till Christ's coming to judgment; except we would deny the humanity of Christ, and the verity of man's nature in him. The presence therefore which we believe and confess, is such a presence as reason knoweth not, and the world cannot learn, nor any that looketh in this matter with other eyes, or heareth with other ears, than with the ears and eyes of the Spirit and of faith; which faith, though it be of things hoped for, and so of things absent to the corporal senses, yet this absence is not an absence indeed, but to reason and the old man; the nature of faith being a possession of things hoped for; therefore to grant a presence to faith, is not to make no presence at all, but to such as know not faith. And this the fathers taught, affirming Christ to be present by grace, and therefore not only a signification, but also an exhibition and giving of the grace of Christ's body, that is, of life and of the seed of immortality, as Cyprian writeth. We eat life, and drink life, saith St. Augustine; we feel a presence of the Lord by grace or in grace, saith Chrysostom; we receive the celestial food that cometh from above, saith Athanasius; we receive the property of the natural conjunction and knitting together, saith Hilarius; we perceive the nature of flesh, the blessing that giveth life, in bread and wine, saith Cyrillus: and elsewhere he saith, that with the bread and wine we eat the virtue of Christ's proper flesh, life, grace, and the property of the body of the only begotten Son of God, which thing he himself expoundeth to be life. Basilus saith, that we by the sacrament receive the mystical advent of

Christ, grace, and the very virtue of his very nature. Ambrose saith, that we receive the sacrament of the true body. Epiphanius saith, we receive the body of grace; and Jerome saith, that we receive spiritual flesh, which he calleth other flesh than that which was crucified. Chrysostom saith, that we receive influence of grace, and the grace of the Holy Ghost. St. Augustine saith, that we receive grace and verity, the invisible grace and holiness of the members of Christ's body. All the which sayings of the fathers do confirm this our faith and doctrine of the sacrament, we granting in all things herein unto them, and they in like manner unto us. And therefore the lying lips, which both belie the doctors, as though they granted a carnal and real presence of Christ's body naturally and corporally after the Papists' declaration and meaning, and which belie us also, as though we denied all presence of Christ, and so made it but a bare sign: these lying lips the Lord will destroy, if they repent not, and with us believe and teach the truth, that the sacrament is a food of the soul and matter of faith, and therefore spiritually and by faith to be talked of and understood; which faith they want, and therefore they err so grossly, in that they would have such a presence of Christ as is contrary to all the Scriptures, and to our Christian religion; whereby cometh no such commodity to the receiver as by the spiritual presence which we teach, and according to God's word do affirm.

For we teach these benefits to be had by the worthy receiving of this sacrament, namely, that we abide in Christ, and Christ in us: again, that we attain by it a celestial life, or a life with God; moreover, that by faith and in spirit we receive not only Christ's body and blood, but also whole Christ, God and man. Besides these, we grant that by the worthy

receiving of this sacrament we receive remission of our sins, and confirmation of the New Testament. Last of all, by worthy receiving we get an increase of incorporation with Christ, and amongst ourselves which be his members, than which things what more can be desired? Alas! that men consider nothing at all how that the coming of Christ's body and blood to the sacrament is a spiritual thing, and therefore there needs no such carnal presence as the Papists imagine. Who will deny a man's wife to be with her husband one body and flesh, although he be at London, and she at York? But the Papists are carnal men, guided by carnal reason only, or else would they know how that the Holy Ghost, because of our infirmity, useth metaphorically the words of abiding, dwelling, eating, and drinking of Christ, that the unspeakable conjunction of Christ with us might something be known. God open their eyes to see it: and thus much for this.

Now to that part of the objection which saith, that we teach Christ to be none otherwise present in the sacrament than in his word. I would that the objectors would well consider what a presence of Christ is in his word. I remember that St. Augustine writeth how that Christ's body is received sometimes visibly, and sometimes invisibly. The visible receipt he calleth that which is by the sacrament; the invisible receipt he calleth that which by the exercise of our faith with ourselves we receive. And St. Jerome, in the third book upon Ecclesiastes, affirmeth, that we are fed with the body of Christ, and we drink his blood, not only in mystery, but also in knowledge of holy Scripture; wherein he plainly sheweth that the same meat is offered in the words of the Scriptures, which is offered in the sacraments; so that no less is Christ's body and blood offered by the Scriptures, than by the sacraments. Upon the

147th Psalm he writeth also, that though these words, *He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood*, may be understood in mystery, yet he saith it is more true to take Christ's body and his blood for the word of the Scriptures and the doctrine of God; yea, upon the same Psalm he saith plainly, that Christ's flesh and blood is poured into our ears by hearing the word, and therefore great is the peril if we yield to other cogitations while we hear it. And therefore I trow, St. Augustine saith, that it is no less peril to hear God's word negligently, than so to use the sacrament. But hereof may no man gather, that therefore it needeth not to receive the sacrament, or to affirm that a man may as much by himself meditating the word in the field receive Christ's body as in the church, in the right use of the sacrament. For Christ ordaineth nothing in vain or superfluously; he ordaineth nothing whereof we have not need, although his authority is such, that without any questioning, his ordinances are to be observed.

Again, though in the fields a man may receive Christ's body by faith in the meditation of the word, yet deny I, that a man doth ordinarily receive Christ's body by the only meditation of Christ's death, or hearing of his word, with so much sight and by such sensible assurance (whereof God knoweth our infirmity hath no small need), as by the receipt of the sacrament; not that Christ is not so much present in his word preached as he is in or with his sacrament, but because there are in the perception of the sacrament more windows open for Christ to enter into us, than by his word preached or heard; for there, I mean in the word, he hath an entrance into our hearts, but only by the ears through the sound and voice of the words; but here in the sacrament he hath an entrance by all our senses, by our eyes, by our nose, by our taste, and by our handling also;

and therefore the sacrament full well may be called seeable, sensible, tasteable, and touchable words. As therefore when many windows be opened in a house, the more light may come in than when there is but one opened, even so by the perception of the sacrament a Christian man's conscience hath more help to receive Christ, than simply by the word preached, heard, or meditated. And therefore methinketh the Apostle full well calleth the sacraments obsignations or sealings of God's promise. Read Rom. iv. of circumcision. And thus much for the answer to the objection aforesaid.

Now to return from whence we came, namely, to the consideration of the second thing, what the sacrament is; I have told you that it is not simply bread and wine, but rather Christ's body, so called of Christ, and so to be called and esteemed of us. But here let us mark what body and what blood Christ called it. The Papists still dabble, *This is my body, this is my blood*; but what body it is, what blood it is, they shew not. Look therefore, my dearly beloved, on Christ's own words, and you shall see that Christ calleth it *his body broken*, and *his blood shed*. Mark, I say, that Christ calleth it his body, which is broken, his blood, which is shed presently, and not which was broken, or shall be broken, which was shed, or shall be shed, as the Greek texts do plainly shew, thereby teaching us, that as God would have the passover called, not which was the passover, or which shall be the passover, but plainly the passover, to the end that in the use of it the passing over of the striking angel should be set before their eyes as present: so in the celebration of the Lord's Supper, the very passion of Christ should be as present behelded with the eyes of faith; for which end Christ our Saviour did especially institute this Supper, saying, *Do ye this in re-*

membrance of me; or, as Paul saith, *Shew you the Lord's death till he come.* The Supper of the Lord then is not simply Christ's body and blood, but Christ's body broken and his blood shed. Wherefore broken, wherefore shed? Forsooth, that teacheth Christ himself, saying, *Broken for you, shed for your sins, and for the sins of many.* Here now then we have occasion in the use of the sacrament to call to mind the greatness and grievousness of sin, which could not be taken away by any other means than by the shedding of the most precious blood, and breaking of the most pure body of the only begotten Son of God, Jesus Christ, by whom all things were made, all things are ruled and governed, &c. Who, considering this gear, shall not be touched to repent, who in receipt of this sacrament, thinking that Christ saith to him, *Take, eat, this is my body, which is broken for thee; this is my blood, which is shed for thy sins;* can but tremble at the grievousness of his sins, for the which such a price was paid? If there were no plague at all else to admonish man of sin, how grievous a thing it is in God's sight, surely that one were enough. But, alas! how are our hearts bewitched through Satan's subtilties, and the custom of sin, that we make sin a thing of nothing? God open our eyes in time, and give us repentance, which we see this sacrament doth, as it were, enforce us unto in the reverence and true use of the same.

Again, in hearing that this which we take and eat is Christ's body broken for our sins, and his blood shed for our iniquities, we are occasioned to call to mind the infinite greatness of God's mercy and truth, and of Christ's love towards us; for what a mercy is this, that God would for man, being lost through his wilful sins, be content, yea, desirous to give his own only Son, *the image of his substance, the brightness of his glory,* being in his own bosom, to be made

man for us, that we men by him might be, as it were, made gods! What a mercy is this, that God the Father should so tender us, that he would make this his Son, being coequal with him in divinity, a mortal man for us, that we might be made immortal by him! What a kindness is this, that the Almighty Lord should send to us his enemies, his dear darling, to be made poor, that we by him might be made rich! What bowels of compassion was this, that the omnipotent Creator of heaven and earth would deliver his own only beloved Son for his creatures, to be not only flesh of our flesh, and bone of our bones, that we might by him through the Holy Ghost be made one with him, and so with the Father by communicating the merits of his flesh, that is, righteousness, holiness, innocency, and immortality, but also to be a slain sacrifice for our sins, to satisfy his justice, to convert or turn death into life, our sin into righteousness, hell into heaven, misery into felicity for us. What a mercy is this, that God will raise up this his Son Christ, not only to justify and regenerate us, but also in his person to demonstrate unto us our state which we shall have; for in his coming we shall be like unto him. Oh! wonderful mercy of God, which would assume this his Christ, even in human body, into the heavens, to take and keep there possession for us, to lead our captivity captive, to appear before him, always praying for us, to make the throne of justice a throne of mercy, the seat of glory a seat of grace, so that with boldness we may come and appear before God, to ask and find grace in time convenient. Again, what a verity and constant truth in God is this, that he would, according to his promise made first to Adam, and so to Abraham and others, in his time accomplish it, by sending his Son so graciously! Who would doubt hereafter of any thing that he hath pro-

mised? And as for Christ's love, oh! whose heart can be able to think of it any thing as it deserveth? He being God would become man, he being rich would become poor, he being Lord of all the world, became a servant to us all; he being immortal, would become mortal, miserable, and, last of all, God's curses, yea, even of hell itself, for us. His blood was nothing too dear, his life he nothing considered, to bring us from death to life. But this his love needeth more hearty weighing than many words speaking, and therefore I omit and leave it to your consideration; so that in the receiving of this Supper, as I would you would tremble at God's wrath for sin; so would I have you to couple to that terror and fear, true faith, by which ye might be assuredly persuaded of God's mercy towards you, and Christ's love, though all things else preached the contrary.

Do every of you surely think when you hear these words, Take, eat, this is my body, broken for your sins; drink, this is my blood, shed for your sins; that God the eternal Father, embracing you, Christ calleth and clippeth you most lovingly, making himself one with you, and you one with him, and one with another amongst yourselves? You ought no less to be certain now that God loveth you, pardoneth your sins, and that Christ is all yours, than if you did hear an angel out of heaven speaking so unto you. And therefore rejoice and be glad, and make this Supper *eucharistiam*, a thanksgiving, as the fathers named it. Be no less certain that Christ and you now are all one, than you are certain the bread and wine is one with your nature and substance after you have eaten and drunken it. Howbeit, in this it differeth, that you by faith are, as it were, changed into Christ, and not Christ into you, as the bread is; for by faith he dwelleth in us, and we in him. God give us faith in the use of this sacrament

to receive Christ, as he giveth us hands to receive the element, symbol, and visible sacrament. God grant us not to prepare our teeth and belly (as St. Augustine saith), but rather of his mercy he prepare, and give us true and lively faith to use this, and all other his ordinances, to his glory and our comforts. He sweep the houses of our hearts, and make them clean, that they may be a worthy harborough and lodging for the Lord. Amen.

Now let us come and look on the third and last thing, namely, wherefore the Lord did institute this sacrament. Our nature is very oblivious of God and of all his benefits: and again, it is very full of dubitation and doubting of God's love, and of his kindness; therefore to the end these two things might be something reformed and holpen in us, the Lord hath instituted this sacrament; I mean, that we might have in memory the principal benefit of all benefits, that is, Christ's death, and that we might be on all parts assured of communion with Christ, of all kindness the greatest that ever God did give unto man. The former to be the end wherefore Christ did institute this sacrament, he himself doth teach us, saying, *Do ye this in remembrance of me.* The latter the Apostle doth no less set forth in saying, *The bread which we break, is it not the partaking or communion of the body of Christ? Is not the cup of blessing which we bless, the partaking or communion of the blood of Christ?* So that it appeareth the end wherefore this sacrament was instituted, was and is for the reformation and help of our oblivion of that which we should never forget, and our dubitation of that whereof we ought to be most certain.

Concerning the former, namely, of the memory of Christ's death, what commodity it bringeth with it, I will purposely, for time's sake, omit. Only a little will I speak of the commodities coming unto us

by the partaking and communion we have with Christ: first, it teacheth us, that no man can communicate with Christ, but the same must needs communicate with God's grace and favour, wherethrough sins are forgiven; therefore this commodity cometh herethrough, namely, that we should be certain of the remission and pardon of our sins; the which thing we may also perceive by the cup, in that it is called the cup of the New Testament, to which Testament is properly attributed on God's behalf, oblivion or remission of our sins; first, I say, therefore the Supper is instituted to this end, that he which worthily receiveth, should be certain of the remission and pardon of his sins and iniquities, how many and great soever they be. How great a benefit this is, only they know which have felt the burden of sin, which of all heavy things is the most heavy. Again, no man can communicate with Christ's body and blood, but the same must communicate with his Spirit, for Christ's body is no dead carcase. Now he that communicateth with Christ's Spirit, communicateth as with holiness, righteousness, innocency, and immortality, and with all the merits of Christ's body; so doth he with God and all his glory, and with the church, and all the good that ever it or any member of it had, hath, or shall have. This is the communion of saints, which we believe in our creed, which hath waiting on it remission of sins, resurrection of the flesh, and life everlasting.

To the end that we should be most assured and certain of all these, Christ our Saviour did institute this his Supper, and therefore would have us to use it; so that there is no man I trow which seeth not great cause of giving thanks to God for this holy sacrament of the Lord, whereby, if we worthily receive it, we ought to be certain that all our sins, whatsoever they be, are pardoned clearly; that

we are regenerate, and born again into a lively hope, into an inheritance immortal, undefiled, and which can never wither away; that we are in the fellowship of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; that we are God's temples, at one with God, and God at one with us; that we are members of Christ's church, and fellows with the saints in all felicity; that we are certain of immortality in soul and body, and so of eternal life, than which thing what can be more demanded? Christ is ours, and we are Christ's; he dwelleth in us, and we in him. Oh! happy eyes, that see these things, and most happy hearts, that feel them. My dear brethren, let us pray unto the Lord to open our eyes to see these wonderful things, to give us faith to feel them. Surely we ought no less to be assured of them now in the worthy receiving of this sacrament, than we are assured of the exterior symbols and sacraments. If an angel from heaven should come and tell you these things, then would you rejoice and be glad. And, my dear hearts in the Lord, I even now, though most unworthy, am sent of the Lord to tell you no less, but that you, worthily receiving this sacrament, shall receive remission of all your sins, or rather, certainty that they are remitted, and that you are even now God's darlings, temples, and fellow-inheritors of all the good that ever he hath; wherefore see that you give thanks unto the Lord for this his great goodness, and praise his name for ever.

Oh, saith one, I could be glad in very deed, and give thanks from my very heart, if that I did worthily receive this sacrament. But, alas! I am a very grievous sinner, and I feel in myself very little repentance and faith, and therefore I am afraid that I am unworthy.

To the answering of this objection, I think it ne-

cessary to speak something of the worthy receiving in this sacrament, in as great brevity and plainness as I can. The Apostle willeth all men to prove and examine themselves before they eat of the bread, and drink of the cup, for they that eat and drink unworthily, eat and drink damnation; therefore this probation and examination is necessary. If men will try their gold and silver whether they be copper or no, is it not more necessary that men should try their consciences? Now how this should be, the Papists teach amiss, in sending us to their auricular confession, which is impossible. The true probation and trial of a Christian conscience consisteth altogether in faith and repentance. Faith hath respect to the doctrine and articles of our belief; repentance hath respect to manners and conversation; concerning the former, I mean faith, we may see the Apostle teacheth us (2 Cor. ii.); concerning the latter for our conversation, those sins, which are called commonly mortal or deadly, are to be removed. These sins are discerned from other sins by the Apostle (Rom. vi.), in saying, *Let not sin reign and bear a swing in your mortal bodies.* For truly then we sin deadly when we give over to sin, and let it have the bridle at his liberty, when we strive not against it, but allow it and consent to it. Howbeit, if we strive against it, if it displease us, then truly, though sin be in us (for we ought to obey God without all resistance or unwillingness), yet our sins be not of those sins, which separate us from God, but for Christ's sake shall not be imputed unto us believing.

Therefore, my dearly beloved, if that your sins do now displease you; if you purpose unfeignedly to be enemies to sin in yourselves and in others, as you may during your whole life if you hope in Christ for pardon; if you believe according to the holy Scriptures and articles of the Christian faith set forth in

your creed ; if, I say, you now trust in God's mercy through Christ's merits ; if you repent and earnestly purpose before God to amend your life, and to give over yourselves to serve the Lord in holiness and righteousness all the days of your life, although before this present you have most grievously sinned ; I publish unto you, that you are worthy guests for this table, you shall be welcome to Christ, your sins shall be pardoned, you shall be endued with his Spirit, and so with communion with him and with the Father, and the whole church of God, Christ will dwell in you, and you shall dwell in him for evermore. Wherefore, behave yourselves accordingly with joyfulness and thanksgiving. Do you now appear before the Lord, make clean your houses, and open the doors of your hearts by repentance and faith, that the Lord of hosts, the King of glory, may enter in ; and for ever hereafter beware of all such things as might displease the eyes of his Majesty. Flee from sin as from a toad ; come away from Popery and all anti-christian religion ; be diligent and earnest in prayer ; hearken to the voice of God in his word with reverence ; live worthy your profession ; let your light in your life so shine, that men may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. As you have been darkness, so now henceforth be light in the Lord, and have society with the works of light. Now hath God renewed his covenant with you, in God's sight now are you as clean and healed from all your sores of sins. Go your ways, sin no more, lest a worse thing happen unto you. See that your house be new swept, and furnished with godliness and virtue, and beware of idleness, lest the devil come with seven spirits worse than himself, and so take his lodging, and then your latter end will be worse than the first.

God our Father, for the tender mercy and merits

of his Son, be merciful unto us, forgive us all our sins, and give us his holy Spirit, to purge, cleanse, and sanctify us, that we may be holy in his sight through Christ, and that we now may be made ready and worthy to receive this holy sacrament, with the fruits of the same, to the full rejoicing and strengthening of our hearts in the Lord. To whom be all honour and glory, world without end. Amen.

CERTAIN PAPERS

OF

JOHN BRADFORD,

FROM

BISHOP COVERDALE'S LETTERS OF THE MARTYRS,
AND JOHN FOX'S MANUSCRIPTS.

To Mrs. J. H. a faithful Woman, and fearing God, whom he exhorteth to be patient under the Cross, and not fear Death.

MY dearly beloved, I beseech our merciful Father to comfort your heavy and pensive heart, with his own consolations in Christ; as I am assured he will in his good time, which with patience look for, good sister, after the example of Job, Elias, Abraham, and all the dear saints of God, which are set forth unto us for patterns of patience. God grant us well to cut our cloth after them; for God is the same God now, and the end will shew that he is a merciful Lord, and full of compassion. My dear sister, you shall unfeignedly feel it at the length, though presently it seemeth otherwise unto your sense; you shall, after you be a little exercised herein, find a quiet fruit of righteousness (Heb. xii.), the God of grace, which hath called you unto his eternal glory, confirming and strengthening you, being some deal afflicted with your brethren and sisters that be in the world; for alone you suffer not, as I trust you know. It comforteth me to read in your letters, that no displeasure of father, mother, husband, children, &c. doth move you to be ruled after the counsel of the world; and therefore you will me not to be afraid for you. Oh! my beloved, what thanks should I give to our God and dear Father, for this his exceeding kindness towards you! His name be magnified for you for ever, his mercy be more and more multiplied unto you, in you, and upon you, for ever and ever. Amen. God make me thankful herefor; but you add, that the fear of death doth now and then move you a little. Howbeit, you say, that as I have counselled you, you will strive thereagainst. My good Joyce, I take you at your word;

keep promise, I pray you, that is, strive against it; and I promise you, in the name of the Lord, that you shall have the victory, which I would wish you to set before your eyes also, and so shall the terror of death trouble you the less. Soldiers going to war set not before their eyes simply the stripe, but rather the victory; and, my good sister, will not you herein follow them? In your travail with child, doth not the hope of the babe to be delivered mitigate the malady? Doth not the sick, in taking bitter and loathsome physic, set before him the commodity which will ensue? And, my dear sister, will not you by these be something informed? Consider what this life is, consider what death is, consider what is prepared for you after death. Concerning this life, you know that it is full of misery, vanity, and woe; it is a plain exile, and hath nothing in it permanent; it is therefore compared to a vapour, to a smoke, to a shadow, yea, to a warfare, a wilderness, a vale of wretchedness, wherein we are compassed on every side with most fierce and fearful enemies; and should we desire to dwell here? Should we lust to live in this loathsome and laborious life? should we wish to tarry in this wretchedness? should we have pleasure to remain in this perilous state? Daniel's den is not so dreadful as is this dungeon we dwell in.

Concerning death to them that be (as I know you are) God's dear children, my tenderly beloved sister, what other thing is it, than the dispatcher of all displeasure, the end of all travail, the door of desires, the gate of gladness, the port of paradise, the haven of heaven, the rail of rest and quietness, the entrance to felicity, the beginning of all blissfulness? It is the very bed of down (and therefore well compared to a sleep), for the doleful bodies of God's people to rest in, out of the which they shall rise and awake most fresh and lusty to life everlasting. It is

a passage to the Father, a chariot to heaven, the Lord's messenger, a leader unto Christ, a going to our home, a deliverance from bondage and prison, a dismissal from war, a security from all sorrows, and a manumission from all misery. So that the very heathen did in some places cause the day of their death to be celebrated with melody and minstrels; and should we be dismayed at it? should we be afraid of it? should we tremble to hear of it? should such a friend as it is be unwelcome? should the foulness of his face fear us from his good conditions? should the hardness of his husk hinder us from his sweet kernel? should the roughness of the tide tie us to the bank and shore, there to be drowned, rather than the desire of our home drive us to go aboard? should the hardness of the saddle set us on our feet to perish by the way, rather than to leap up and endure the same a little, and so to be where we would be?

Concerning that which is prepared for you after death, if I should go about to express it, the more I should so do, the further I should be from it; for the eye hath not seen, neither the ear hath heard, nor the heart of man is able to conceive in any point the joy, mirth, melody, pleasure, power, wealth, riches, honour, beauty, fellowship, dainties, odours, glory, wisdom, knowledge, treasures, security, peace, quietness, and eternal felicity, which you shall have and enjoy world without end, with God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, with the angels, arch-angels, with the patriarchs and prophets, with the apostles and evangelists, with the martyrs and confessors, and with all the saints of God in the palace of the Lord in heaven, the kingdom of God, the glory of the Father. Oh! woe to the blindness of our eyes that see not this! woe to the hardness of our hearts that feel not this! woe to the deafness of

our ears that hear not this in such sort as we should do, wherethrough we might be so far from fearing death, that rather we should wish it, crying with Simeon, Now let thy servant depart in peace; with Paul, I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ; with David, When shall I come and appear before thee! And again, Oh! woe is me that my habitation is thus prolonged, &c. (Psa. cxix.) But, alas! dear sister, great is our unbelief; full faint is our faith, or else night and day tears should be our bread and drink, while it is said unto us, Where is your God? It is a token of little love to God to be loath to go unto him when he calleth. If my dearest friend, of a special favour and tender good will, should send a horse for me to come unto him, should I be displeased thereat? yea, should I not be willing and glad to come unto him? And, alas! yet if death, the Lord's palfrey, the Lord's messenger, should come, I think I should not be so ready, but be fearful as you foresee yourself to be; wherethrough I doubt not you take occasion to lament the weakness of your faith, and, seeing your need, to prepare for remedy against the time of need, and to beg of God his aid, strength, and comfort against that pinch, which undoubtedly you shall have, and find his promise true, that in an acceptable time he hath heard your prayer. Such as I am, have no such foresight of death, and therefore are less presently dismayed, which will turn to our greater grief in the plunge, save that for my part, I hope he will never tempt me further than he will make me able to bear. Into his hands I offer myself, beseeching him, for his Christ's sake, to keep me, soul and body, to his kingdom and glory; and to lead me, order me, and dispose me as he will in all things, in all places, and for ever, that at the length I may come whither I will, that is, into his own blessed

presence and fruition of immortality, with you and his saints. Amen. Thus much I thought good to write unto you for this present, to occasion you the less to fear death, which either needeth not or booteth not; and therefore even reasonable men, much more spiritual men, labour to strive against the fear of that which they can by no means avoid. But of this hereafter I trust mouth to mouth to speak with you. Now as to my soul, I pray and wish unto you, my most dear sister in the Lord, whose grace guide you, and his mercy embrace you on every side for ever. Amen.

Yours,

JOHN BRADFORD.

*To my good Friend in God Master HUMPHREY
HALES.*

As to my dear friend, I wish unto you, gentle Master Hales, health of soul and body, to God's glory and your everlasting comfort. Amen.

Although it be commonly spoken, and as commonly verified, that seldom seen is soon forgotten, yet it is not so commonly seen or experienced amongst them, whose friendship is in God the Father through Christ, as ours is, but in those whose friendship is begun in respect of some earthly commodity. And therefore, lest I should incur this suspicion at your hands, which have so many ways deserved the contrary, I thought it my duty to refresh (if it need refreshing) the amity in God begun betwixt us, which I doubt not shall continue so long as we live, or else I would be sorry; in consideration whereof, both mindful of my promise made unto you, and careful for your safety, I have caused a place to be provided for your wife's deliverance, where she may so quietly and safely remain, that for the avoid-

ing of the perils and dangers of these days, I see none more convenient. I mean it in Hadley, at D. Taylor's house, where I trust there is no peril to youward, nor to any that feareth or regardeth any peril that thereby may happen; and herein of very love and good will I am the more familiar and bold to admonish you, not as distrusting you (God forbid, for I think of you as of a very child of God), but as one careful for you, lest you should at length, through the common infirmity of our frail flesh, and the manifold offences given of the world, do exteriorly as the world doth, to save your sleeve and maim your arm for ever, as those do, which for the saving of their goods, jeopard goods of body and soul in the peril of eternal damnation. If I suspected any such thing in you (gentle Master Hales), I then would go about to tell you what this life is, a smoke, a shadow, a vapour, &c. what the glory of this life is, grass, hay, yea, how full of misery it is, and hath more aloes than honey. (Job, ix.) If I suspected any thing your conscience, I would then set before you on the one part the judgment of Christ, which shall be most assuredly the terrible sentence to them which are ashamed to confess his Gospel, the eternal woe and misery which they shall be cast into, that will not obey his Gospel here; and in the other part the most pleasant shout of the angel to summon all men to come before our Captain and brother Christ; the collection and catching of us up in the clouds to meet our Master; the eternal joy and felicity which we shall receive that here confess him, here suffer with him, here lose any thing for his sake. If I did in any point so much as think that you would defile your body in the antichristian service now used, then would I go about to set forth these things briefly spoken, more at large. But, as I said before, I say again, because I am as well per-

suaded of you (my dearly beloved brother) as of any in your profession and state, I cannot but pray God to make perfect the good which he hath begun in you, and desire you, as you have begun in God, so to go forward. As your example hath done good to many, so cast not all down by a tip. Terrible is that woe which Christ threateneth to them by whom offences do come. You know the way to salvation is straiter than men make it; you know the soul is to be considered above all things. Happy is the loss of that bodily life, liberty, and goods, by the which a spiritual life, freedom, and felicity is purchased. What should it profit a man to win the whole world, and to lose his own soul? Who would desire a two years merry life for an eternal sorrow? as these mass-gospellers do which yet are uncertain of two years life, and God knoweth what wounds their consciences have. Hard is it to recover health to the conscience; and because I am careful for it to youwards, as to mine own brother and dear friend, therefore I write thus: we are in God's power, and not in the power of our enemies; he it is that hath all our hairs numbered; before he say Amen, no man shall once touch you. Into his hands commit yourself, cast your care upon him, have a care to please him, and then he will care to keep you. You know the oath the Athenians did make, *I will fight for the defence of religion, both alone and with others*: which saying of the heathen will be to our condemnation, if for his holy word and Gospel's sake we dare not adventure the loss of that he hath lent us, keepeth for us, and can when he will take away from us, or us from it. If worldly men dare jeopard a joint with God, rather than they would lose worldly things (as experience teacheth), certainly it should be much to our shame, which in baptism have vowed and solemnly sworn to forsake the world; if we dare not jeopard

a joint with man, rather than we would lose a good conscience and spiritual treasures. He that will not have God's blessing, it shall be taken from him, saith David.

Therefore, my dearly beloved, beware; you are now the temple of the Holy Ghost, defile it not for the Lord's sake, but keep it pure, not only from all uncleanness of the spirit, but also of the flesh (2 Cor. vii.), as I trust you will, and cry upon your Father for his strength and aid, which I beseech him of his mercy always to give unto you, my own good friend, even as I desire to myself. If in any thing I could help you, you may be as assured thereof, as of your brother. My prayer to God night and day you shall have, that for his holy name's sake he would bless you in all things, and keep you, with my good sister your wife, unto the very end, as his dear elect children. Amen. Amen. From my lodging, you know where, this 5th of August.

By your own to use in the Lord for ever,

JOHN BRADFORD.

Another Letter to Master HUMPHREY HALES and his Wife.

THE everliving and merciful God, our dear Father through Christ, be with you both, my most dearly and entirely beloved in the Lord, now and for ever. I cannot forbear but signify unto you both, that my heart is careful and heavy for the cross which is come upon you by the heavy and fearful judgment of God, fallen upon your father, justly for his denying of God for fear of man, and love of those things, which he hath left behind him unto you and others. God grant his fate be so imprinted in the hearts of all men, especially of you both, that his fall may be unto you, I will not say rising (for yet

I trust ye are not fallen), but an establishing in the verity of God; whereof whoso is ashamed shall at length feel such shaine, as I beseech God keep us all from. Happy are they that mark the judgments of God upon other, to come and increase in repentance (Luke, xiii.), to fear God's wrath and judgments, which is always like himself, if we follow the steps of them on whom he taketh punishment. I need not to tell you the cause of this that hath happened unto your father, if it be as I with sorrow have heard. For you know well enough that till he forsook God, gave ear to the serpent's counsel, began to mamber of the truth, and to frame himself outwardly to do that which his conscience reprov'd inwardly (for that which he mingled with the love of God, I mean, the love of the world, cannot be in any man without the expulsion of God's love). till then, I say, God did not depart and leave him to himself, to the example of you, and me, and all others, that we should fear even ourselves and our own hands, more than man and all the powers of the world; if we therefore should do any thing which should wound our conscience, the conscience (I tell you) is soon wounded, yea, sooner than we be ware of. The devil useth all kind of deceit to blind us from seeing that which might wound it; but when the stripe is given, then either shutteth he still up our eyes with contempt to our hardening, or else openeth them to bring us to utter despairing. In your father, as you may see the latter, so in many worldly gossellers you may (if you will) see the other. God might deal with all such, as he hath done now with your father; but because the time of his judgment is not yet come, his wisdom hath thought good to set your father forth as an example to all men; as he did in the first world Cain; in the second world Ham; in the thjrd age Corah, &c.; in Christ's time

Judas ; in the Apostles' time, Ananias, &c. ; although none will heartily consider it, but such as be God's children indeed.

But here in comparing your father thus (my dearly and unfeignedly beloved in the Lord), I must pray you not to be offended, or think that I do determinately judge (to God I leave all judgment), but because the fruit to us declareth no less, to the admonishment of us all, I trust ye will accordingly consider my collation. For your parts, as I think godly of you both, that indeed you are both the children of God, so I pray you comfort yourselves, as David did, though his son Absalom perished so desperately, and though his father-in-law, Ahithophel, father to Bathsheba, as the Hebrews write, perished so miserably. You know Jonathan was not the worse because his father slew himself, nor Bathsheba because of her father Ahithophel ; they were both the children of God, and so I am assured (as man can be) that ye are. As they used God's judgments upon their parents, so do ye, to fear God, and love God the more, and to fly from those things which in your father ye did see displeased God. Oh ! that I were with you but one half hour, not only with you to lament, but also, as God should lend me his grace, to comfort you, who by this judgment doth tempt your patience and faith to the comfort of you both, as you shall find I am assured. My dear hearts in the Lord, if I could by any means comfort you, certainly, if my life lay on it, I think you should forthwith perceive it ; but because I can do no more than I can, therefore as I can I do ; that is, as to write, so to send this messenger, my good friend and brother, with the same, to learn certainly the truth herein, and the condition of your estate. My other letter was made before I knew of this matter. I pray God this which by report I understand

be otherwise, but God's good will be done, who give us patience and comfort in him. To whom I commend you both, even as heartily as any friends I have, in this life of your estate. From my lodging, you know where, this 8th of August 1554.

By your own to use in the Lord for ever,

JOHN BRADFORD.

To certain of his faithful Friends in God, exhorting them to be joyful under the Cross, as a Token of God's singular Favour towards them.

GOD our dear and most merciful Father through Christ be with you, my good brother and sister, as with his children for ever, and in all things so guide you with his holy Spirit, the leader of his people, as may be to his glory and your everlasting joy and comfort in him. Amen.

Because I have oftentimes received from either of you comfort corporally (for the which I beseech the Lord, as to make me thankful, so to recompense you both now and eternally), I cannot but go about (Lord help hereto for thy mercy's sake) to write something for your comfort spiritually. My dearly beloved, look not upon these days and the afflictions of the same here with us simply as they seem unto you, that is, as dismal days, and days of God's vengeance, but rather as lucky days, and days of God's fatherly kindness towards you, and such as ye be; that is, towards such as repent their sins and evil life past, and earnestly purpose to amend, walking not after the will of the world, as the most part of men do for the preservation of their pelf, which, will they nill they, they shall leave sooner or later, and to whom or how it shall be used, they know not. Indeed to such as walk in their wickedness, and wind on with the world, this time is a time of wrath and

vengeance, and their beginning of sorrow is but now, because they contemn the physic of their Father, which by these purging times and cleansing days would soon work their weal, which they will not; and because they will not have God's blessing, which both ways he hath offered unto them, by prosperity and adversity; therefore it shall be kept far enough from them; as when the sick man will no kind of physic at the hands of the physician, he is left alone, and so the malady increaseth, and destroyeth him at the length. To such men indeed these days are and should be doleful days, days of woe and weeping, because their damnation draweth nigh. But unto such as be penitent, and are desirous to live after the Lord's will (amongst whom I do not only count you, but, as far as man may judge, I know ye are), unto such, I say, this time is and should be comfortable. For first now your Father chastiseth you and me for our sins, for the which, if he would have destroyed us, then would he have let us alone, and left us to ourselves in nothing to take to heart his fatherly visitation, which here it pleaseth him to work presently, because elsewhere he will not remember our transgressions. As Paul writeth (1 Cor. ii.), he chastiseth us in the world, lest with the world we should perish.

Therefore, my dear hearts, call to mind your sins, to lament them, and to ask mercy for them in his sight, and withal undoubtedly believe to obtain pardon and assured forgiveness of the same, for twice the Lord punisheth not for one thing. So that I say, first, we have cause to rejoyce for these days, because our Father suffereth us not to lie in Jezabel's bed, sleeping in our sins and security, but, as mindful on us, doth correct us as his children, whereby we may be certain that we be no bastards, but children; for he chastiseth every child whom he

receiveth; so that they which are not partakers of his chastising, or that contemn it, declare themselves to be bastards, and not children, as I know ye are, which, as ye are chastised, so do ye take it to heart accordingly; and therefore be glad, my dear hearts, as folks knowing certainly, even by this visitation of the Lord, that ye are his dear elect children, whose faults your Father doth visit with the rod of correction, but his mercy will he never take away from you. Amen. (Psa. lxxxix.)

Secõdly, ye have cause to rejoice for these days, because they are days of trial, wherein not only ye yourselves shall better know yourselves, but also the world shall know that ye be none of his, but the Lord's dearlings. Before these days came (Lord God), how many thought of themselves they had been in God's bosom, and so were taken and would be taken of the world; but now we see whose they are, for to whom we obey, his servants we are. If we obey the world (which God forbid, and hitherto ye have not done it), then are we the world's; but if we obey God, then are we God's, which thing (I mean that ye are God's) these days have declared both to you, to me, and to all other that know you better than ever we knew it. Therefore ye have no cause to sorrow, but rather to sing, in seeing yourselves to be God's babes, and in seeing that all God's children do so count you: what though the world repine thereat? what though he kick, what though he seek to trouble and molest you? My dear hearts, he doth but his kind; he cannot love the Lord, which liveth not the Lord; he cannot brook the child that hateth the father; he cannot mind the servant that careth not for the master. If ye were of the world, the world would love you; ye should dwell quietly; there would be no grief, no molestation. If the Devil dwelt in you (which the Lord forbid), he would

not stir up his knights to besiege your house, to snatch at your goods, or suffer his friends to enter into your hogs. But because Christ dwelleth in you (as he doth by faith), therefore stirreth he up his first-begotten son the world, to seek how to disquiet you, to rob you, to spoil you, to destroy you. And perchance your dear Father, to try and to make known unto you and to the world, that ye are destinate to another dwelling than here on earth, to another city than man's eyes have seen at any time, hath given or will give power to Satan and to the world, to take from you the things which he hath lent you, and, by taking them away, to try your fidelity, obedience, and love towards him (for ye may not love them above him), as by giving that ye have, and keeping it, he hath declared his love towards you. Satan perchance telleth God (as he did of Job) that ye love God for your goods' sake; what now then? if the Lord, to try you, with Job, shall give him power on your goods and body accordingly, should you be dismayed? should you despair? should you be fainthearted; should you not rather rejoice? as did the Apostles, that they were counted worthy to suffer any thing for the Lord's sake. Oh! forget not the end that happened to Job; for as it happened unto him, so shall it happen unto you, for God is the same God, and cannot long forget to shew mercy to them that look and long for it, as I know you do; and I pray you do so still, for the Lord loveth you, and never can nor will forget to shew and pour out his mercy upon you. After a little while that he hath afflicted and tried you (saith Peter), he will visit, comfort, and confirm you. As to Jacob wrestling with the angel, at the length morning came, and the sun arose; so, dear hearts, doubtless it will happen unto you. Howbeit, do ye as Job and Jacob did, that is, order and

dispose your things that God hath lent you as ye may, and whiles ye have time: who knoweth whether God hath given you power this long even to that end?

Go to therefore, dispose your goods, prepare yourselves to trial, that either ye may stand to it like God's champions, or else, if ye feel such infirmity in yourselves that ye be not able, give place to violence, and go where ye may, with free and safe conscience serve the Lord. Think not this counsel to come by chance or fortune, but to come from the Lord; other oracles we may not look for now. As God told Joseph in a dream by an angel that he should fly; so if ye feel such infirmity in yourselves as should turn to God's dishonour and your own destruction withal, know that at this present I am as God's angel to admonish you to take time whiles ye have it, and to see that in no case God's name by you might be dishonoured. Joseph might have objected the omission of his vocation, as perchance ye will do; but, dear hearts, let vocations and all things else give place to God's name and the sanctifying thereof. This I speak, not as though I would not have you rather to tarry and to stand to it, but I speak it in respect of your infirmity, which if ye feel to be so great in you that ye are not certain of this hope that God will never tempt you above your ability, fly and get you hence, and know that thereby God will have you tried to yourselves and others. For by this you shall know how to take this world, and your home here, as no home, but that ye look for another, and so give occasion to others less to love this world, and perchance to some to doubt of their religion, wherein, though they be earnest, yet would not they lose so much as ye do for your religion, which ye confirm to me and others by your giving place to violence.

Last of all, ye have cause to rejoyce over these days, because they be days of conformation, in the which and by the which God our Father maketh us like to Christ's image here, that we may be like to him elsewhere. For if we suffer with him, we shall reign with him; if we be buried with him, we shall rise with him; if we company with him in afflictions, we shall rejoyce with him in glory; if we sow with him in tears, we shall reap with him in gladness; if we confess him before men, he will confess us before his Father in heaven; if we take his part, he will take ours; if we lose aught for his name's sake, he will give us all things for his truth's sake. So that we ought to rejoyce and be glad, for it is not given to every one to suffer loss of country, life, goods, house, &c. for the Lord's sake. What can God the Father do more unto us than to call us into camp with his Son? what may Christ our Saviour do more for us than to make us his warriors? what can the Holy Ghost do to us above this, to mark us with the cognizance of the Lord of hosts? This cognizance of the Lord standeth not in forked caps, tippets, shaven crowns, or such other baggage and antichristian pelf, but in suffering for the Lord's sake. The world shall hate you, saith Christ. Lo! there is the cognizance and badge of God's children; the world shall hate you. Rejoyce therefore, my dearly beloved, rejoyce that God doth thus vouchsafe to begin to conform you, and to make you like to Christ. By the trial of these days ye are occasioned more to repent, more to pray, more to contemn this world, more to desire life everlasting, more to be holy (for holy is the end wherefore God doth afflict us), and so come to God's company; which thing, because we cannot do so long as this body is as it is, therefore by the door of death we must enter with Christ

into eternal life, and immortality of soul and body, which God of his mercy send shortly, for our Saviour Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

JOHN BRADFORD.

To my dear Brother in the Lord, Master RICHARD HOPKINS, and his Wife, dwelling in Coventry, and other my faithful Brethren and Sisters, Professors of God's holy Gospel there and thereabouts.

THE peace which Christ left to his church and to every true member of the same (John, xiv Rom. viii.), the holy Spirit, the guide of God's children, so ingraft in your heart and in the heart of your good wife, and of all my good brethren and sisters about you, that unfeignedly ye may in respect thereof condemn all worldly peace, which is contrary to that peace which I speak of, and driveth it utterly out of the hearts of all those which would patch them both together. For we cannot serve two masters, no man can serve God and manimon. (Matt. vi.) Christ's peace cannot be kept with this world's peace; God therefore of his mercy do I beseech to give unto you his peace, which passeth all understanding, and so keep your hearts and minds, that they may be pure habitacles and mansions for the holy Spirit (Phil. iv.); yea, for the blessed Trinity, who hath promised to come and dwell in all them that love Christ, and keep his sayings. (John, xiv.)

My dearly beloved, the time is now come wherein trial is made of men that have professed to love Christ, and would have been counted keepers of his testimonies. But, weal away! the tenth person persevereth not; the more part do part stakes with the Papists and Protestants, so that they are become mangy mongrels, to the infecting of all that company with them, and to their no small peril. For they

pretend outwardly Popery, going to mass with the Papists, and tarrying with them personally at their antichristian and idolatrous service, but with their hearts (say they) and with their spirits they serve the Lord. And so by this means, as they save their pigs, which they would not lose, I mean their worldly pelf, so they would please the Protestants, and be counted with them for gospellers, yea, marry would they. But, mine own beloved in the Lord, flee from such persons as from men most perilous and pernicious both before God and man; for they are false to both, and true to neither. To the magistrates they are false, pretending one thing, and meaning clean contrary: to God they are most untrue, giving him but a piece, which should have the whole. I would they would tell me who made their bodies. Did not God, as well as their spirits and souls? And who keepeth both? Doth not he still? And, alas! shall not he have the service of the body, but it must be given to serve the new-found god of antichrist's invention? Did not Christ buy both our souls and bodies? And wherewith? with any less price than with his precious blood. Ah! wretches then that we be, if we will defile either part with the rose-coloured whore of Babylon's filthy mass abomination. It had been better for us never to have been washed, than so to wallow ourselves in the filthy puddle of Popery. It had been better never to have known the truth, than thus to betray it. (Rev. xviii. 2 Pet. ii. Heb. vi. x. Matt. xii. Luke, xi.) Surely, surely, let such men fear that their latter end be not worse than the beginning; their own conscience now accuseth them before God (if so be they have any conscience), that they are but dissemblers and hypocrites to God and man. For all the cloaks they make, they cannot avoid this, but that their going to church and to mass is of self-love; that is, they go thither because they would avoid

the cross ; they go thither, because they would be out of trouble ; they seek neither the Queen's Highness nor her laws, which in this point cannot bind the conscience to obey, because they are contrary to God's laws, which bid us often to flee idolatry and worshipping him after men's devices ; they seek neither (I say) the laws (if there were any), neither their brethren's commodity (for none cometh thereby), neither godliness or good example (for there can be none found in going to mass, &c. but horrible offences and woe to them that gave them), but they seek their own selves, their own ease, their escaping the cross, &c. ; when they have made all the excuses they can, their own conscience will accuse them of this, that their going to church is only because they seek themselves ; for if there would no trouble ensue for tarrying away, I appeal to their conscience, would they come thither ? Never, I dare say.

Therefore (as I said) they seek themselves, they would not carry the cross ; and hereof their own conscience (if they have any conscience) doth accuse them. Now if their conscience accuse them at this present, what will it do before the judgment-seat of Christ ? Who will then excuse it, when Christ shall appear in judgment, and shall begin to be ashamed of them then, which now here are ashamed of him ? (Luke, ix. xii. Mark, viii.) Who then (I say) will excuse these mass-gospellers' conscience ? Will the Queen's Highness ? She shall then have more to do for herself than without hearty and speedy repentance she can ever be able to answer, though Peter, Paul, Mary, James, John, the Pope, and all his prelates, take her part, with all the singing Sir Johns that ever were, are, and shall be. Will the lord chancellor and prelates of the realm excuse them there ? Nay, nay. They are like then to smart for it so sore, as I would not be in their places for

all the whole world. Will the laws of the realm, the nobility, gentlemen, justices of peace; &c. excuse our gospel massmongers' conscience then? Nay, God knoweth they can do little there but quake and fear for the heavy vengeance of God like to fall upon them. Will their goods, lands, and possessions, the which they by their dissembling have saved, will these serve to excuse them? No, no; God is no merchant, as our mass-priests be. Will masses or trentals and such trash serve? No, verily; these haunters of this gear then shall be horribly ashamed. Will the catholic church excuse them? Nay, it will most of all accuse them; as will all the good fathers; patriarchs, apostles, prophets, martyrs, confessors, and saints, with all the good doctors and good general councils: all these already condemn the mass, and all that ever useth it as it is now, being of all idols that ever was, the most abominable and blasphemous to Christ and his priesthood, manhood, and sacrifice; for it maketh the priest that saith mass God's fellow, and better than Christ; for the offerer is always better or equivalent to the thing offered. (Heb. v.) If therefore the priest take upon him there to offer up Christ, as they boldly affirm they do, then must he needs be better or equal with Christ. Oh! that they would shew but one jot of the Scripture of God calling them to this dignity, or of their authority to offer up Christ for the quick and dead, and to apply the benefits and virtue of his death and passion to whom they will. Surely, if this were true, as it is most false and blasphemous, prate they at their pleasure to the contrary; then it made no matter at all whether Christ were our friend or no, if so be the mass-priest were our friend; for he can apply us Christ's merits by his mass if he will, and when he will, and therefore we need little to care for Christ's friendship. They can make him when they will, and where they will. Lo! here he

is, there he is, say they; but believe them not, saith Christ, believe them not, believe them not, saith he. (Matt. xxiv.) For in his human nature and body, which was made of the substance of the Virgin's body, and not of bread, in this body (I say) he is, and sitteth on the right hand of God, the Father Almighty, in heaven, from whence, and not from the pix, shall he come to judge both the quick and the dead. In the mean season, heaven, saith St. Peter, must receive him. (Acts, iii.) And as Paul saith, he prayeth for us, and now is not seen elsewhere or otherwise seen than by faith there, until he shall be seen as he is, to the salvation of them that look for his coming, which I trust be not far off. For if the day of the Lord drew near in the Apostles' time, which is now above 1500 years past, it cannot be, I trust, long hence now. I trust our Redeemer's coming is at hand. (Rom. viii. Heb. vii. ix. 1 Thess. v. Luke, xxi.) Then these mass sayers and seers shall shake, and cry to the hills, Hide us from the fierce wrath of the Lamb, if they repent not in time. (Rev. vi.) Then will neither gold nor goods, friendship nor fellowship, lordship nor authority, power nor pleasure, unity nor antiquity, custom nor counsel, doctors' decrees nor any man's devices, serve. The word which the Lord hath spoken, in that day shall judge (John, xii.) ; the word (I say) of God in that day shall judge. And what saith it of idolatry and idolaters? Saith it not, Flee from it? And further, that they shall be damned? (1 Cor. vi. x.) Oh! terrible sentence to all massmongers and worshippers of things made with the hands of bakers, carpenters, &c. This word of God knoweth no more oblations or sacrifices for sin, but one only, which Christ himself offered, never more to be re-offered (Heb. vii. ix. x.), but in remembrance thereof his supper to be eaten sacramentally and spi-

ritually according to Christ's institution, which is so perverted now, that there is nothing in it simply according to the judge, I mean, the word of God. It were good for men to agree with their adversary, the word of God, now whilst they be in the way with it, lest if they linger, it will deliver them to the judge Christ, who will commit them to the jailor, and so they shall be cast into prison, and never come out thence till they have paid the uttermost farthing, that is, never. (Matt. v.)

My dearly beloved, therefore mark the word, hearken to the word; it alloweth no massing, no such sacrificing nor worshipping of Christ with tapers, candles, copes, canopies, &c. It alloweth no Latin service, no images in the temples, no praying to saints dead, no praying for the dead. It alloweth no such dissimulation, as a great many use now outwardly. If any withdraw himself, my soul, saith the Holy Ghost, shall have no pleasure in him (Heb. x.); it alloweth not the love of this world, which maketh men to do many things against their consciences, for in them that love the world, the love of God abideth not (1 John, ii.); it alloweth not gatherers elsewhere than with Christ, but saith they scatter abroad; it alloweth no lukewarm gentlemen; but if God be God, then follow him; if Baal and a piece of bread be God, then follow it (Rev. iii. 1 Kings, xviii.); it alloweth not faith in the heart that hath not confession in the mouth (Rom. x.); it alloweth no disciples that will not deny themselves, that will not take up their cross and follow Christ (Matt. xvi. Mark, viii.); it alloweth not the seeking of our own ease and commodity (Phil. ii.); it alloweth not the more part, but the better part; it alloweth not unity, except it be in verity; it alloweth no obedience to any which cannot be done without disobedience to God (Rom. xvi.); it al-

loweth no church that is not the spouse of Christ, and hearkeneth not to his voice only (Eph. v.); it alloweth no doctor that speaketh against it (John, x.); it alloweth no general council that followeth not in all things. (Gal. i.) Lastly, it alloweth no angel, much more then any such as should teach any other thing than Moses, the Prophets, Christ Jesus, and his Apostles have taught and left us to look upon in the written word of God, the holy books of the Bible, but curseth all that teach not only contrary, but also any other doctrine. It saith, they are fools, unwise, proud, that will not consent unto the sound word and doctrine of Christ and his Apostles, and biddeth and commandeth us to flee from such. (1 Tim. vi. Matt. vii. Jer. viii.)

Therefore, obey this commandment, company not with them, specially in their church service, but flee from them; for in what thing consent they to Christ's doctrine? He biddeth us pray in a tongue to edify; they command contrary. (1 Cor. xiv.) He biddeth us call upon his Father in his name when we pray (Matt. vi.); they bid us run to Mary, Peter, &c. He biddeth us use his supper in the remembrance of his death and passion, preaching it out till it come, whereby he doth us to wit, that corporally he is not there in the form of bread; therefore saith Paul, *Till he come*. He willeth us to eat of the bread, calling it bread after consecration, and drink of that cup all, making no exception, so that we do it worthily; that is, take it as the sacrament of his body and blood broken, and shed for our sins, and not as the body itself, and blood itself, without bread, without wine, but as the sacrament of his body and blood, whereby he doth represent and unto our faith give and ob-sign unto us himself wholly, with all the merits and glory of his body and blood. But they forbid utterly the use of the supper to all but their shavelings, ex-

cept it be once in the year, and then also the cup they take from us; they never preach forth the Lord's death but in mocks and moes; they take away all the sacrament by their transubstantiation, for they take away the elements, and so the sacrament. To be short, they most horribly abuse this holy ordinance of the Lord, by adoration, reservation, oblation, ostentation, &c. In nothing they are contented with the simplicity of God's word; they add to and take from at their pleasure, and therefore the plagues of God will fall upon them at the length, and upon all that will take their part; they seek not Christ nor his glory, for you see they have utterly cast away his word, and therefore, as the Prophet saith (Jer. viii.), there is no wisdom in them; they follow the strumpet church of antichrist, which they call the catholic church, whose foundation and pillars is the devil, and his daughter the mass, with his children the Pope, and his prelates. (Rev. xviii.) Their laws are craft and cruelty, their weapons are lying and murder, their end and study is their own glory, fame, wealth, rest, and possessions. For if a man speak nor do nothing against these, though he be a sodomite, an adulterer, an usurer, &c. it forceth not, he shall be quiet enough, no man shall trouble him. But if any one speak any thing to God's glory, which cannot stand without the overthrow of man's glory, then shall he be disquieted, imprisoned, and troubled, except he will play mum, and put his finger upon his mouth, although the same be a most quiet and godly man. (Job, xxxi.) So that easily a man may see how that they be antichrist's church, and sworn soldiers to the Pope and his spouse, and not to Christ and his church, for then would they not cast away God's word, then would they be no more adversaries to his glory, which chiefly consisteth in obedience to his word.

Therefore, my dear hearts in the Lord, seem not to allow this or any part of the pelf of this Romish church and synagogue of Satan. Halt not on both knees, for halting will bring you out of the way; but, like valiant champions of the Lord, confess, confess I say, with your mouth, as occasion serveth, and as your vocation requireth, the hope and faith you have and feel in your hearts. (1 Kings, xviii. Heb. xii. Matt. x. xvi. Mark, viii. Luke, ix. xiv. 2 Tim. iii. Rom. x. 1 Pet. iii.)

But you will say, that so to do is perilous; you shall by that means lose your liberty, your lands, your goods, your friends, your name, your life, &c. and so shall your children be left in miserable state, &c. To this I answer, my good brethren, that you have professed in baptism to fight under the standard of your captain Christ; and will you now, for peril's sake, leave your Lord? You made a solemn vow that you would forsake the world; and will you be forsworn, and run to embrace it now? You swore and promised to leave all, and follow Christ; and will you now leave him for your father, your mother, your children, your lands, your life, &c.? He that hateth not these, saith Christ, is not worthy of me. He that forsaketh not these, and himself also, and withal taketh not up his cross, and followeth him, the same shall be none of his disciples. (Matt. x. xvi. xix. Mark, viii. Luke, ix.) Therefore either bid Christ adieu, be forsworn, and run to the devil quick, or else say as a Christian should say, that wife, children, goods, life, &c. are not too dear unto you in respect of Christ, who is your portion and inheritance. (Acts, xx. Psal. xlix. cxix. Heb. xi. xii.) Let the worldlings, which have no hope of eternal life, fear perils or loss of lands, goods, life, &c. Here is not our home; we are here but pilgrims and strangers; this life is but the desert and

wilderness to the land of rest; we look for a city, whose workman is God himself; we are now dwellers in the tents of Kedar; we are now in warfare, in travail, and labour, whereto we were born as the bird to fly: we sorrow and sigh, desiring the dissolution of our bodies, and the putting off corruption, that we might put on incorruption. (Psal. xc. cxx. Job, v. ix. 2 Cor. iv. v.) The way we walk in is strait and narrow, and therefore not easy to our enemy, the corrupt flesh; but yet we must walk on, for if we hearken to our enemy, we shall be served not friendly. Let them walk the wide way that are ruled by their enemies; let us be ruled by our friends, and walk the strait way, whose end is weal, as the other is woe. (Matt. vii. xxv.) The time of our suffering is but short, as the time of their ease is not long; but the time of our rejoicing shall be endless, as the time of their torments shall be ever and intolerable. Our breakfast is sharp, but our supper is sweet. The afflictions of this life may not be compared in any part to the glory that shall be revealed unto us. (Rom. viii.) This is certain, if we suffer with Christ, we shall reign with him; if we confess him, he will confess us, and that before his Father in heaven, and all his angels and saints, saying, Come, ye blessed of my Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning. (Matt. x. xxv.) There shall be joy, mirth, pleasure, solace, melody, and all kinds of beatitude and felicity, such as the eye hath not seen, the ear hath not heard, nor the heart of man is able to conceive it as it is. (Isa. lxiv.) In respect of this and of the joy set before us, should not we run our race, though it be something rough? (Heb. xii.) Did not Moses so, the prophets so, Christ so, the apostles so, the martyrs so, and the confessors so? They were drunken with the sweetness of this gear, and therefore they contemned all that man and

devils could do to them ; their souls thirsted after the Lord and his tabernacles, and therefore their lives and goods were not too dear to them. Read Heb. xi. and 2 Mac. vii. and let us go the same way, that is, by many tribulations ; let us labour to enter into the kingdom of heaven ; for all that will live godly in Christ Jesu must suffer persecution. (Acts, xiv. 2 Tim. iii.)

Think therefore the cross, if it come for confession of Christ, no strange thing to God's children (1 Pet. v.), but rather take it as the Lord's medicine, by the which he helpeth our infirmities, and setteth forth his glory. Our sins have deserved cross upon cross ; now if God give us his cross to suffer for his truth, and confessing him, as he doth by it bury our sin, so doth he glorify us, making us like to Christ here, that we may be like unto him elsewhere ; for if we be partakers of the affliction, we shall be partakers of the consolation ; if we be like in ignominy, we shall be like in glory. (Rom. viii. 2 Cor. i. 1 Cor. xv.) Great cause we have to give thanks to God for lending us liberty, lands, goods, wife, children, life, &c. thus long ; so that we shall be guilty of ingratitude, if he now shall come and take the same away, except we be cheerful and content. God hath given, and God hath taken away, saith Job ; as it pleaseth the Lord, so be it done. And should not we do this, especially when the Lord taketh these away of love to try us, and prove us, whether we be faithful lovers or strumpets, that is, whether we love him better than his gifts or otherwise ? This is a truth of all truths to be laid up in our hearts, that that is not lost which seemeth so to be for the confession of Christ. Read 2 Kings, iv. In this life your children shall find goods plentiful, blessing upon them when you are gone, and all your goods taken away. God is so good, that he helpeth the young ravens before they can fly, and feedeth them when

their dams have most unkindly left them ; and trow ye that God, which is the God of the widows and fatherless children, will not specially have a care for the babes of his dear saints, which die or lose any thing for conscience to him ? (Psa. xxxvii. cxlvii. lxxviii. lv.) Oh ! my dearly beloved, therefore look up with the eyes of faith ; consider not things present, but rather things to come ; be content now to go whither God shall gird and lead you. Let us now cast ourselves wholly into his hands with our wives, children, and all that ever we have ; let us be sure the hairs of our head are numbered, so that one hair shall not perish without the good will of our dear Father, who hath commanded his angels to pitch their tents about us, and in their hands to take and hold us up, that we shall not hurt as much as our foot against a stone. (Matt. x. Psa. xci.) Let us use earnest prayer ; let us heartily repent ; let us hearken diligently to God's word ; let us keep ourselves pure from all uncleanness, both of spirit and body ; let us flee from all evil, and all appearance of evil ; let us be diligent in our vocation, and in doing good to all men, especially to them that be of the household of faith ; let us live in peace with all men as much as is in us. And the Lord of peace give us his peace, and that for evermore. Amen. (Eph. vi. Luke, xiii. 1 Cor. vii. 1 Thess. v. Matt. xxv. 1 Tim. v. Rom. xii. xvi.) I pray you remember me, your poor afflicted brother, in your hearty prayers to God. This 2d of September.

JOHN BRADFORD.

To Master SHALCROSSE and his Wife, dwelling in Lancashire.

THE peace of conscience in Christ, and through faith in his blood, which as it passeth, and is far

better than any worldly riches or joy, so is it to be redeemed with the loss of the dearest treasures we have, rather than we should lose it; this peace I wish unto you, good M. Shalcrosse, and unto your yoke-fellow, my good sister in the Lord, now and for ever. Amen.

Hitherto although I could not write unto you, yet, as I trust you pray for me, so I have not been forgetful of you in my poor prayers to Almighty God, my dear Father through Christ, to whom I give humble praises, that he hath given you grace as yet (for so I hear) to keep yourself undefiled in his service, which far differeth from the Romish rags, revived of late, and justly for our sins and unthankful using his true religion and holy ceremonies once again in place and use amongst us. In token whereof (I mean that I have not been forgetful of you) I thought good now, when I may write, to signify the same, as well to renew our mutual love in God, and care one for another by hearty prayer, as to excite and provoke you both to thankfulness for God's graces hitherto, especially in the point before spoken of, and to be diligent and wary that you unto the end continue in the same; for you know that perseverance in godliness and purity is required of us, and that none other shall be crowned, but such as fight lawfully. (2 Tim. ii.)

Go to therefore, and fight on a good fight stoutly and manfully; that is, as you know God is not to be worshipped and served but after his word written, and not after unwritten verities, or the device, fantasy, and pleasure of men or women, in what state soever they be, accordingly behave yourself as inwardly in God's sight, so outwardly before your brethren. Seem not to approve by your outward man, that which the inward man detesteth: it is not enough to believe with the heart, except the

mouth and fact confess the same: nor it is not enough with the mouth to acknowledge a verity, and by our fact and deed to destroy the same. Paul speaketh sometimes of deniers of God, not only with their lips and tongue, but also with their deed and life. Let not the world or the more part of men be an example to you to follow them, or do as they do in the service of God. Christ saith, Follow me, speaking of himself, which is the pattern and sampler we should set before us, and not the world or more part, which windeth the wide and broad way, whose end doth lead to perdition and everlasting woe; but rather let the example of such as walk in the narrow and strait way, which bringeth to life endless, encourage you to walk with them, although the number of them be but few, and the personages of them be utterly contemned with the world and in the world, which world cannot love, no, not know indeed the children of God, because it cannot receive the Spirit of God; and therefore as the ape her young ones; so it (the world I mean) doth think her own birds the fairest, contemning with deadly hate all others that will not follow her judgment. But what saith Christ? Be of good cheer; although the world will persecute you, yet I have overcome the world. Oh! comfortable sentence! I have overcome the world. This undoubtedly he meaneth for you and me, and all other his children, that he hath overcome the world for us; but by what means? Surely, by suffering contempt, wrong, false reports, and even very shameful and most bitter death. If he went this way, and won the victory this way, as I trust we know, let us as his servants (whose state ought not to be above our masters) not be dismayed of contempt, of wrong, of loss of goods, or life itself; but rather joyfully suffer the same as men, knowing we have better portions in heaven, and that this is the sure

way to victory most victorious ; for by many tribulations must we enter into the kingdom of heaven, if we will come thither, except for tribulation's sake we will with ease and worldly quietness go to hell. You know that Paul saith, all that will live godly in Christ Jesu must suffer persecution ; wherefore in that you are in Christ Jesu, I dare say you will continue, though persecution come to you ; being assured that it cannot come except God have so decreed ; and if he have so decreed, then cannot you but receive it, or else a cross which will be much worse ; willingly therefore take what cross the Lord shall offer, and then the Lord will make you able to bear it, and never tempt you further than he will make you strong enough ; yea, all the hairs of your head he will number and keep, so that one of them shall not perish ; but if you should refuse God's cross, especially in suffering the loss of any thing for his sake, which giveth you all the good that ever you have, and keepeth it ; if, I say, you refuse, be certain the plagues of God will be poured down, first on your soul and conscience, in hardening your heart, and blinding your mind, either by bringing you into despair, or into a contempt and carnal security, whereafter will ensue loss of the dearest things you have, if God love you, or else he will conserve the same to your eternal destruction. I write not this as distrusting your constancy in God's cause, God forbid (for methink I am assured of your godly zeal), but I do it as I said, that you may be the more heedly, wary, diligent, and earnestly given to call upon the name of God for his help and grace of perseverance, which is more ready to give than we to ask.

I know this kind of writing is madness to the world, foolishness to reason, and sour to the flesh ; but to you which are a man of God, and by profession in baptism have forsaken the world, and do consider

things after the reach of faith, and have tasted of the good Spirit of God, and of the life to come, unto such a one, I say (as I trust you be), this kind of writing is otherwise esteemed. For here you are but a pilgrim, your home is in heaven, your treasures are there hoarded, where thieves cannot come to steal them; there is your heart, and therefore you can and will say as the philosopher said, when he was robbed of all he had, I carry all with me. If he an heathen took his riches to be the world's rather than his, how much more should we so do?

Therefore, my dear brother, accordingly prepare yourself, as you have done, and do, I hope. Read the second of Ecclesiasticus, how he counselleth them that will serve God, to prepare themselves to temptation. Often set before your eyes the judgment of Christ, his coming in the clouds, and the resurrection which is now our comfort, especially in afflictions. I write to you none otherwise than I am persuaded (I thank God) and purpose to go before you; I know there is an eternal life; I hope to be partaker of it through Christ; I know this is the way thither, I mean by suffering; I know, if we suffer with him, we shall reign with him; I know that by the cross, he maketh us like to Christ here, that we might be like to him elsewhere; therefore I write to you not words only. And hereupon I am the more earnest, as to admonish so to pray you to cleave still to the Lord and his true religion which you have received, and I for my part am sure that I have preached unto you. For the confirmation whereof, as I am in bonds, so I trust in the goodness of God and his power to give my life in and for the same, that you and others might be certain, and follow as God shall call you and vouch you worthy. Remember, die you must; but when, as you know not, so where and how, it is uncertain to you. Again, all that you have

you must leave behind you, for nothing shall go with you but a good or an evil conscience. Moreover, to whom you shall leave your goods, it is hid from you, for you may purpose, but God will dispose; therefore if God will have you to die, or to lose your goods for his cause, how much are you bound then to bless God? Sure you may be that then you cannot perish, for of all ways to heaven, it is the most sure way. Your goods God will preserve, so that your children shall find them, although the wicked spoil every piece of them; for the righteous man's seed I have not seen (saith David) beg their bread, but God will bless them unto a thousand generations; the which thing I pray God to remember towards your children for his name's sake. Amen.

Thus will I betake you to God, and to his holy word, which is able, as to teach you which way to serve God, so to save you if you believe and love it. If I thought it might do you any good, I would send you a book which James Bradshaw already hath, to teach you how you should behave yourselves, especially concerning the mass. I wrote it since my trouble. Commend me to T. Riddlestone, although I fear me he have defiled himself in this false service. That book I would wish he would read, as you shall advertise me, I will do in sending to him. I shall pray God to illuminate his eyes with his grace. Commend me to Sir W. Charlton, who, I trust, hath kept himself pure from idolatry. God grant he so continue. Written in haste, as it appeareth, from the Counter in the Poultry,

By yours in Christ,

JOHN BRADFORD.

To my good Friends in the Lord, Master R. and his Wife.

My dearly beloved, I heartily commend me unto you in our common Christ, whom I so call, not that I would make him as common things be, that is, nothing set by, but because by him we are brought into a communion, and that as with him so with his Father, and as with his Father so with all God's people, if we be his people, as I trust we are; and therefore write I unto you as one careful (but not so much as I should be) for you, as for them whose well doing comforteth me, and is profitable to me, and whose evil doing maketh me heavy and woundeth me.

The days are come in the which we cannot but declare what we be, if we be indeed as we should be, as I trust we are, that is, if we be Christ's disciples; I mean, we cannot now do as the world doth, or say as it saith, but as God's church doth and saith. The world seeketh itself, and speaketh thereafter; the church of God seeketh Christ's glory, and speaketh accordingly; the worldlings follow the world, the church children follow their Captain Christ; and therefore as of the world they are not known to be as they be, so are they hated, and, if God permit it, are persecuted and slain, the which persecution is the true touchstone which trieth the true church children from hypocrites, as the wind doth the wheat from the chaff. And of this gear this our time and age setteth very many forth for example, doctrine, and fear, which once were hearty and very zealous, and now are so cold, that they smell nothing of the Spirit; for they are not only afraid to seem to speak with a church child, but also ashamed, and not only ashamed of them, and so of that they profess, but

also frame and fashion themselves in all outward behaviour, as in coming to church, and hearing mass, so as no man can accuse them for not allowing it or not honouring it as well as the Papists, where in their hearts they disallow it, and know the same to be nought, at the least they have known it; but halting out of the way may perchance have brought them so far, that now they cannot see the way, they are so far and so long gone astray; for the further and longer a man goeth wide, the harder shall it be to recover and see the way; and therefore the Apostle giveth warning thereof (Heb. xii.), as doth Moses (Deut. xxix.), speaking of men that bless themselves, inwardly cursing themselves. Read both the chapters, I pray you, and mark the example of Master Hales, which after that he consented to seem to allow in outward fact, that which he knew once was evil, was fearfully left of God to our admonition. For albeit God hath not done this to all that have indeed done that he purposeth to do, yet in this example he teacheth us how fearful a thing it is to wound our conscience, and do any thing there-against, to the offence of the godly, and comfort of the obstinate.

I write not this as thereof to accuse you, or either of you; for as I cannot lightly be persuaded of any such thing of you, so I am assured you hitherto would not do any such thing, for I ween there be yet no great penalty to punish you for not so doing, if thereof you should have been accused. For he that will do a thing unforced, I cannot hope any thing of the same, but that he will run apace when he is forced. But of this enough to you, which are to be comforted and exhorted to continue in that pureness of religion which you have (as I think) hitherto received, and by your open conversation protested. Howbeit, considering how you have heard

and read as much as in manner can be spoken herein (for the Scriptures, which of themselves are most perfect herein, you have read and read again), I think it good to exhort you to use earnest and hearty prayer (as I trust you do), and then doubtless God will so write that you have read in your hearts, as shall be both comfortable and profitable unto you and others plentifully. You shall rejoice in the strait way, which few find, and fewer walk in, but most few continue therein to the end. (Matt. vii.) You shall suffer with joy the direption of your goods, because the best part of your substance is in heaven. You will set before you the example of Christ, the beginner and ender of your faith, who suffered much more than we can suffer, that we should not be faint-hearted. (Heb. x. xii.) You will rejoice, and greatly, because great is your reward in heaven. (Matt. v.) You will be glad that God accounteth you worthy to suffer any thing for his sake. (Acts, iv.) You will set before you the end of this your short cross, and the great glory which will ensue the same. (2 Cor. iv.) You will know that it is no small benefit of God to suffer for his sake. You will know that your sorrowing shall be turned to joying. (2 Thess. i.) You will know that as God doth make you now like to Christ in suffering, so shall you be in reigning; and if you be partakers of affliction, you shall be also of his glory, &c. (Phil. i. John, xiv. xvi. Rom. viii.) Lastly, you will know that this is the surest and safest way to heaven, which is called the kingdom of patience. (Rev. i.) But because I have written a little treatise hereof, and of the harm of halting with the world in coming to mass, I send them both unto you to peruse and read them, and then at your leisure to redeliver them to this bringer, or my man, when I shall send to you for the same. In the mean season, I shall as heartily as I can pray to God for you both,

my most dear members in the Lord. What said I, as heartily as I can? God forgive me, for I do nothing so well as I might, in that I flatter myself too much, God lay it not to my charge. Indeed I have most cause to pray night and day, and to give thanks night and day, for you both. The Lord of mercy in Christ bless you both, keep you both, and send you both as well to do as I wish to my dearest and best beloved friends and brethren in the Lord. I pray you continue to pray for me, as I doubt not you do, and so give thanks to God for me, for he is good, and his mercy endureth for ever. The day will come when we shall meet together, and never part. God send it shortly. Amen.

JOHN BRADFORD.

*To the Worshipful Sir WILLIAM FITZWILLIAMS,
then being Knight Marshal of the King's Bench.*

THE peace of God proper to his people, the Holy Ghost work daily and deeply in your heart through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

I thank my Lord and God, through his Son our Mediator and Saviour, for his mercies and graces given to your Mastership; the which I beseech his goodness to increase in you continually to your everlasting comfort in him, by his mercies towards you. I mean not in your lands, possessions, offices, natural wisdom, riches, health, form, &c. which indeed be gifts of God given to you of his mercy without your deserts, and therefore should he be daily of you praised for the same, as I doubt not but he is, for else your ingratitude would provoke him to punish you in them and by them, if he love you; but I mean his mercies towards you in the knowledge and love of his truth in religion, the which benefit in that you, amongst the not many of your estate and con-

dition, as St. Paul witnesseth (1 Cor. i.), have received as a very testimonial of your election in Christ. I would be sorry that you should need any such as I am to move you to thankfulness; for I am not in a mannering whether you be thankful to God for this great mercy, which is much more to be esteemed than all that ever you have. I humbly beseech God in his Christ to increase the same in you to the very end. And that by me he might do the same in some part, I thought it good and also my bounden duty deeply deserved on your behalf towards me (for the which I beseech the Lord to reward you), to send you this Treatise of the doings of Master Ridley at Oxford, concerning his disputation about the sacrament. I know that there hath gone divers copies abroad, but none of them were as, I know, this is; for I have translated it out of that copy in Latin, which was corrected with his own hand, which came unto me not without his own consent, and therefore dare I be bold to say that this hath not before been seen on this sort. In reading whereof you shall well see this I speak to be most true, and also that which causeth me to suppress commendations of the thing (the excellency and worthiness thereof I mean), because I think I cannot speak any thing so worthily as undoubtedly these his doings do deserve. Unto your Mastership I send them, as a token of my duty towards you, thereby to declare, that as you deserve much of me, so I would shew myself willing to recompense the same if I could; but in that I cannot, and also your doing is simply in respect of God and his cause, I will, according to your expectation, leave the recompense unto him; in the mean season praying him, that of his goodness he would as increase the knowledge and love of his truth in you, so strengthen you after your vocation, both purely to walk, and manfully to confess his Gospel,

if he shall think it needful to call you to that honour; for surely, of all honours, it is the greatest to suffer any thing for Christ's sake. Most happy may that man think himself that hath any thing for his cause to lose. As he shall be sure to find for his own part eternal felicity and honour endless, so shall his posterity even temporally prove this to be most true. For God's sake therefore, right worshipful Sir, consider well this gear, and weigh it not as the world and your mother wit will move you to do, but as the word of God doth teach you; there shall you see this I speak of, to be matter of much mirth, joy, and glory, though to the world it seem clean contrary. God's good Spirit always guide you to his glory, and give you the spirit of prayer, continually to pray that God never further tempt you than he will make you able to bear. Amen. In that this copy is not so fair written as I wish and would have had it, I shall desire you to consider where I am, and how I cannot have things so done as I would, and therefore you have it as may be, when it may not be as I would it were and should be.

From the King's Bench.

Your humble

JOHN BRADFORD.

To my good Brother, Master COKER, at Maldon, in Essex.

ALTHOUGH I have presently both little time and less opportunity otherwise to write as I would, yet, as I may, I thought better to write something, than utterly to be silent. For if I should not so do, having so convenient a messenger, as I might towards you incur the suspicion of ingratitude and forgetfulness, so might I not satisfy the desire of this my poor brother and friend, John Searchfield, which cometh unto you for help and comfort in this troublesome

time. This dare I say, that the man feareth God, and for God's sake and conscience towards him, sustaineth both loss and labour. For our common Father's sake therefore in Christ, help him to some hole to hide himself in for a little time, if conveniently you may; and remember, that he that receiveth one of Christ's little ones, receiveth Christ, as he himself in the last day will acknowledge, which last day let us often look on and set before us, as the thing which most maketh to our comfort. Now we sorrow and sigh to see the sea swell and rage, on this sort as it doth; and, to confess the truth, we have double cause, as well because we have deserved this sour sauce, by reason of our unthankfulness and many sins (which the Lord pardon), as because God's glory is trodden under foot. But this comfort we have, that as God our good Father will not the death of a sinner, so will he order this gear most to his glory and our joy and comfort, if we repent now, and heartily lament our evils, use earnest, humble, and often, yea, continual prayer, and cast ourselves wholly on him and his goodness, still labouring to loath this life, and longing for the life to come; for the which we should account this as it is, a very vale of misery, much to be mourned in, because the time of our habitation herein and exile is prolonged. God grant us his holy Spirit, to strengthen us in his truth professed, that we may persevere to the end, to the joyful and courageous confessing of his Christ. Amen.

I pray you continue, as I trust you do, to keep both soul and body pure in God's service; strive to enter in at the narrow gate, though you leave your lands and goods behind you. It is not lost which for Christ's sake we leave, but lent to a great usury. Remember that this time is come but to try us. God make us faithful to the end. God keep us

always as his children. Amen. I pray you commend me to Master Osbourn, and to all our good brethren in the Lord. The peace of Christ be with us all. Amen. Amen.

Yours in Christ,

JOHN BRADFORD.

To a Friend of his, instructing him how he should answer his Adversaries.

My good brother, our merciful God and dear Father through Christ, open your eyes effectually to see, and your heart ardently to desire the everlasting joy, which he hath prepared for his slaughter sheep, that is, for such as shrink not from his truth for any storm's sake. Amen.

When you shall come before the magistrates to give an answer of the hope which is in you, do it with all reverence and simplicity. And because you may be something afraid by the power of the magistrates and cruelty which they will threaten against you, I would set before you the good father Moses to follow his example; for he set the invisible God before his eyes of faith, and with them looked upon God, and his glorious majesty and power, as with his corporal eyes he saw Pharaoh and all his fearful terrors. So do you, my dearly beloved, let your inward eyes give such light unto you, that as you know you are before the magistrates, so and much more you and they also are present before the face of God, which will give such wisdom to you, fearing him, and seeking his praise, as the enemies shall wonder at; and further, he will so order their hearts and doings, that they shall, will they nill they, serve God's providence towards you (which you cannot avoid though you would), as shall be most to his glory and your everlasting comfort. Therefore, my

good brother, let your whole study be only to please God, put him always before your eyes, for he is on your right hand, lest you should be moved; he is faithful, and never will suffer you to be tempted above that he will make you able to bear; yea, every hair of your head he hath numbered, so that one of them shall not perish without his good will, which cannot be but good unto you, in that he is become your Father through Christ; and therefore as he hath given you to believe in him (God increase this belief in us all), so doth he now graciously give unto you to suffer for his name's sake; the which you ought with all thankfulness to receive, in that you are made worthy to drink of the self-same cup, which not only the very sons of God have drunk of before you, but even the very natural Son of God himself hath brought you good luck. Oh! he of his mercy make us thankful to pledge him again! Amen.

Because the chiefest matter they will trouble you and go about to deceive you withal, is the sacrament, not of Christ's body and blood, but of the altar (as they call it), thereby destroying the sacrament which Christ instituted, I would you noted these two things: first, that the sacrament of the altar, which the priest offereth in the mass, and eateth privately with himself, is not the sacrament of Christ's body and blood instituted by him, as Christ's institution, plainly written and set forth in the Scriptures, being compared to their using of it, plainly doth declare.

Again, if they talk with you of Christ's sacrament, instituted by him, whether it be Christ's body or no, answer them, that as to the eyes of your reason, to your taste, and corporal senses, it is bread and wine, and therefore the Scripture calleth it after the consecration so; even so to the eyes, taste, and senses of your faith, which ascendeth to the right hand of

God in heaven, where Christ sitteth, it is in very very deed Christ's body and blood, which spiritually your soul feedeth on, to everlasting life, in faith and by faith, even as your body presently feedeth on the sacramental bread and sacramental wine. By this means, as you shall not allow transubstantiation, nor none of their popish opinions, so shall you declare the sacrament to be a matter of faith, and not of reason, as the Papists make it. For they deny God's omnipotence, in that they say Christ is not there, if bread be there; but faith looketh on the omnipotency of God, joined with his promise, and doubteth not but that Christ is able to give that he promiseth us spiritually by faith, the bread still remaining in substance, as well as if the substance of bread were taken away; for Christ saith not in any place, this is no bread: but of this gear God shall instruct you, if you hang on his promise, and pray for the power and wisdom of his Spirit, which undoubtedly, as you are bound to look for praying for it, so he hath bound himself by his promise to give it; the which thing he grant unto us both, and to all his people, for his name's sake, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

JOHN BRADFORD.

*To mine own good Brother, Master JOHN PHILPOT,
Prisoner in the King's Bench.*

My dear brother, God our Father be praised for the good he doth work in you and by you. Even now I have received your loving letters, wherein I see cause to bless God for the wisdom, love, and efficacy he hath and doth work in you and by you. Go on, for God's sake, to seek unity in Christ. If any will go to work dissemblingly, refuse it not; either shall it increase his damnation, or occasion him the sooner to conversion. Judas dissembling

turned to the hurt of himself only. If once we come into an unity and love, then shall we not respect one another, neither take things into the worse part. Nothing hindereth them more, than for that now they hear all that ever we speak with prejudice, where, if an unity be had, this prejudice will be taken away, and so then shall they see the truth the sooner. Therefore, mine own dearest brother, go on, and bring it to a good end. God our Father be with thee for ever. Amen.

Pray, my good brother, and desire mine own fellow and beloved brother, J. Careless, to do the like. I shall pray for you, both in my prayers with others, and with myself alonely, as for my most dear brother upon earth. I will not forget, by God's grace, to write in the behalf of our brethren in necessity. Jesus Christ, our sweet Saviour, be with us all, Emmanuel, for ever. Amen.

Your own in the Lord,

JOHN BRADFORD.

To my good Brother, R. COLE.

MINE own good brother, our good and most merciful Father, more and more embrace us in the arms of his mercy, as his loving and own natural children, and give us one to embrace another in the arms of love as true brethren, that with one heart and mind we may praise his holy name in Christ our Saviour, and through the grace of his Spirit may mightily every one fight against sin, and all that is against the kingdom of Christ, whereunto (my beloved) we are called effectually to our everlasting felicity (I doubt not), praised be the name of our good God therefor for ever and ever. Amen.

My own heart in the Lord, desire our brethren that every one would bend himself to bow; let us

never break. Love suffereth long, and seeketh not herself. We have all one Father, we are all brethren. God keep us from dissension. If we cannot agree in all points, either the points perchance be not so necessary, or else by love we shall hereafter be brought to see that which yet is hid. If love may appear in all our doings, and that we seek one another with a simple and a single eye in God's sight, doubtless all prejudice, whereby we are letted to see manifest things, will be had away, and we will take things spoken and done in the best part, and so doubtless the name of our Father shall be sanctified in us and by us, as by instruments of grace; and God's kingdom shall increase apace in us and by us also, which thing he grant for his mercy's sake. Amen.

Commend me heartily, I pray you, to both those good women: good I call them, because I am persuaded that God will deliver them, especially my good Mary. I will not cease, but even as for myself to pray to God for them, and for you, my right dear brother in the Lord. If you were acquainted with M. Robert Harrington, you would find a plain Nathaniel; you should see the worst at the first. I dare say for him, his only desire is to please God, and he is afraid to offend him. Pray for him, and for my good sister, J. H. as I know she doth for you. The peace of God be with you, mine own in the Lord.

JOHN BRADFORD.

To Mistress BROWN.

GOOD sister, I beseech God to make perfect the good he hath begun in you unto the very end. Amen.

This life more and more waxeth unto us as it should be, that is, a miserable life, a weeping life, a woful life, and therefore let us long for our happy

life, our laughing life, our joyful life, which we shall enjoy, and then have in very deed, when we depart by death out of this dangerous state, wherein we now are, by reason of this sinful flesh which we carry about us. Therefore let us prepare ourselves accordingly, and in misery and sorrow be glad through hope. Now we are dispersed, but we shall be gathered together again there, where we shall never part, but always be together in joy eternal. In hope hereof let us bear with better will our bitter burdens which we feel, and shall feel in this miserable world: we have cause to thank God, that maketh this world unto us a wilderness. If so be therein we be patient, kiss God's rod, and humble ourselves before God, assuredly we shall come into the most pleasant land of rest; wherefore (good sister), as I said, I say again, be merry with sorrow, rejoice in hope, be patient in trouble, pray in affliction; and, amongst other, I pray you heartily pray for me, that God would forgive me my unthankfulness, not only against you, which is great indeed, but also against all his people, but especially against his majesty. As I can, I shall commend you unto the tuition of our shepherd Christ, who always keep us as his lambs, for his holy name's sake. Amen.

Your afflicted brother,

JOHN BRADFORD.

An Exhortation to the patient Suffering of Trouble and Affliction for Christ's Cause, written to all the unfeigned Professors of the Gospel throughout the Realm of England, at the Beginning of his Imprisonment.

THE holy Spirit of God, which is the earnest and pledge of God given to his people for their comfort and consolation, be poured into our hearts by the

mighty power and mercies of our alone Saviour Jesus Christ, now and for ever. Amen.

Because I perceive plainly, that to the evils fallen upon us, which profess Christ's Gospel, greater are most like to ensue, and after them greater, till the measure of iniquity be up heaped (except we shrink, and having put our hands to the plough do look back, and so with Lot's wife and the Israelites, desiring to return into Egypt, fall into God's heavy displeasure incurably, Gen. xv. xix. Luke, ix. ; all which God forbid) ; and because I am persuaded of you, my dearly beloved brethren and sisters, throughout the realm of England, which have professed unfeignedly the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (for unto such do I write this epistle), that as ye have begun to take part with God's Gospel and truth, so through his grace ye will persevere, and go on forwards, notwithstanding the storms risen and to arise. I cannot but write something unto you, lustily to go on forwards in the way of the Lord, and not to become faint-hearted or fearful, whose place St. John appointeth (Rev. xxi.) with the unbelievers, murderers, and idolaters in eternal perdition ; but cheerfully to take the Lord's cup, and drink of it afore it draw towards the dregs and bottom, whereof at the length they shall drink with the wicked to eternal destruction, which will not receive it at the first with God's children ; with whom God beginneth his judgment, that as the wicked world rejoiceth when they lament, so they may rejoice when the wicked world shall mourn, and without end find woe intolerable. (Psa. lxxv. 1 Pet. iv. John, xvi.)

First therefore, my dearly beloved in the Lord, I beseech you to consider, that though ye be in the world, yet ye are not of the world. (John, xiv.) Ye are not of them which look for their portion in this

life (Psa. xvii.), whose captain is the god of this world, even Satan, who now ruffeth it apace, as he were wood, because his time on earth is not long. (2 Cor. iv. Rev. xii.) But ye are of them that look for a city of God's own blessing. Ye are of them that know yourselves to be here but pilgrims and strangers; for here ye have no dwelling-place. (Heb. xi. xii. xiii. 1 Pet. ii.) Ye are of them whose portion is the Lord, and which have their hope in heaven, whose Captain is Christ Jesus, the Son of God, and governor of heaven and earth. Unto him is given all power, yea, he is God Almighty, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, praise-worthy for ever. (Matt. xxviii. Rom. ix.) Ye are not of them which receive the beast's mark, which here rejoice, laugh, and have their heart's ease, joy, paradise, and pleasure, but ye are of them which have received the angel's mark, yea, God's mark, which here lament, mourn, sigh, sob, weep, and have your wilderness to wander in, your purgatory, and even hell to purge and burn up your sins. (Rev. xiii. Luke, vi. Ezek. ix.) Ye are not of them which cry, Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die; ye are not of that number which say, they have made a covenant with death and hell for hurting them; ye are not of them which take it for a vain thing to serve the Lord (Matt. v. 1 Cor. xv. Isaiah, xxii. xxviii.); ye are not of them which are lulled and rocked asleep in Jezebel's bed—a bed of security (Rev. iii.); ye are not of the number of them which say, Tush, God is in heaven, and seeth us not, nor much passeth what we do (Psa. lxxiii.); ye are not of the number of them which will fall down for the muck of the world to worship the fiend, or for displeasing of men to worship the golden image. (Matt. iv. Dan. iii.) Finally, ye are not of the number of them which set more by your pigs than by Christ, which, for ease and rest

in this life, will say and do as Antiochus biddeth you do or say, and will follow the multitude to do evil, with Zedechias and the three hundred false prophets; yea, Ahab, Jezabel, and the whole court and country. (Matt. viii. 1 Mac. i. ii. Exod. xiii. 1 Kings, xxii.) But ye are of the number of them which are dead already, or at least be in dying daily to yourselves and to this world; ye are of them which have made a covenant with God, to forsake yourselves in this world, and Satan also; ye are of them which say, Nay, the Lord hath all things written in his memorial book, for such as fear him, and remember his name. (Rom. vi. vii. Col. iii. Luke, xii. Mal. iii.) ; ye are of them which have their loins girded about, and their lights burning in their hands, like unto men that wait for their Lord's coming (Luke, xii.) ; ye are in the number of them that say, The Lord looketh down from heaven, and beholdeth the children of men, from the habitation of his dwelling; he considereth all them that dwell upon the earth (Psa. xxxiii. xiv. ci.) ; ye are of the number of them which will worship the only Lord God, and will not worship the works of man's hands, though the oven burn never so hot; ye are of the number of them to whom Christ is precious and dear, which cry out rather because your habitation is prolonged here, as David did (1 Pet. ii. Psa. cxx.) ; ye are of them which follow Mattathias and the godly Jews, which knew the way to life to be a strait way, and few to go through it, which will not stick to follow poor Micaiah, although he be racked and cast into prison, having the sun, moon, seven stars, and all against him. (Matt. vii. 1 Kings, xxii.)

Thus therefore, dearly beloved, remember, first, that (as I said) ye are not of this world; that Satan is not your captain; your joy and paradise is not here; your companions are not the multitude of

worldlings, and such as seek to please men, and live here at ease in the service of Satan. But ye are of another world; Christ is your Captain, your joy is in heaven, where your conversation is; your companions are the fathers, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, virgins, confessors, and the dear saints of God, which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, dipping their garments in his blood, knowing this life and world to be full of evil, a warfare, a smoke, a shadow, a vapour, and as replenished, so environed with all kind of miseries. (Heb. xiii. Rev. vii. Job, vii. viii. xiv. Psal. ix. James, iv.) This is the first thing which I would have you often and diligently with yourselves to consider and muse well upon, namely, what ye be, and where ye be.

Now, secondly, forget not to call to mind that ye ought not to think it any strange thing if misery, trouble, adversity, persecution, and displeasure come upon you. For how can it otherwise be, but that trouble and persecution must come upon you? Can the world love you, which are none of his? can worldly men regard you, which are your chief enemies soldiers? (1 Pet. iv. v. John, xiv.) can Satan suffer you to be in rest, which will do no homage unto him? can this way be chosen of any that make it so narrow and strait as they do? will ye look to travel, and to have no foul way or rain? will shipmen shrink, or sailors on the sea give over, if storms arise? do they not look for such? and (dearly beloved) did not we enter into God's ship and ark of baptism at the first? will you then count it strange, if perils come or tempests blow? are not ye travelling to your heavenly city of Jerusalem, where is all joy and felicity? and will ye now tarry by the way for storms and showers? The mart and fair will then be past, the night will so come upon you, that ye cannot travel, the door will be sparred, and the bride

will be at supper. (John, ix. Matt. xxv.) Therefore away with dainty niceness. Will ye think the Father of heaven will deal more gently with you in this age than he hath done with others, his dearest friends in other ages? what way, yea, what storms and tempests, what troubles and disquietness found Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and good Joseph? which of these had so fair a life and restful times as we have had? Moses, Aaron, Samuel, David the king, and all the good kings, priests, prophets in the Old Testament, at one time or other (if not throughout their life) did feel a thousand parts more misery than we have felt hitherto. (Gen. iv. vi. vii. viii. ix. &c. Exod. ii. iii. iv. v. &c.)

As for the New Testament, Lord God, how great was the affliction of Mary, of Joseph, of Zacharias, of Elizabeth, of John Baptist, of all the Apostles and Evangelists, yea, of Jesus Christ our Lord, the dear Son and darling of God? And since the time of the Apostles, how many and great are the numbers of martyrs, confessors, and such as have suffered the shedding of their blood in this life, rather than they would be stayed in their journey, or lodge in any of Satan's inns, lest the storms or winds which fell in their travellings might have touched them? And, dearly beloved, let us think what we are, and how far unmeet to be matched with these, with whom yet we look to be placed in heaven. But with what face can we look for this, that are so fearful and unwilling to leave that, which, will we nill we, we must leave, and that so shortly, as we know not the time when? Where is our abrenouncing and forsaking of the world and the flesh, which we solemnly took upon us in baptism? Ah! shameless cowards that we be, which will not follow the trace of so many fathers, patriarchs, kings, priests, prophets, apostles, evangelists, and saints of God, yea,

even of the very Son of God! (1 Pet. v.) How many now go with you lustily, as I and all your brethren in bonds and exile for the Gospel? Pray for us, for, God willing, we will not leave you now, we will go before you; ye shall see in us by God's grace that we preached no lies nor tales of tubs, but even the very true word of God, for the confirmation whereof we by God's grace, and the help of your prayers, will willingly and joyfully give our blood to be shed, as already we have given our livings, goods, friends, and natural country; for now be we certain that we be in the highway to heaven's bliss; as St. Paul saith, by many tribulations and persecutions we must enter into God's kingdom. (Acts, xiv.) And because we would go thither ourselves, and bring you thither also, therefore the devil stirreth up the coals; and forasmuch as we all loitered in the way, he hath therefore received power of God to overcast the weather, and to stir up storms, that we, God's children, might more speedily go on forwards, and make more haste (Matt. viii. xiv.), as the counterfeits and hypocrites will tarry and linger till the storms be past; and so when they come, the market will be done, and the doors sparred, as it is to be feared. Read Matt. xxv. This wind will blow God's children forwards, and the devil's dearlings backward; therefore, like God's children, let us go on forward apace, the wind is on our backs, hoist up the sails, lift up your hearts and hands unto God in prayer, and keep your anchor of faith to cast out in time of trouble on the rock of God's word and mercy in Christ, by the cable of God's verity, and I warrant you. And thus much for you secondly to consider, that affliction, persecution, and trouble is no strange thing to God's children, and therefore it should not dismay, discourage, or discomfot us, for

it is none other thing than all God's dear friends have tasted in their journey to heavenwards.

As I would in this troublesome time that ye would consider what ye be by the goodness of God in Christ, even citizens of heaven, though ye be presently in the flesh, even in a strange region on every side full of fierce enemies, and what weather and way the dearest friends of God have found, even so would I have you, thirdly, to consider for your further comfort, that if ye shrink not, but go on forwards, pressing to the mark appointed, all the power of your enemies shall not overcome you, nor in any point hurt you. (Phil. iii.) But this must not you consider according to the judgment of reason, and the sense of old Adam, but according to the judgment of God's word and the experience of faith and the new man, for else you mar all. For to reason, and to the experience of our sense, or of the outward man, we poor souls which stick to God's word, to serve him as he requireth, only are counted to be vanquished and to be overcome, in that we are cast into prison, lose our livings, friends, goods, country, and life also at the length concerning this world. But, dearly beloved, God's word teacheth otherwise, and faith feeleth accordingly. Is it not written, Who shall separate us from the love of God? Shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, either hunger, either nakedness, either peril, either sword? (Rom. viii.) As it is written, For thy sake are we killed all the day long, and are counted as sheep appointed to be slain. (Psa. xliv.) Nevertheless, in all these things we overcome through Him that loved us: for I am sure that neither death, neither life, neither angels, nor rule, neither power, neither things present, neither things to come, neither high nor low, neither any creature shall be able to part us from that love wherewith God loveth us in Christ Jesu

our Lord. Thus spake one which was in affliction, as I am, for the Lord's Gospel sake, his holy name be praised therefor, and he grant me grace with the same to continue in like suffering unto the end. This (I say) one spake which was in affliction for the Gospel, but yet so far from being overcome, that he rejoiced rather of the victory which the Gospel had. For though he was bound, yet the Gospel was not bound (2 Tim. ii.), and therefore giveth he thanks unto God, which alway giveth the victory in Christ, and openeth the savour of his knowledge by us, and such as suffer for his truth, although they shut us up never so much, and drive us never so far out of our own natural country in every place. (2 Cor. ii.)

The world for a time may deceive itself, thinking it hath the victory, but yet the end will try the contrary. Did not Cain think he had the victory when Abel was slain? (Gen. iv.) But how say you now, is it not found otherwise? Thought not the old world and men then living that they were wise and well, and Noah a fool, which would creep into an ark, leaving his house, lands, and possessions, for I think he was in an honest state for the world; but I pray you who was wise when the flood came? Abraham (I trow) was considered a fool, to leave his own country, friends, and kin, because of God's word; but, dearly beloved, we know it proved otherwise. (Gen. xii.) I will leave all the patriarchs, and come to Moses, and the children of Israel. Tell me, were not they thought to be overcome and stark mad, when for fear of Pharaoh, at God's word, they ran into the Red Sea? (Exod. xiv.) Did not Pharaoh and the Egyptians think themselves sure of the victory? But, I trow, it proved clean contrary. Saul was thought well, and David in an evil case, and most miserable, because he had no hole to hide him in; but at the length Saul's misery was

seen, and David's felicity began to appear. (1 Sam. xvi. xvii. xviii. xix.) The prophet Micaiah being cast into prison for telling Ahab the truth, was thought to be overcome of Zedekiah and the other false prophets; but, my good brethren and sisters, the holy history telleth otherwise. (1 Kings, xxii.) Who did not think the Prophets unhappy in their time? For they were slain, prisoned, laughed to scorn, and jested at of every man. (Jer. xx. Isa. viii. 2 Kings, ii.) And so were all the Apostles (1 Cor. iv.), yea, the dearly beloved friend of God, than whom among the children of women none arose greater, I mean, John Baptist, who was beheaded, and that in prison, even for a dancing damsel's desire. As all these to the judgment of reason were then counted heretics, runagates, unlearned, fools, fishers, publicans, &c. so now unhappy and overcome indeed, if God's word and faith did not shew the contrary. (Rom. viii.)

But what speak I of these? Look upon Jesus Christ, to whom we must be like fashioned here, if we will be like him elsewhere. Now say ye, was not he taken for a most fool, a seditious person, a new fellow, an heretic, and one overcome of every body; yea, even forsaken, both of God and men? But the end told them, and telleth us another tale; for now is he in majesty and glory unspeakable. When he was led to Pilate or Herod, or when he was in prison in Caiaphas' house, did not their reason think, that he was overcome? When he was beaten, buffeted, scourged, crowned with thorns, hanged upon the cross, and utterly left of all his disciples, taunted of the high priests and holy fathers, cursed of the commons, railed on of the magistrates, and laughed to scorn of the lewd heathen, would not a man then have thought that he had been out of the way, and his disciples fools to follow him, and believe him? Think ye, that whilst he did lie in his grave, men did

not point with their fingers, when they saw any that had followed and loved him, or believed in him and his doctrine, saying, Where is their master and teacher now? What! is he gone? Forsooth, if they had not been fools, they might have well known that this learning he taught could not long continue. Our doctors and pharisees are no fools now, they may see. On this sort either men spake, or might have spoken, against all such as loved Christ or his doctrine; but yet at the length they and all such were proved fools and wicked wretches. For our Saviour arose, maugre their beards, and published his Gospel plentifully, spite of their heads, and the heads of all the wicked world, with the great powers of the same, always overcoming, and then most of all, when he and his doctrine was thought to have the greatest fall. As now (dearly beloved) the wicked world rejoiceth, the Papists are puffed up against poor Christ and his people after their own kind, now cry they out, Where are these new-found preachers? Are they not in the Tower, Marshalsea, Fleet, and beyond the seas? Who would have thought that our old bishops, doctors, and deans were fools, as they would have made us to believe, and indeed have persuaded some already, which are not of the wisest, especially if they come not home again to the holy church?

These and such-like words they have, to cast in our teeth, as triumphers and conquerors; but, dearly beloved, short is their joy; they beguile themselves; this is but a lightning before their death. As God, after he had given the Jews a time to repent, visited them by Vespasian and Titus, most horribly to their utter subversion, delivering first all his people from among them, even so (my dear brethren) will he do with this age, when he hath tried his children from amongst them (as now he be-

ginneth), and by suffering hath made us like to his Christ, and, by being overcome, to overcome indeed to our eternal comfort; then will he, if not otherwise, come himself in the clouds (1 Thess. iv.), I mean, our dear Lord, whom we confess, preach, and believe on; he will come (I say) with the blast of a trump, and shout of an archangel, and so shall we be caught up in the clouds to meet him in the air, the angels gathering together the wicked wretches, which now walter and wallow, as the world and wind bloweth, to be tied in bundles, and cast into the fire, which burneth for ever most painfully. (Matt. xiii.) There and then shall they see who hath the victory, they or we, when they shall see us afar off in Abraham's bosom (Luke, xvi.): then will they say, Oh! we thought these folks fools, and had them in derision; we thought their life madness, and their end to be without honour; but look how they are counted among the children of God, and their portion is with the saints. (Wisd. iii.) Oh! we have gone amiss, and would not hearken. Such words as these shall the wicked say one day in hell, whereas now they triumph as conquerors. And thus much for you, thirdly, to look often upon; namely, that whatsoever is done unto you (yea, even death itself) shall not dash or hurt you, no more than it did Abel, David, Daniel, John Baptist, Jesus Christ our Lord, with other the dear saints of God, which suffered for his name's sake. Let not reason therefore be judge in this matter, nor present sense, but faith and God's word, as I have shewed; in the which, if we set before our eyes the shortness of this present time wherein we suffer, and consider the eternity to come, as our enemies and persecutors shall be in intolerable pains helpless; and if we persevere to the end, in such felicity and joys dangerless as the very heart of man in no point

is able to conceive (1 Cor. ii. Isa. lxiv.) ; if we consider this (I say), we cannot but even contemn and set nothing by the sorrows and gresses of the cross, and lustily go through thick and thin with good courage.

Thus have I declared unto you, in things necessary to be mused on of every one which will abide by Christ and his Gospel in this troublesome time, as I trust you all will, namely, first to consider that we are not of this world, nor of the number of the worldlings, or retainers to Satan, that we are not at home in our own country, but of another world, of the congregation of the saints, and retainers to Christ, although in a region replete and full of untractable enemies. Secondly, that we may not think it a strange thing to be persecuted for God's Gospel, from the which the dearest friends of God were in no age free, as indeed it is impossible that they should any long time be, their enemies being always about them to destroy them if they could. And thirdly, that the assaults of our enemies, be they never so many and fierce, in no point shall be able to prevail against our faith, albeit to reason it seemeth otherwise, wherethrough we ought to conceive a good courage and comfort ; for who will be afraid, when he knoweth the enemies cannot prevail ? Now will I, for the more encouraging you to the cross, give you a further memorandum, namely, of the commodities and profits which come by the trouble and affliction now risen and to arise to us, which be God's children elect, through Jesus Christ. But here look not to have a rehearsal of all the commodities which come by the cross to such as are exercised well therein, for that were more than I can do, I will only speak of a few thereby to occasion you to gather, and at the length to feel and perceive more.

First, in that there is no cross which cometh upon any of us without the counsel of our heavenly Father (for as for the fancy of fortune, it is wicked, as many places of the Scriptures do teach, Amos, iii. Matt. x. Isa. xlv.), we must needs, to the commendation of God's justice (for in all his doings he is just), acknowledge in ourselves that we have deserved at the hands of our heavenly Father this his cross or rod fallen upon us, we have deserved it, if not by our unthankfulness, slothfulness, negligence, intemperance, uncleanness, and other sins committed often by us, whereof our consciences can and will accuse us if we call them to counsel, with the examination of our former life, yet at least by our original and birth sin, as by doubting of the greatness of God's anger and mercy, by self-love, concupiscence, and such-like sins, which, as we brought with us into this world, so do the same alway abide in us, and even as a spring do always bring something forth in act with us, notwithstanding the continual fight of God's spirit in us against it. (Psa. l. Heb. xii. Gal. v.)

The first commodity therefore that the cross bringeth, is knowledge, and that double, of God and of ourselves; of God, that he is just, pure, and hateth sin; of ourselves, that we are born in sin, and are from top to toe defiled with concupiscence and corruption, out of the which have sprung all the evils that ever at any time we have spoken and done (Psa. li. Gen. viii. Jer. xvii.), the greatest and most special whereof by the cross we are occasioned to call to mind, as did the brethren of Joseph their evil fact against him when the cross once came upon them. (Gen. xlii.) And so by it we come to the first step to get health for our souls, that is, we are driven to know our sins, original and actual, by God's justice declared in the cross.

Secondly, the end wherefore God declareth his

justice against our sin original and actual, and would by his cross have us to consider the same, and to call to mind our former evil deed, the end whereof (I say) is this, that we might lament, be sorry, sigh, and pray for pardon, that so doing we might obtain the same by means of faith in the merits of Jesus Christ his dear Son; and further, that we being humbled, because of the evil that dwelleth in us, might become thankful for God's goodness and love, in continual watching and wariness to suppress the evil which lieth in us, that it bring not forth fruit to death at any time. (James, i.) This second commodity of the cross therefore must we not count to be a simple knowledge only, but a great gain of God's mercy, with wonderful, rich, and precious virtues of faith, repentance, remission of sins, humility, thankfulness, mortification, and diligence in doing good. Not that properly the cross worketh these things of itself, but because the cross is the mean and way by the which God worketh the knowledge and feeling of these things in his children; as many, both testimonies and examples in the Scriptures, are easily found of them that diligently weigh what therein they read.

To these two commodities of the cross, join the third of God's singular wisdom, that it may be coupled with his justice and mercy. On this sort therefore let us conceive, when we see the Gospel of God and his church persecuted and troubled, as now with us it is, that because the great, learned, and wise men of the world use not their wisdom to love and serve God, as to natural wisdom and reason he openeth himself manifestly by his visible creatures (Rom. i.), therefore both God justly infatuates and makes them foolish, giving them up to unsensibleness especially herein; for on this manner reason they concerning the affliction which cometh for the

Gospel: If (say they) this were God's word, if these people were God's children, surely God would then bless and prosper them and their doctrine. But now in that there is no doctrine so much hated, no people so much persecuted as they be, therefore it cannot be of God. Rather this is of God, which our Queen and old bishops have professed; for how hath God preserved them and kept them? what a notable victory hath God given unto her, where it was impossible that things should so have come to pass as they have done? And did not the great Captain confess his fault, that he was out of the way, and not of the faith which these gospellers profess? how many are come again, from that which they professed to be God's word? The most part of this realm (notwithstanding the diligence of preachers to persuade them concerning this new learning, which now is persecuted) never consented to it in heart, as experience teacheth. And what plagues have come upon this realm since this Gospel (as they call it) came in amongst us? Afore, we had plenty, but now there is nothing like as it was. Moreover, all the houses of the parliament have overthrown the laws made for the stablishing of this Gospel and religion, and new laws are erected for the continuance of the contrary. How miraculously doth God confound their doctrine, and confirm ours! For how was Wyat overthrown? how prosperously came in our King? how hath God blessed our Queen with fruit of womb? how is the Pope's Holiness restored again to his right? All these do teach plainly that this their doctrine is not God's word. Thus reason the worldly wise, which see not God's wisdom; for else, if they considered that there was with us unthankfulness for the Gospel, no amendment of life, but all kind of contempt of God, all kind of shameless sinning ensued the preaching of the Gospel; they must needs

see, that God could not but chastise and correct; and as he let Satan loose, after he had bound him a certain time, for unthankfulness of men, so to let these champions of Satan run abroad, by them to plague us for our unthankfulness. (Rom. xx.) Great was God's anger against Ahab, because he saved Benhadad, king of Syria, after he had given him into his hands, and afterwards it turned to his own destruction. (1 Kings, xx.) God would that double sorrow should have been repaid to them, because of the sorrow they did to the saints of God. Read the 18th of the Revelations.

As for the victory given to the Queen's Highness, if men had any godly wit, they might see many things in it. First, God hath done it to win her heart to the Gospel. Again, he hath done it, as well because they that went against her, put their trust in horses and power of men, and not in God, as because in their doing they sought not the propagation of God's Gospel, which thing is now plainly seen. Therefore no marvel why God fought against them, seeing they were hypocrites, and under the cloak of the Gospel, would have debarred the Queen's Highness of her right, but God would not so cloak them.

Now for the relenting, returning, and recanting of some from that which they once professed or preached. Alas! who would wonder at it? for they never came to the Gospel, but for commodity and gain's sake, and now for gain they leave it. The multitude is no good argument to move a wise man; for who knoweth not more to love this world, better than heaven, themselves better than their neighbours? Wide is the gate, saith Christ (Matt. vii.), and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat; but strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. All the whole multi-

tude cry out upon Jesus, Crucify him, truss him up, but (I trow) not because they were the bigger part, therefore they were to be believed. All Chaldea followed still their false gods, only Abraham followed the true God. (Gen. xii.) And where they say that greater plagues are fallen upon the realm in poverty and such other things than before, is no argument to move others, than such as love their swine better than Christ (Matt. viii.); for the devil chiefly desireth his seat to be in religion. If it be there, then he will meddle with nothing we have, all shall be quiet enough; but if he be raised thence, then will he beg leave to have at our pigs. Read Matt. viii. of the Gergesites. As long as with us he had the ruling of religion, which now he hath gotten again, then was he Robin Goodfellow, he would do no hurt: but when he was tumbled out of his throne by preaching of the Gospel, then ranged he about as he hath done, but secretly. Finally, effectual he hath not been, but in the children of unbelief (Eph. ii.): them indeed hath he stirred up to be covetous oppressors, blasphemers, usurers, whoremongers, thieves, murderers, tyrants, and yet perchance he suffereth them to profess the Gospel, the more thereby to hinder it, and cause it to be slandered. How many now do appear to have been true gossellers! As for the parliament and statutes thereof, no man of wisdom can think otherwise, but that, look what the rulers will, the same must there be enacted; for it goeth not in those houses by the better part, but by the bigger part; and it is a common saying, and no less true, the greater part overcometh the better; so they did in condemning Christ, not regarding the counsel of Nicodemus (John, vii.); so they did also in many general councils; but all wise men know that acts of parliament are not for God's law in respect of God's law, but in respect of the

people. Now what we are God knoweth, and all the world seeth more meet a great deal, to have the devil's decrees than God's religion, so great is our contempt of it, and therefore justly for our sins (as Job saith) God hath set hypocrites to reign over us, which can no more abide God's true religion, than the owl the light, or bleared eyes the bright sun; for it will have them to do their duties, and walk in diligent doing of the works of their vocation. If God's word (I mean) had place, bishops could not play chancellors and idle prelates as they do; priests should be otherwise known than by their shaven crowns and tippets: but enough of this. As for miracles of success against Wyat and other, of the King's coming in, &c. I would to God men would consider two kinds of miracles, one to prepare and confirm men in the doctrine which they have received, and another to prove and try men how they have received it, and how they will stick unto it. Of the former, these miracles be not; but of the second, now by this success given to the Queen, God trieth whether we will stick to his truth simply for his truth sake, or no. This is a mighty illusion, which God sendeth to prove his people, and to deceive the hypocrites, which receive not God's truth simply, but in respect of gain, praise, estimation. Read how Ahab was deceived, 2 Thess. ii. Deut. xiii.

But I will now return to the third commodity coming by the cross. Here let us see the wisdom of God, in making the wisdom of the world foolish, which knoweth little of man's corruption, how foul it is in the sight of God, and displeaseth him; which knoweth little the portion of God's people to be in another world; which knoweth little the pattern of Christians, Christ Jesus; which knoweth little the general judgment of God, the greater malice of Satan to God's people, the price and estimation of the

Gospel; and therefore in the cross seeth not, as God's wisdom would we should see; namely, that God, in punishing them which sin least, would have his anger against sin seen most, and to be better considered and feared. In punishing his people here, he kindleth their desire towards their celestial home. In punishing his servants in this life, he doth conform and make them like to Christ, that, as they be like in suffering, so shall they be in reigning. (Phil. i.) In punishing his church in the world, he doth give a demonstration of his judgment which shall come on all men, when the godly shall there find rest, though now they be afflicted, and the wicked now wallowing in wealth, shall be wrapped in woe and smart. In punishing the professors of his Gospel in earth, he setteth forth the malice of Satan against the Gospel and his people, for the more confirming of their faith and the Gospel to be God's word indeed, and they be God's people, for else the devil would let them alone. (Acts, xvi.) In punishing the lovers of his truth more than others, which care not for it, he putteth them in mind how they have not had in price, as they should have had, the jewel of his word and Gospel. Before such trial and experience came, perchance they thought they had believed and had faith, which now they see was but a lip-faith, a mock faith, or an opinion; all which things we see are occasions for us to take better heed by means of the cross. Therefore, thirdly, let us consider the cross to be commodious for us to learn God's wisdom, and what is man's foolishness, God's displeasure at sin, and desire to be with God, the conformity with Christ, the general judgment, the malice of Satan, hatred of sin, the Gospel to be God's word, and how it is to be esteemed, &c. Thus much for this.

Now will I fourthly briefly shew you, the cross or

trouble to be profitable for us to learn and behold better the providence, presence, and power of God, that all these may be coupled together as in a chain to hang about our necks, I mean, God's justice, mercy, wisdom, power, presence, and providence. When all things be in rest, and men be not in trouble, then they are forgetful of God commonly, and attribute too much to their own wisdom, policy, providence, diligence, as though they were the procurers of their own fortune, and workers of their own weal. But when the cross cometh, and that in such sort as their wits, policies, and friends cannot help, though the wicked despair, run from God to saints, and such other unlawful means, yet do the godly therein behold the presence, the providence, and power of God. For the Scripture teacheth all things to come from God, weal and woe, and that the same should be looked upon as God's work, although Satan the devil be often an instrument by whom God worketh justly and mercifully; justly to the wicked, and mercifully to the godly; as by the examples of wicked Saul and godly Job easily we may see God's work by Satan, his instrument in them both. The children of God therefore, which before forgat God in prosperity, now in adversity are awaked to see God in his work, and no more to hang on their own forecasts, power, friends, wisdom, riches, &c. but learn to cast themselves on God's providence and power, whereby they are so preserved and governed, and very often miraculously delivered, that the very wicked cannot but see God's providence, presence, and power in the cross and affliction of his children, as they (his children I mean) to their joy do feel it, thereby learning to know God to be the governor of all things. He it is that giveth peace, he it is that sendeth war, he giveth plenty and poverty, he setteth up and casteth down, he bringeth

to death, and after giveth life, his presence is every where, his providence is within and without, his power is the pillar whereby the godly stand, and to it they lean, as to the thing no less able to set up than to cast down (Isa. xlv. Hosea, i. Luke, i. Psa. cxxxix. 1 Pet. v.) : which thing full well the Apostle saw in his afflictions, and therefore rejoiced greatly in them, that God's power might singularly be seen therein. (2 Cor. iv.) Concerning this thing, I might bring forth innumerable examples of the affliction of God's children, both in the Old and New Testament, wherein we may see how they felt God's presence, providence, and power plentifully. But I will omit examples, because every one of us, that have been or be in trouble, cannot but by the same remember God's presence, which we feel by his hand upon us, his providence which leaveth us not unprovided for, without any of our own provisions and his power, which both preserveth us from many other evils, which else would come upon us, and also maketh us able to bear more than we thought we could have done. So very often doth he deliver us by such means, as have been thought most foolish, and little to have been regarded ; and therefore we shake off our sleep of security, and forgetting of God, our trust and shift in our own policies, our hanging on men, or on our own power. So the cross, you see, is commodious, fourthly, for to see God's presence, providence, and power, and our negligence, forgetfulness of God, security, self-love, trust, and confidence in ourselves, and things in this life to be cast off, as the other are to be taken hold on. And this shall suffice for the commodities which come by the cross, where-through we may be in love with it for the commodities sake, which at length we shall find, though presently in sense we feel them not. No castigation or punishment is sweet for the present instant, saith the

Apostle, but afterward the end and work of the thing is otherwise. (Heb. xii.) As we see in medicines, the more wholesome they be, the more unpleasant is the taste thereof, as in pills, potions, and such-like bitter stuff, yet we will, on the physician's word, drink them gladly for the profit which cometh of them. And, dearly beloved, although to lose life, and goods, or friends, for God's Gospel sake, it seem a bitter and sour thing, yet in that our Physician which cannot lie, Jesus Christ I mean, doth tell us, that it is very wholesome, howsoever it be loathsome, let us with good cheer take the cup at his hand, and drink it merrily. If the cup seem unpleasant, and the drink too bitter, let us put some sugar therein, even a piece of that which Moses cast into the bitter water, and made the same pleasant (Exod. xv.): I mean an ounce, yea, a dram of Christ's afflictions and cross, which he suffered for us. (1 Pet. iv.) If we call this to mind, and cast of them into our cup, considering what he was, what he suffered, of whom, for whom, to what end, and what came thereof, surely we cannot loath our medicine, but wink and drink it lustily. Lustily, therefore, drink the cup which Christ giveth, and will give unto you, my good brethren and sisters; I mean, prepare yourselves to suffer whatsoever God will lay upon you for the confessing of his holy name. If not, because of these three things, that ye are not of the world, ye suffer not alone, your trouble shall not hurt you, yet for the commodities which come of the cross, I beseech you heartily to embrace it. The fight is but short, the joy is exceeding great. *We must pray alway* (Luke, xviii.); then shall we undoubtedly be directed in all things by God's holy Spirit, which Christ hath promised to be our doctor, teacher, and comforter; and, therefore, we need not to fear what man or devil can do

unto us, either by false teaching or cruel persecution, for our Pastor is such a one, that none can take his sheep out of his hands. (John, xiv. xv. xvi.)

Thus much, my dear brethren and sisters in our dear Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, I thought good to write unto you for your comfort. From the which, if ye, for fear of man, loss of goods, friends, or life, do swerve or depart, then ye depart and swerve from Christ, and so snare yourselves in Satan's sophistry to your utter subversion. Therefore, as St. Peter saith, watch, be sober; for as a roaring lion, he seeketh to devour you. Be strong in faith; that is, mammer not, nor waver not in God's promises, but believe certainly that they pertain to you; that God is with you in trouble; that he will deliver you, and glorify you. (Heb. xiii. 1 Pet. ii. 5. John, x. Acts, ii. Exod. xx.) But yet see that ye call upon him, specially, that ye enter not into temptation, as he taught his disciples even at such time as he saw Satan desire to sift them, as now he hath done to sift us. (Psal. xciii. Matt. xxvi. Luke, xxii.) O dear Saviour, prevent him now as thou didst then, with thy prayer, I beseech thee, and grant that our faith faint not, but strengthen us to confirm the weak, that they deny not thee and thy Gospel, that they return not to their vomit, stumbling on those sins from the which there is no recovery, causing thee to deny them before thy Father, making their latter end worse than the beginning, as it chanced to Lot's wife, Judas Iscariot, Francis Spira, and to many others; but rather strengthen them and us all in thy grace, and in those things which thy word teacheth, that we may here hazard our life for thy sake, and so shall we be sure to save it, as, if we seek to save it, we cannot but lose it; and that being lost, what profit can we have, if we win the whole world? (2 Pet. ii.

Matt. x. Heb. vi. x. Mark, viii. Luke, xi. Matt. vi.) Oh, set thou always before our eyes, not as reason doth, this life, the pleasure of the same; death of the body, and prisonment, &c. but everlasting life, and those unspeakable joys which undoubtedly they shall have, which take up the cross and follow thee, and eternal hell fire and destruction of soul and body for evermore, which they must needs at length fall into, the which are afraid for the hoar frost of adversity that man or the devil stirreth up to stop or hinder us for going forwards our journey to heaven's bliss, to the which do thou bring us for thy name's sake. Amen.

Your own in the Lord,

JOHN BRADFORD.

To certain godly Men, Relievers and Helpers of him and others, in their Imprisonment.

THE peace of Christ, which passeth all pleasure and worldly felicity, be daily more and more felt in your hearts (my right dearly beloved in the Lord), by the inward working of the holy Spirit, the earnest of our inheritance and guides of God's elect, with the which God, our dear Father, more and more endue us all unto the end, for his beloved Son's sake, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Praised be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is a Father of mercy, and a God of all consolation, that hath blessed you with the knowledge and love of his truth, not only to your own comforts, but also the great ease and comfort of many which without the help of God by you hitherto, had been in much more misery. By your relieving the Lord's prisoners, I am brought to see the root whereof the work doth spring, even the knowledge and love of God's truth, wherefor we

are in bonds. The which knowledge and love, in that it is a blessing of all blessings the greatest (for it is even eternal life, John, xvii.), I cannot but praise God for you on this behalf, that it hath pleased him to vouch you worthy so excellent and singular a benefit, which is more to be esteemed, desired, and cared for, than any thing else. The world, for all that ever it hath, cannot attain by any means to this blessing, which God our Father hath given you freely of his own good will through Christ, even before ye were purposed to desire it; therefore, I beseech you all to be thankful with me, and to rejoice in the Lord. For if he have given us such a gift unasked, undesired, yea, unthought upon, how can it be that he will deny us any good thing now, which may be necessary for us? will he, trow ye, sow his seed in the ground of your hearts, and not keep away the fowls from picking it up? would he so bestow his seed in you as he hath, if that he would not hedge in your hearts his field from cominon paths, and from breaking in of beasts to destroy it; will he be more careless than a good husbandman to weed out the weeds which are in us, lest they should overgrow the corn of his word? will not he bestow muck and marl upon us, that we may bring forth more fruit? If in a good husbandman this be not lacking, alas! how should we think then, but that the Lord God, a good husbandman, and nothing but good, and only good; how, I say, should it be, but that he is most careful to keep his seed already sown in your hearts by the ministry of us and other his preachers, and that to the bringing forth of just and full fruits? He that hath begun with you, doubt not, my dearly beloved, but that he will happily make an end with you. He hath begun to sow his seed in you, as I dare say ye feel it; be sure then that all this will follow. First, he

will have scarecrows in your hearts, I mean such sparkles of his fear will he drop, yea, already he hath dropped into you, that the birds of the air, vain and evil cogitations, shall not be cherished of you, but expelled, by crying to the Lord for his help. Secondly, he will make such hedges as shall keep you as well from by-paths of all evil customs and usages, as also preserve you from the power of evil and dominion of sin, which would have the upper hand on you. Thirdly, he will doubtless pour such showers upon you to supple you, so weed you, so muck and marl you by temptation and other exercises, that the sunshine of persecution shall make more to the ripening his seed in you than to the withering of it away.

These things (my dearly beloved), the Lord God, which hath begun them in you and for you, will continue with you, that in the end you may be brought into his barn, there to rest with him in eternal felicity. For God's sake therefore wait, and look for no less than I have told you at his hands: a greater service you cannot give him. If God keep not the order I have told you, but perchance begin to muck and marl you, to pour his showers upon you, to nip you with his weeding-tongs, &c. rejoice and be glad that God will do that in you and with you at once, which a long time he hath been a-working in and for others. Now undoubtedly great showers are fallen to supple our hearts, that God's word might enter therein, and take root. Now the Lord goeth a-weeding, to weed out of us our carnality, security, covetousness, self-love, forgetfulness of God, love of this world. Now the Lord doth muck and marl us, loading us with heaps and burdens of crosses, that our hearts might be made good ground to bring forth fruit to God's glory by patience, as well in suffering inward temptations and griefs, whereof we must complain to the Lord for his scarecrows to drive them

forth of us ; as also in suffering outward assaults, for the which we must cry to our Master for his hedges and defence, which hath two parts ; the one concerning us, to help and deliver us ; and the other concerning our, or rather his obstinate adversaries, to take vengeance upon them, which he will do in his time.

Therefore let us by patience possess our souls, knowing that they which persevere to the end shall be saved. Let us not be weary of well doing, for in our time we shall reap the fruits thereof ; but rather, whiles we have time, let us redeem it in doing well to all men, but specially to the household of faith, which thing hitherto you have done (the Lord therefore be praised, and in the day of his coming he recompense you), and in the rest I hope well ; I mean, that you have declared no less in confessing the truth planted in your hearts, by your words and works. After your vocation to the glory of God, I hope you have godly behaved yourselves, not being as too many be now-a-days, even mongrels, giving half to God, and half to the world, halting on both knees, going two ways ; I mean it of the mass-gospellers, which are worse than any Papists. In this point I hope well of you (my dearly beloved), that you have not contaminated yourselves, that you have both confessed the truth as oft as need hath required, and also have refrained from coming to church now, where is nothing but idolatrous service. I hope you have glorified God, both in soul and body ; I hope you have gathered with Christ, and not scattered abroad ; I hope you have drawn no yoke with unbelievers, nor communicated with other men's sins, but have abstained from all appearance of evil, confessing in heart, confessing in tongue, confessing in deed and act, the true knowledge of God, which he hath of his great mercy given unto you, not to be

as a candle under a bushel, but upon a candlestick, to give light, that men may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

All this I hope of you (my beloved), and also of all purity of life and godly conversation, not doubting but in this behalf also you have declared God's verity in your heart, and for the Lord's sake do so still in all points; that is, in your vocations be diligent and righteous, towards yourselves be sober and pure, towards your neighbours be charitable and just, towards God be faithful and thankful, loving and obedient. Use earnest and often hearty prayer; meditate much upon, and often hearken to the word of God.

If you be called, give with modesty an account of the hope which is in you; be not ashamed of God's true service; allow not that with your presence which is contrary to God's will; make not the members of Christ's church, that is, yourselves, members of antichrist's church; be not ashamed of the Gospel, or of such as be bound therefor, but rather be partakers thereof, first inwardly by compassion, prayer, &c. then outwardly by giving according to that the Lord hath lent you to that end; and, last of all, by suffering with us, if God so will, and if it be needful for you. For, my dearly beloved, be certain that no man can touch you, or lay hands upon you, but by the will of God, which is all good towards you, even as the will of a most dear Father, which cannot always be angry, or otherwise use his rod, than only to chastise and correct, not to destroy his children. Again, be certain that no cross shall come unto you before you need it; for God is our physician, and when he seeth our souls in peril, he preventeth the peril by purgation and ministering physic, which is the cross. As therefore for the body we follow the advice of the physicians for the health thereof, thankfully using their

counsel, and obeying their precepts; so for God's sake, let us for our souls, being sick, thankfully receive the heavenly Physician's physic and diet, so shall we wax strong men in God and in his Christ; which thing I beseech thee, O holy Spirit, to work in us all. Amen.

My dearly beloved, this have I briefly written unto you, not as one that seeketh any gifts, as Paul saith (Phil. iv.), but as one that seeketh abundant fruits on your behalf, and to your commodity; for it is better to give than to receive, saith Christ by his Apostle St. Paul, who testifieth, that according to that we sow, so shall we reap. He that soweth little, shall reap little; he that soweth much, shall reap much. (2 Cor. ix.) Never should we forget, how that the Lord Jesus, being rich, for our sakes became poor, that we might be made rich by him. Again, never should we forget that we are dead to sin, and alive to righteousness: therefore should we live wholly unto God, and for God, and not for ourselves.

In all things therefore we must avoid the seeking of ourselves, as well in doing, as in leaving things undone. If the cross come upon us, therefore, then are we happy, for the Spirit of God and the glory of God resteth upon us; therefore rejoice (saith Christ), for your reward is great in heaven. (Matt. v.) In this we are made like to Christ here, therefore we shall be so elsewhere, even in eternal joy and endless glory. The highway to heaven, you know, is affliction, so that all that will live godly in Christ Jesu must suffer persecution. If we were of the world, the world would love us; but we are not of the world, but bear witness against the world, and therefore the world doth hate us. But let us rejoice, our Lord hath overcome the world (John, xv.): he suffered out of the city, bearing our rebuke, saith the Apostle. Let us then go out of our tents,

and bear his rebuke; that is, let us deny ourselves, take up our cross, which is his also, and follow him; let us know and esteem this more riches than all the treasures of the world, as Moses did (Heb. xiii.); let us know that he that saveth his life shall lose it; let us know that the way to salvation is a strait way, and a way wherein we cannot carry our bags and chests with us; let us know that no excuse of wife, farm-house, or children, will excuse us; let us know that in this case we must be so far from loving father, mother, wife, and children, that we must hate them and our own selves also. (Luke, xiv.)

Though this be a hard saying, yet we must not leave our Loadman for a little foul way; yea, rather we should know indeed, that it is but hard to the flesh, which if she be handled daintily will be imperious; under must she be kept, that the spirit, which is a precious thing in God's sight, may have her commodities. If we should follow the fancy of the flesh, we could not please God. Against it we have made a solemn profession, as also against the devil and the world, in our baptism; and shall we now look for easy things of our enemies? shall we not look rather to be hardly entreated of them? Oh! that we considered often, and indeed what we have professed in baptism, then the cross and we should be well acquainted together. For we are baptized into Christ's death, that is, as to be partakers of the benefit of his death, which is remission of sins, so to be made like thereunto, continually by dying to sin.

Oh! that we considered what we be, where we be, whither we are going, who calleth us, how he calleth us, to what felicity he calleth us, whereby he calleth us; then, my dear hearts in the Lord, we should say to all worldly persuasions and persuaders, Follow me, Satan; thou savourest not those things that be of God, but the things that be of men.

Shall we not drink the cup which our heavenly Father hath appointed for us? O Lord God, open thou our eyes, that we may see the hope whereunto thou hast called us. Give us eyes of seeing, ears of hearing, and hearts of understanding. In the favour thou bearest to thy people, remember us, visit us with thy saving health, that we may see the good things thou hast prepared for thy elect children, that we may have some sight of thy heavenly Jerusalem, and have some taste of the sweetness of thy house. O dear Father, kindle in us an earnest desire to be with thee in soul and body, to praise thy name for ever, with all thy saints in thy eternal glory. Amen.

JOHN BRADFORD.

*To my dear Friend and Brother in the Lord, Master
GEORGE EATON.*

ALMIGHTY God, our dear Father, give to you daily more and more the knowledge of his truth, and a love and life to the same, for ever in all things, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

I should begin with thanksgiving to God, and to you as his steward, for the great benefits I have oftentimes received from you, and specially in this time of my most need, far above my expectation; but because thankfulness lieth not in words or letters, and because you look not to hear of your well doing of man, I am purposed to pass it over with silence, and to give myself presently to that which is more profitable unto you; that is, as God shall lend me his grace, briefly to labour, or at least to shew my good will, to help you in God's gift to me, as you by your doing the like in God's gift unto you have as already done, so occasioned me greatly hereto. I would gladly have done it heretofore, but I have been discouraged to write unto you, lest hurt thereby

might come unto you, which is the only cause I have not hitherto written, nor now would not have done, but that I stand in doubt whether ever hereafter I shall have liberty to write unto you: and therefore, whilst I something may, I thought good to do thus much, to declare unto you, how that, as I think myself much bound to God for you, so I desire to gratify the same, as God should enable me.

The days are come, and more and more do approach, in the which trial will be of such as have unfeignedly read and heard the Gospel; for all others will abide no trial but as the world will. But of you, because I have better hope, I cannot but, as pray to God, in him to confirm you, so to beseech you of the same. I know it will be a dangerous thing indeed to declare that which in word you have confessed, and in heart have believed, specially concerning the papistical mass; but notwithstanding, we must not for dangers depart from the truth, except we will depart from God; for inasmuch as God is the truth, and the truth is God, he that departeth from the one departeth from the other.

Now what a thing it is to depart from God, I need not to tell you, because you know it is no less than a departing from all that good is, and not only so, but also a coupling of yourself to all that evil is; for there is no mean; either we depart from God, and stick to the devil, or depart from the devil, and stick to God. Some men there be, which, for fear of danger and loss of that they must leave, when, where, and to whom they know not, do deceive themselves after the just judgment of God, to believe the devil, because they have no lust to believe God, in hearkening to Satan's counsel of parting stake with God, as to be persuaded that it is not evil, or else no great evil inwardly in heart to conceal the truth, and outwardly in fact to betray it. And therefore, though they know the mass to be abomination, yet they

make it but a straw in going to it as the world doth, in which thing the Lord knoweth they deceive themselves to damnation, dream as they lust: for surely the body departing from the verity, and so from God, will draw and drown in damnation the soul also; for we shall receive according to that we do in the body, good or bad, and therefore the matter is more to be considered than men make of it, the more it is to be lamented. But I trust (my rightly dearly beloved) you will consider this with yourself, and call your conscience to account, as God's word maketh the charge.

Beware of false auditors, which, making a false charge, can get no quietness of the conscience after God's word; therefore cast your charge, and there shall you see that no belief of the heart justifieth, which hath not confession of the mouth to declare the same. No man can serve two masters: he that gathereth not with Christ (as no mass-seer, unrepoving it, doth) scattereth abroad. God's chosen are such as not only have good hearts, but also kiss not their hands, nor bow their knee to Baal. Christ's disciples are none but such as deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow him. He that is ashamed of Christ and his truth in this generation, must look that Christ will be ashamed of him in the day of judgment; he that denieth Christ before men, shall be denied before God. Now two kinds of denial there be, yea, three kinds; one in heart, another in word, and the third in deed: in the which kinds all mass-gospellers be so bitten, that all the surgeons in the world can lay no healing plaster thereto; till repentance appear, and draw out the matter of using the evil, and resorting to the mass; for pure should we be from all spots, not only of the flesh, but also of the spirit.

And our duty is to depart not only from evil, that is, the mass, but also from the appearance of evil; that is,

from coming at it. Woe unto them that give offence to the children of God; that is, which occasion by any means any to tarry in the church at mass-time, much more then they which occasion any to come thereto; most of all, they which enforce any thereto. Assuredly, a most heavy vengeance of God hangeth upon such. Such as decline to their crookedness, God will lead on with wicked workers, whose portion shall be snares, fire, brimstone, and stormy tempests (Psa. xi.), whose palace and home shall be hell fire and darkness, whose cheer shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, whose song shall be woe, woe, woe, from the which the Lord of mercy deliver us.

My dearly beloved, I write not this as one that thinketh not well of you, but as one that would you did well; and therefore; to help you thereto, I write as I write, beseeching God to open your eyes to see the dangers men be in that dissemble with God and man, to the end you do not the like, and also to open your eyes to see the high service you do to God, in adventuring yourself, and that you have, for his sake. Oh! that men's eyes were opened to see that the glory of God resteth upon them that suffer any thing for his sake! Oh! that we considered, that it is happiness to suffer any thing for Christ's sake, which have deserved to suffer so much for our sins and iniquities! Oh! that our eyes were opened to see the great reward they shall have in heaven, which suffer the loss of any thing for God's sake!

If we knew the cross to be as a purgation most profitable to the soul, as a purifying fire to burn the dross away of our dirtiness and sins, as an oven to bake us in, to be the Lord's bread, as soap to make us white, as a stew to mundify and cleanse us, as God's framehouse, to make us like to Christ here in suffering, that we may be so in reigning; then should we not so much care for this little short sorrow,

which the flesh suffereth in it, but rather in consideration of the exceeding endless joy and comfort which will ensue, we should run forwards in our race after the example of our Captain Christ, who comfort us all in our distress, and give us the spirit of prayer, therein to watch and pray, that we be not led into temptation, which God grant to us for ever. Amen.

And thus much I thought good to write to you at this present, to declare my carefulness for the well doing of you and all your family, whom I commend with you into the hands and tuition of God our Father. So be it.

Your own in the Lord,

JOHN BRADFORD.

Another Letter to the Lord RUSSELL.

THE eternal mercies of God in his dear Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, be more and more felt and heartily perceived of you, my good Lord, to your endless joy and comfort. Amen.

Because your Lordship looketh not for thanks of me for God's benefits ministered by you, and in few words I cannot duly declare that I would do; I will omit the same, praying God, our dear Father, in the day of his retribution to remember it, and in the mean season to assist, counsel, and comfort you, as his child for ever in all things. I doubt not, but that you have that childly opinion, yea, persuasion of his goodness in Christ towards you, than which blessing (my good Lord) none is greater given to man upon earth. For assuredly, he that hath it is the very child of God, elect before all time in Christ Jesu our Lord, and therefore shall enjoy everlasting felicity; although he be here afflicted and tossed in

trouble and temptation to his trial, that when he is found faithful, he may receive the crown of glory.

The only thing that discerneth the child of God from the wicked is this, faith, trust, and hope in God's goodness through Christ, the which I trust you have, God increase it in you, and make you thankful. Certainly, such as enjoy it be happy; if they be happy, and that happiness is not where any thing is to be desired, they cannot but for ever be most assured of perseverance to salvation; for if they fall, the Lord putteth under his hand, that they shall not perish; they are beloved of Christ, which loveth them to the very end. God for his mercy sake in Christ open more and more your eyes to see his sweetness in Christ, to make you secure in him, and awake the flesh from her security, to be vigilant and heedful how you may most behave yourself in thankful obedience to God, and careful help and service to his people, that all your whole life may tend to this, how by example and otherwise you may do good to others, and still confirm his true service and religion by your constancy, wherein if you continue to the end, you shall receive an incorruptible crown of immortal and unspeakable glory; but if for because God's tarrying, which is only to prove you, you relent (which God forbid), thinking it enough in heart to serve God, and in body to do as may make most to your commodity temporally, as many do; then undoubtedly your standing hitherto (wherefore God's holy name be praised) shall make much more for the papistical kingdom and glory thereof, than if you had never done as you have done.

Whereof (my good Lord) be not weary nor unthankful; for with the godly and in the church of God you are and shall be had as a worthy member of Christ, worthy of double honour, because God of his goodness hath vouched you worthy without your deserts. In the one, that is, for lands and possessions, you have

companions many, but in the other (my good Lord) you are *A per se A*, with us to our comfort and joy unspeakable, so long as you continue (as I trust you will do to the end), and to our most heavy sorrow (which God forbid), if you should relent in any point.

Therefore I beseech your Lordship, in the bowels and blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ, to persevere and continue to the end. He that hath not tempted you hitherto above your strength, will continue so to the end. If for a time he hide his face from you, yet he doth it but for a moment, to make you the more heartily to cry to him; and surely he will hear you, not only when you are in crying, but also whilst you are in thinking how to cry; he is with you in trouble, and will deliver you; the longer he tarrieth, the more pleasantly and comfortably will he appear. Only believe and look for his help, and you shall have peace, such peace as the world knoweth not, nor can know, the which God give us a true feeling of, and then we shall not be grieved with afflictions, but rather rejoice in them, because they are but exercises and trials of faith, to the increase of faith and patience, with many godly virtues, &c.

As concerning the number and charges of us here (which this day I heard your Lordship desired to understand), this is so much as I know, that we are four in number together, whose names this bearer will tell you. The charges of the least is 12s. a week; there are five others, whose charges be not so great, but as they will themselves; I mean, they pay daily as they take, and that to the uttermost; these were never ministers. I trust there is no urgent need in any of us all, and (I think) least in myself, through God my Father's providence, the which I have and do daily wonderfully feel, his name

therefore be praised. Other things I would write, but because they may be more safely told by this bringer, I have omitted the same for that purpose. God of his goodness ever be with you, and keep your Lordship to the very end as his dear child. Amen. Amen.

Your humble to command,
JOHN BRADFORD.

To his godly Friends, G. and N. encouraging them to prepare themselves to the Cross, and patiently to endure Afflictions for God's Cause and his holy Gospel.

THE God of all mercies, and the Father of all consolation, shew unto you more and more the riches of his mercies in Christ Jesus our Lord, and grant you a lively faith to apprehend and pull unto yourselves the same, to your everlasting comfort. Amen.

Because my mind will not let me rest to think upon, and as it were to see sore storms like to fall more felly than any yet we have felt (I should rather say, ye have felt, and are like to feel, if ye continue to confess christianly as ye have begun), I thought it my duty to admonish you, that therefore ye should not be dismayed, nor think it any strange thing. For undoubtedly you, confessing Christ according to the truth taught you, yea, received of you, though trouble come, the same shall be so far from hurting you, that it shall profit you exceedingly, making you thereby like to Him which for your sakes suffered much greater sorrow than all men can sustain, as well that your sorrows and afflictions, whatsoever they be that shall come unto you, should be sanctified in his cross, and that which he suffered; as also that in him ye might have

both example how to order yourselves in the cross, and how soon, shortly and gloriously the end of your cross will be; therefore, I say, be not dismayed in that the cross cannot but conform and make us like unto Christ, not simply of itself, but by God's Spirit, which maketh it his chief mean thereto; first, in putting us in mind of our corruption received of Adam, the cause of all care; then by occasioning us to remember as well our privy hid sins, as also our more manifest evils, that we there-through might be provoked to repentance, and asking of mercy; the which undoubtedly God will give us for his Christ's sake, and thereto also his holy Spirit to sanctify us, if we ask the same.

Now this Spirit will not cease more and more both to mortify the old man with his desires, and also to renew and repair the new man daily with augmentation and increase, so that at the length we shall be made so like to Christ, that we cannot but be coupled unto him; I mean not by faith, as now we be, but even in deed, leaving here behind us with Elias our cloak, the flesh, which one day God will call and quicken again, to be like unto the glorious and immortal body of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; after that it hath suffered and slept, as his hath done, the afflictions and time which God hath already appointed.

My dear brethren and sisters, this is most certain, that the afflictions and crosses which ye shall suffer, God hath already appointed for you, so that they are not in the power, choice, and will of your and his enemies. If ye would fly them ye cannot, but, will ye nill ye, needs must ye have them. If ye will not carry them in the love of God, ye shall carry them in his displeasure; therefore cast your care on him, which careth for you, and hath counted all the hairs of your heads, so that one shall not perish, if that ye commit yourselves to his ordering, where else your heads

and bodies, yea souls too, shall perish, if ye withdraw yourselves as unwilling to take his cup and drink of it; not that I would have you to thrust yourselves headlong and rashly to take or pull unto you trouble, or that I would not have you to use such honest and lawful means as ye may in the fear of God and with good conscience to avoid the cross, and give place to evil, but that I would have you willing to put your hand to take it when God offereth it in such sort, as that with good conscience ye cannot escape. Then take it, kiss it, and thank God for it, for it is even a very sacrament that God loveth you; as he saith, Whom I love, them do I chastise; and if ye be not partakers of correction, surely ye are no children; but if he once chastise you, if that ye kiss the rod, verily he will cast the rod into the fire, and call you and kiss you, as the mother doth her child, when she perceiveth the child to take in good part the correction. But why do I compare God your Father's love to a mother, in that it far passeth it? For, saith he, though it be possible that a natural mother should forget the child of her womb, yet will not I forget thee, saith the Lord our good God and Father through Christ: though he seem angry towards evening, yet in the morning we shall find him well pleased, if in Christ we come to him, and cry, Abba, dear Father, help us, and (as thou hast promised) tempt us not further than thou wilt make us able to bear.

Therefore (my dear hearts in the Lord) be of good comfort, be of good comfort in the Lord; confess him and his truth, and fear not prison, loss of goods, or life. Fear rather that prison, out of the which there is no deliverance; fear rather the loss of those goods which last for ever; fear rather the loss of the life which is eternal, whereunto ye are called, and the way by which God will bring you to

it, in that ye certainly know not whether it will be by prison, fire, halter, &c. ; whensoever these come (as I said before), let them not dismay you, nor seem strange to you. For no small number of God's children are gone that way, and we are a good company here together, which are ready to follow the same way through God's grace, if God so will. I beseech you make you ready, and go with us, or rather be ready, that when we come we may go with you. The journey is but short, though it be unpleasant to the flesh. Perchance, if we should die in our beds on a corporal malady, it would be much longer, and also more painful, at the least in God's sight it cannot be so precious and gainful as I know this kind of death is, whereto I exhort you to prepare yourselves, mine own dear hearts in the bowels and blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ, to whose tuition, grace, governance, and protection, I heartily commend you all, and beseech you that ye would do the like unto me in your hearty prayers.

Out of the Tower of London, 1554.

By your own to use in the Lord for ever,
JOHN BRADFORD.

*To my dearly beloved in the Lord, Mrs. W. and
Mrs. W.*

ALMIGHTY God, our dear and most merciful Father, be always with you both (my entirely beloved mother and sister in the Lord), and as his babes he for ever keep you unto his eternal kingdom through Christ our Saviour. Amen.

I purpose not to go about to render thanks to you for God's great goodness towards me by you, because I cannot. Either of you hath so heaped upon me benefits, that it were hard for me to reckon the tithes. He for whose sake you have done it, and

all the good you do, one day recompense you after your heart's desire in him. In the mean season, I beseech him to reveal unto you more and more the riches of his grace and love in Christ, by whom ye are beloved, and were before the world was, and shall be doubtless world without end. According to the revelation, and your sense or faith herein, so will you continue to all piety and godliness, as St. John saith, He that hath this hope, will purify himself as Christ is pure. (1 John, iii.) For how should it otherwise be, but if we be certainly persuaded that heaven is ours, and we citizens thereof, but (I say) we should desire the dissolution of our bodies, and death to dispatch us, and to do his office upon us.

If we did certainly believe we were members of Christ and God's temples, how should we but fly from all impurity and corruption of the world which cometh by concupiscence? If we did certainly believe that God indeed of his mercy in Christ is become our Father, in that his good will is infinite, and his power according thereto, how could we be afraid of man or devil? How could we doubt of salvation, or any good thing, which might make to God's glory and our own weal? Now that we should be certain and sure of this, that we are God's children in Christ, mark whether all things teach us not. Behold, the creation of this world, and the gubernation of the same, do not these teach us that God loveth us? And is God's love out of Christ the beloved? is not his love, as he is, unchangeable? doth not St. John say, that he loveth to the end whom he loveth? (John, xiii.) Therefore I say, the very creatures of God concerning both their creation and conservation tell us, that God loveth us; that is, that we in Christ be his children and dearlings, although in ourselves and of ourselves we be otherwise, namely, children of wrath. Again, look upon the law of

God, and tell me whether it do not require this certainty of you, namely, that you be God's dear children in Christ? Doth not God plainly affirm, and say, *I am the Lord thy God?* Doth he not charge you to have none other gods but him? How then can you perish, if God be your God? Doth not that make God no God? Doth not David say, that those people be happy, which have the Lord for their God? (Psa. cxliii.)

Besides this, look on your Belief; do you not profess that you believe in God, your Father Almighty, which wanteth no power to help you, as he wanted no good will in Christ to choose you? Do you not say that you do believe remission of sins, resurrection of the body, life everlasting, fellowship with the saints, &c.? But how do you say you believe this gear, and be not certain thereof? Is not faith a certainty? is not doubting, against faith? as St. James saith. Pray in faith, and doubt not; for he that doubteth, obtaineth nothing. When Peter began to doubt, he had like to have been drowned (Matt. viii.); beware of it therefore.

Moreover, for to certify your consciences that you be God's children, and shall never finally perish through God's goodness in Christ, behold your Head, your Captain, I mean, Christ Jesus. Wherefore came he into this world, but to redeem you, to marry you unto himself, to destroy the works of Satan, to save and seek that which was lost? Wherefore suffered he so great and bitter passions? did he it not to take away your sins? wherefore did he rise from death? did he it not to justify you? wherefore did he ascend into heaven? did he it not to take possession there for you, to lead your captivity captive, to prepare and make ready all things for you, to appear before the Father, always praying for you? If these be true, as they be most true, why then stand

you in a doubt? do you not thereby deny Christ? Wherefore were you born of Christian parents, and in God's church, but because you were God's children by Christ before you were born? For this cause you were baptized, and hitherto the Lord hath thus dealt with you, sparing you, correcting you, and blessing you; but why? Merely because you be his children, and shall be for ever through Christ. Tell me, why hath God kept you till this time, but that he will for his sake have you even here made like unto Christ, that elsewhere you may so be? Why hath he opened your eyes from Popery, but because you be his children indeed? when you pray, do you not call him Father? why do you doubt of it then? why will you believe the devil more than God your Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost? more than the holy word of God, both in the law and in the Gospel, more than all the blessings and castigations of God? do not all these preach to you and tell you, that you are God's babes through Christ? Therefore, my dearly beloved, believe it, and give not place to the devil, but withstand him strong in faith. Say with the poor man, I believe; Lord, help my unbelief. Say with the Apostles, Lord, increase our faith. (Mark, ix. Luke, xix.)

This, mine own hearts in the Lord, I write not that you should live more securely and carnally, doing as the spiders do, which gather poison where bees gather honey, but that, as the elect of God, you might live in all purity, godliness, and peace, which God increase in us all for his Christ's sake. Amen.

I pray you heartily pray for us, that to the very end we may (as I hope we shall) go lustily and cheerfully whithersoever our heavenly Father shall bring and lead us. His will, which is always good, be done in earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

Your brother in bonds for the testimony of Jesus
Christ,

JOHN BRADFORD.

To my good Sister, M. H.

THE peace of God, with increase of faith and feeling of his mercy to your comfort in Christ, the Holy Ghost work in your heart now and for ever. Amen.

As it is much to my comfort, that God hath given you such a love and zeal to his truth, so I exhort you (my good sister) diligently to labour, as by continual reading and meditation of God's holy word, so by earnest prayer and other godly exercises to maintain and increase the same, that by the feeling of God's gracious Spirit working in you such good fruits as witnesses of your faith, you may grow in strength thereof, and certainty of God's favour and good will towards you. For, above all things, of this I would have you to be most assured, that you are beloved of God, that you are his dear child, and shall be for evermore through Christ, in whom you are by faith, and he in you. Out of this certainty (the cause whereof is God's own goodness, grace, and truth) springeth true love, and loving fear, and obedience to God continually and in all things where it is (I mean his faith, certainty, and persuasion of God's eternal goodness to you in Christ), there no sins are imputed to you, or laid to your charge, to condemnation, nor shall be, though for correction's sake now and then your heavenly Father visit them fatherly, or rather you for them; where it is not, there is nothing, be it never so well done, that pleaseth God. Labour therefore for this certainty of faith through Christ; whensoever you doubt, you heap sin upon sin. If Satan, your conscience, or God's law do accuse you, confess your fault, and hide it not before the Lord: but when they would infer that because of your sin you are condemned, you are cast away; then answer them, that it is but their of-

fice to accuse and witness, not to give sentence and judge; it only appertaineth to God to give judgment. Paul saith, It is God that absolveth, who then shall condemn us? God himself promiseth, before he demand any thing of us, that he is our Lord and our God, and are not they happy which have the Lord for their God? is he God to any whose sins he remitteth not? Through Christ he is our Father, and therefore we are commanded so to call him; and can there want any fatherly kindness in him towards us, which be his children? No, verily; therefore be sure, and waver not of God's love and favour towards you in Christ. The cause of his love is his own goodness and mercy: this lasting for ever, his love loveth for ever. How can you then but be quiet and happy? Use this gear to comfort the weak conscience, and not to unbridle the mighty affections of the flesh or old Adam, which must have other meat.

Your own in the Lord,
JOHN BRADFORD.

To certain Men not rightly persuaded in the most true, comfortable, and necessary Doctrine of God's holy Election and Predestination.

GRACE, mercy, and peace, with increase of all godly knowledge and living from God the eternal Father of all consolation, through the bloody death of our alone and full Redeemer Jesus Christ, by the mighty and lively working and power of the holy Spirit the Comforter, I wish unto you now and for ever. Amen.

Although I look hourly for officers to come and have me to execution, yet can I not but attempt to write something unto you, my dearly beloved (as always you have been, and howsoever you have

taken me), to occasion you the more to weigh the things wherein some controversy hath been amongst us, especially the article and doctrine of predestination, whereof I have written a little treatise, therein as briefly shewing my faith, so answering the enormities gathered of some to slander the said necessary and comfortable doctrine. That little piece of work I commend unto you, as a thing whereof I doubt not to answer to my comfort before the tribunal-seat of Jesus Christ; and therefore I heartily pray you, and every of you, for the tender mercies of God in Christ, that you would not be rash to condemn things unknown; lest God's woe should fall upon you, for calling good evil, and evil good. For the great love of God in Christ, cavil not at things that be well spoken, nor construe not things to the evil part when ye have occasion otherwise. Do not suppose that any man by affirming predestination (as in that book I have truly set it forth according to God's word and the consent of Christ's church) either to seek carnality, or to set forth matter of desperation; only by the doctrine of it I have taught, as to myself, so to others, a certainty of salvation; a setting up of Christ only; an exaltation of God's grace, mercy, righteousness, truth, wisdom, power, and glory; and a casting down of man and all his power; that he that glorieth may glory only, and altogether, and continually in the Lord.

Man consisteth in two parts, the soul and the body, and every man of God hath (as a man would say) two men; an outward or old man, and an inward, or new man. The devil's drift is to bring the one into a carnality, and the other into a doubt, and so to despair and hatred of God; but God for remedy hereof hath ordained his word, which is divided into two parts; the one is a doctrine which demand-

eth of us our duty, but giveth no power thereto ; the other is a doctrine which not so much demandeth as giveth : the former is called the law which hath its promises, conditionals, and comminations, or threats accordingly ; the other is called the Gospel, or rather the free promises, hanging not as conditions on our behalf, but simply on God's verity and mercy, although they require conditions, but not as hanging thereon ; of which promises the Gospel may well be called a publication. The former, that is, the law, with her promises and comminations, tell man what he is, and shew him what he can do. The latter, that is, the Gospel, and free promises, tell and set forth Christ, and what mercy at God's hand, through Christ, we have offered and given unto us. The former part serveth to keep the old man from carnality and security, and to stir him up to diligence and solicitude : the latter part serveth how to keep the new and inward man from doubting and despair, and to bring us into an assured certainty and quietness with God through Christ. The old man and the field he resteth in may not be sown with any other seed than is agreeable to the former doctrine : the new man and the field he resteth in may not be sown with any other than is agreeing to the latter doctrine. By this means man shall be kept from carnality, and from desperation also, and brought into diligence and godly peace of conscience. It is forbidden in the old law to sow two kinds of seed in one field ; to wear linsey woolsey petticoats ; or to eat beasts that did not cleave the hoofs. (Deut. xiv. 22.) God grant us to be wise husbandmen, to sow according as I have said ; God grant us to be wise taylors, to cut our coats for two men of one whole cloth, as it is declared ; God grant us to be clean beasts, to cleave the hoofs accordingly ; that is, to give the old man

meat meet for the mowers ; that is, the law with its appurtenances,—conditionals, promises, and comminations ; and to give to the new man the Gospel and sweet free promises, as appertaineth, and then, doubtless, we shall walk in the right highway unto eternal life : that is, in Christ Jesu, the end of the law and the fulfilling of the promises, in whom they be yea and amen.

If this my poor advice be observed (my dear brethren in the Lord), I doubt not but all controversies for predestination, original sin, free will, &c. shall so cease that there shall be no breach of love nor suspicion amongst us, which God grant, for his mercies' sake. I am persuaded of you, that you fear the Lord, and therefore I love you and have loved you in him (my dear hearts), though otherwise you have taken it without cause on my part given, so far as I know. For hitherto I have not suffered any copy of the treatise above specified to go abroad, because I would suppress all occasions, so far as might be. Now am I going before you to my God and your God, to my Father and your Father, to my Christ and your Christ, to my home and your home. I go before, but you shall come after, sooner or later. Howbeit, I could not but, before I go, signify thus much unto you as I have done, that you might see my love, and thereby be occasioned to increase in love, and learn rather to bear than break. My poor and most dear sister to me that ever I had, with whom I leave this letter, I commend unto you all and every of you, beseeching you, and heartily praying you, in the bowels and blood of Jesus Christ, to care for her, as for one which is dear in God's sight, and one which loveth you all in God, and hath done, as I can and do bear her witness ; although in the point of predestination it hath pleased God by my ministry to open unto her his truth, wherein as she is settled,

and, I trust in God, confirmed, so if you cannot think with her therein as she doth, I heartily pray you, and, as I can, in God's behalf charge you, that you molest her not, nor disquiet her; but let love abound, and therein contend who can go most before. I commend also unto you my good sister M. C. making for her the like suit unto you all.

Ah! dear hearts, be not faint-hearted for these evil days, which are come to try us and purify us, that we may the more be partners of God's holiness as to ourselves, so to the world we shall be better known. Continue to walk in the fear of the Lord; ye have well begun. Keep yourselves pure, as I hope you do, from this rotten Romish, yea, anti-christian religion. Reverently read God's word, thereto joining prayer, that as you hear in reading God speak unto you, so in praying, you may speak unto him; labour after your' callings to help others. As you have done, do still; and I pray God give you grace to continue, as I doubt not but he will, for his goodness' sake. At the length we shall meet [together in Christ's kingdom, and there never part asunder, but praise the name of our good God and Father, with the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, angels, archangels, and all the saints of God. Oh, joyful place! Oh! place of all places desired.

My brethren, I think myself more happy than you, by how much I am now more near unto it. Elias' chariot I hourly look for to come and catch me up. My cloak, that is, my carcass, I shall leave behind me in ashes, which I doubt not my Lord will raise up and restore to me again in the last day, glorified even like unto his own most glorious body. The portion of the good Spirit which my Father hath lent me I wish, yea, double and treble, unto you all. God, the Father of mercy, in the blood of his Christ, give to every of you (my

dear hearts) in him his blessing, and pour plentifully upon you his Holy Spirit, that you may increase in all godly knowledge and godliness, to your own comfort and the edification of many others. Amen. Yet once more I commend unto you my foresaid most dear and beloved sister in the Lord, who always be unto her a most loving father, spouse, and pastor. Amen, amen. Out of prison, the 16th of February 1554.

Your own heart,
JOHN BRADFORD.

To TREWE and ABINGDON, with other of their Company, Teachers and Maintainers of the Error of Man's Freewill.

YET once more, beloved in the Lord, before pen and ink be utterly taken from me (as I look it to be this afternoon), I thought good to write unto you, because I stand in a doubt, whether at any time hereafter I shall see or speak with you, for within this sevensnight my Lord Chancellor bade look for judgment. God knoweth I lie not, I never did bear you malice, nor sought the hinderance of any one of you, but your good, both in soul and body, as when we shall all appear together before God, I am certain you shall then know, though now you doubt it, and of that I am right well assured; for mine own conscience can, and doth bear witness with me, that I never defrauded you, or any of you, of the value of one penny, or pennyworth of any thing, but have sought with that which has been given, not only in common, but also unto me, and to mine own use, discretion, and distribution, to do you good: therefore disdain not the good will of your lover in God; and in hope that you will not, I have estsoons even now sent unto you thirteen

shillings and four-pence. If you need as much more you shall have it, or any thing else I have or can do for you. Though in some things we agree not, yet let love bear the bell away, and let us pray one for another, and be careful one for another, for I hope we be all Christ's. As you hope yourselves to pertain to him, so think of me; and as you be his, so am I yours,

JOHN BRADFORD.

At this Letter these men were so offended, because he said he had hindered himself to further them, as though he had thereby upbraided them, that in displeasure they sent it to him again: whereupon he wrote unto them as followeth:

He that seeketh not to hinder himself temporally, that he may further his brother in more need, the same wanteth true love; I have done, do, and will (except you refuse it), hinder myself this way, that I may further you, and, indeed, myself also, that way, wherein I desire to be furthered. If I would seek mine own gains temporally, then could I have taken and used many portions of money which have been given me for mine own use. I never minded to upbraid you, but that which I did write of mine own hinderance was, that you might see I loved you, and sought your weal, as I do and will be glad to do it continually. The Lord of mercy hath forgiven us all, wherefore henceforth let us rather bear than break.

Yours in the Lord,
JOHN BRADFORD.

To a faithful and dear Friend of his, entreating of this Place of St. Paul to the Romans: "The fervent desire of the creature waiteth when the children of God shall be delivered."

GRACE and peace, with increase of all godliness in Christ, I wish unto you, my dearly beloved.

Because this morning I had some knowledge more than before I had, how that my life stood in great danger, and that even this week, so far as men might, both by the doings and sayings of such as be in authority attempted and spoken concerning me, judge and perceive, I thought good (my right dearly beloved in the Lord) to go about something which might be on my behalf a swan's song, and towards you both a monument of my love, and also an help, or, at the least, an occasion for you to profit in that which I bear you record you most desire, I mean, everlasting life, and the state thereof. And this will I attempt upon the last talk we had betwixt us, when you were here with me. I know you have not forgotten that we talked together of the place of St. Paul to the Romans, chap. viii. concerning the groanings of the *creature*, and his desire of the revelation of the children of God. You demanded whether this word *creature* was to be understood of man or no; I told you, that though some did take *creature* there for man, because there is no kind of creature which may not be acknowledged in man; yet (said I) the text itself considered with that which the Apostle writeth of Christ (Eph. i. Col. i.), the restorer and reformer of all things that be, both in heaven and earth, and with the argument which St. Paul presently hath in hand, there doth enforce a godly mind, to take every creature there (as also St. Chrysostom and St. Ambrose do)

for the whole world, and every creature both heavenly and earthly. All things I told you were made for man, and according to man's estate, so are they. When man was without sin, and in God's favour, there was no malediction, curse, or corruption; but when man by sin was cast out of favour, then was the earth cursed. For the wickedness of the inhabitants, fruitful lands are turned into salt ground; as for their piety, barren countries are made fruitful. (Psal. cvii.) The angels themselves do rejoice over one sinner that repenteth, thereby giving us notice that in their kind they lament over the impenitent. In reading the Prophets you may see how that all things do depend upon man. When they prophesy any great blessing or plague to come on God's people, they do communicate the same both to heaven and earth, and to every thing else: as for example, when the Prophets do foreshew the overthrow of realms and people, how do they say that the whole shape of the world shall be moved thereat? Look upon Isaiah, how he, when he prophesieth the fall of Babylon, doth say, that the stars shall not shine from heaven, the sun shall be darkened in his rising, the moon shall not give her light; and afterwards he saith, I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall be moved out of his place. (Isaiah, xiii.) But the histories do witness, that there are wonderful changes of all creatures, both heavenly and earthly, in the overthrow and destruction of realms and people.

Again, when Isaiah doth prophesy of the kingdom of Christ, he doth promise new heavens and a new earth, and that so excellent and new, that he sheweth the former heavens and earth to be utterly forgotten (Isaiah, lxiii.); whereto the Apostle agreeth, making Christ the repairer of all things in heaven and earth. (Eph. i. Col. i.) How did both

heaven and earth give their service to the Israelites coming forth of Egypt, as well in preserving them, as in destroying their enemies? How did the sun shine longer than it was wont to do, for Joshua to overcome his enemies? How did even the very angels fight for Hezekiah against the Assyrians? Read the 30th of Isaiah, and behold the history of Christ; consider how the angels rejoiced; how the star brought the wise men to Christ; how the angels were ministers unto him in the wilderness; how the devils confessed him. In his death, how did all the whole world shew compassion. The sun was darkened, the earth did quake, the rocks clave asunder, the veil of the temple rent asunder; when he arose, both heaven (for the angels with great heavenly brightness appeared) and earth which was moved did rejoice, the angels were preachers of it. In his ascension also, did not a bright cloud receive him and take him up? did not the angels testify of his return, when he sent the Holy Ghost, and made his new covenant of grace? did not all the whole world serve thereto by thunder, smoke, fire, earthquake?

Now how wonderfully they will do their service to Christ coming to judgment, it is more plain than I need to rehearse; and inasmuch as we are the members of Christ, he being our head, we may soon see how that all things have a certain compassion with man, and do, after their kind, as the Apostle writeth, look for a deliverance from vanity, which they shall obtain in their restauration. I therefore told you how that I do take the Apostle to mean by every creature simply, even all the whole shape and creatures in the world. He doth attribute unto them, how that they look for the perfection of our salvation, how that they are subject to vanity, how that they are subject in hope, how that they groan and

travail, attributing these things unto the senseless creature by translation from man to signify the society, cognation, and consent, which all and every creature hath with man, that as every and all things were made for man, so by the man Christ, all and every thing, both earthly and heavenly, shall be restored.

These things you know in effect I spake unto you, to stir up both myself and you to a deeper consideration of our blessed state, which now we enjoy in hope, which will never deceive us, the more to occasion us to desire the full fruition of the same. But I do remember, that you were something troubled with some doubtfulness hereabout; therefore I purpose now to write of this more at large, thereby to occasion us, both to see better through the help of God's Spirit which we desire; and I pray God grant unto us both, for his mercy's sake, I mean the felicity of his children, and the happy state which one day in very deed (my dear heart) we shall fully possess, and both together praise the Lord with all his saints, world without end. Amen. Amen.

This was your doubt: If so be that St. Paul did mean by all creatures simply (as I have spoken), that they shall be delivered from corruption into such a state, as shall adorn the freedom of God's children, whether that plants, beasts, and other things, having life, shall be restored? If yea, then you would know whether all things that have been, shall be restored also. And after this you will perchance ask in what place they shall be, what they shall do, and so forth? As I think upon this matter, and as I am accustomed to answer such questions coming to me, I will here write for an answer unto you also, not doubting but that therewith you will be satisfied, because I know your heart is satisfied with godly and sufficient answers.

Thus I think all and every creature groaneth and travaileth as yet, hoping and looking for my restoration, for they be subject to corruption for my sin's sake; but they all shall be delivered by my Christ from the bondage of corruption then when he shall restore us his members. This will I muse on and weigh with myself, that I may duly know both in me and in all other things, the atrocity and bitterness of sin which dwelleth in me, and so may the more heartily give over myself wholly to the Lord Christ my Saviour, that he may with what cross soever shall please him, slay sin in me, and bring me after his own will and way to newness of life; whereunto, that I for my part may faithfully and with all my whole heart do my diligence, in mortifying the desires of my flesh, and in labouring to obey the desires of the spirit, to live a life acceptable to him, I beseech him of his grace.

And that I may do this cheerfully, and continue in this purpose and diligence, I will fasten my mind as much as the Lord shall enable me to consider this my so great happiness whereunto I shall be restored in the resurrection, the which resurrection doubtless shall be adorned by the whole shape of the world delivered from corruption. These things will I think on, these things will I pause on; herein will I, as it were, drown myself, being careless of this, I mean, what parts of the world the Lord Christ will restore with me, or how he will do it, or what state or condition he will give it: it is enough, and enough for me, that I and all the world with me shall be much more happy, than now I can by any means conceive.

By reason hereof I will praise and glorify my Lord, and by his grace I will study to please him with all my heart, with all my soul, with all my strength, singing unto him, that he both doth well, and hath done and made all things well: to him be eternal

glory for ever. This is my cogitation in this matter, and not mine only, but the cogitation of one which was my father in the Lord; and now I am assured, with the Lord at home, where we yet are from home, by reason of this our corruptible habitacles, wherein we abide the Lord's leisure.

If you would know the reason that moveth me to answer as I have done to the aforesaid doubts or questions, it is this: you see that the Apostle, in this place to the Romans, speaketh of the deliverance of every creature from the bondage of corruption, and that to the beautifying of the glory of God's children. This is so manifest, that no man can well deny it. It is but a simple shift to say that the Apostle doth mean in this place by every creature, man only; he is not wont to speak on that sort; neither dare I say, that the Apostle speaketh here hyperbolically or excessively, although some think so.

But, as I said, I say again, that the Apostle doth here simply affirm, that there shall be a renovation and deliverance from corruption, not only of man, but also of all and of every part of the whole world; of every part (I say), meaning parts indeed, and not such as be rather vices, and added for plagues, than for parts. For by reason of sin, many spots and corruptions are come into the world, as is all that is hurtful and filthy in the creatures; also all that cometh of corruption, as perchance fleas, vermin, and such-like.

This renovation of all things, the Prophets do seem to promise, when they promise new heavens and new earth. For a new earth seemeth to require no less renovation of earthly things, than new heavens do of heavenly things. But these things the Apostle doth plainly affirm, that Christ will restore, even whatsoever be in heaven and in earth. (Col. i.) Therefore methinks it is the duty of a godly mind,

simply to acknowledge, and thereof to brag in the Lord, that in our resurrection all things shall be so repaired to eternity, as for our sin they were made subject to corruption.

The ancient writers out of Peter have as it were agreed to this sentence (2 Pet. iii.), that the shape of this world shall pass away, through the burning of earthly fire, as it was drowned with the flowing of earthly waters. These be St. Augustine's words, whereto I will add these which he writeth. The qualities (saith he) of the corruptible elements, which agreed with our corruptible bodies, shall utterly be burned with that same worldly conflagration and burning, as I said; but the substance itself shall have those qualities which do agree by a marvellous change to our bodies; that the world changing into the better, may openly be made meet to man returned even in the flesh into the better. These be his words, whereby it is plain, that this good man did believe that the elements should be renewed, but of other things he meddled not, except it be of the sea; by the occasion of that which is in the Apocalypse; howbeit, so he speaketh that he cannot well tell whether it also shall be changed into the better; adding these words: But we read that there shall be a new heaven and a new earth. For he did understand the place of Isaiah concerning the new heaven and new earth; simply of other things he expresseth nothing.

But Thomas Aquinas entreateth this question more exactly, or rather curiously, affirming the celestial bodies, the elements, and mankind, to be renewed, but in no wise beasts, plants, &c. to be so; and this is his principal reason: the renovation of the world shall be for man, therefore such shall be the renovation as shall be conformable to the renovation of man. But the renovation of man shall be from corruption to incorruption, from moving to rest; the

things therefore that shall be renewed with man must be brought also to incorruption. Now the celestial bodies and the elements were made to incorruption, the one wholly, and in every part; the other, that is, the elements, though in part they are corruptible, yet concerning the whole they are incorruptible, as man is incorruptible, concerning part, that is, the soul. But beasts, plants, &c. are corruptible, both wholly and in every part, therefore they were not made to incorruption, and so are they not conformable to the renewing, that is, they are not receivable of incorruption, and therefore they shall not be restored.

This reason is true in this part, that it affirmeth things shall be restored with man, and with him shall be brought to perpetuity, and, as the Apostle saith, to be delivered from the bondage of corruption. Again, his reason is true herein also, that man's reason may sooner be persuaded that things now partly incorruptible shall be restored altogether to incorruption; but now to say, that by no reason those things may be brought to perpetuity, which now both wholly and partly be temporal and momentary; how can he prove it? in that the nature and being of all things dependeth on the omnipotency of God, which after his own pleasure doth give to things which he hath made their being; and all is one to him, to make a thing temporal, and to make it eternal. For he made all things of nothing, and therefore heaven and the celestial bodies have no more of themselves, that they be perpetual, than have those things that last but a day; wherefore this reason which Thomas maketh is not firm, in that it wholly leaneth to that which now seemeth, and appeareth in things. Indeed (as I said) it hath some show or probability that these things shall be re-

newed to eternity, for the glory of God's children, which now something are partakers of the same.

But now, seeing that both it which they now have, and also shall have, dependeth upon the beck and pleasure of God, who hath God made of counsel with him concerning the renovation of the world and of all things? that he can tell what parts of things and what kinds of things he will rénew. Yea, even Aristotle did acknowledge, that physic, or natural knowledge, because it bringeth his reasons from the disposition and nature of things, hath not full necessity of his reasons; for nature is nothing else than the ordinary and unwonted will of God, as a miracle, portent, or monster, is the rare and unwonted will of God. We say that the nature of stones and all heavy things is to sink downwards, which is nothing else but the pleasure of God so depelling them and putting them down; for else of themselves nothing is either heavy or light; all is alike to be carried downwards or upwards. Who may make God subject to his work? Cannot He that made all things of nothing give hereafter to the things that he hath made, that whereof now in themselves they have no capacity?

These things I do therefore rehearse, to the end I might declare, that when we dispute what God will do concerning his works, how that it is not seemly for us to conclude according to that which seemeth and appeareth to us in things, but rather, as godliness requireth, to refer all things to the will of God. This will, if it be expressed in holy Scripture, then may we simply determine that which we read expressed there. But if it be not so, then ought we freely to confess our ignorance, and not prescribe to God what he ought to do of his works, by that which already he hath done. God is of power infinite, and of nothing did he not only make all things,

but also will do what pleaseth him, both in heaven and in earth, saith David.

The foresaid Thomas bringeth forth also other reasons, but which he himself counteth not for invincible. One is, if beasts and plants shall be restored, either all or some shall be restored; if all shall be restored, then must the resurrection be communicate unto them, that the same in number be restored, which is not convenient. If some shall be restored, there appeareth no reason why these should be restored more than other, therefore saith he they shall not be restored. But here what would he answer, if one should ask him how he knoweth it is not convenient that either all in number be restored, as man shall arise either only some, in that this thing wholly rested in the hand and will of God? Another reason he maketh out of Aristotle, and out of a ground which is uncertain. Aristotle affirmeth the perpetuity of things to hang on the continual moving of heaven. Thomas now hereto gathereth this, but the moving of heaven shall cease, therefore he concludeth, that in these inferior things no perpetuity may be looked for.

But here what answer will he make, if a man shall say that all things hang at the beck and pleasure of God, who now for the conservation of his creatures which now arise and spring, and now die and fall down, useth the moving of heaven, and can afterwards not use it for this purpose? This is a truth, that all things of themselves are nothing, much more then can they not do any thing. Now men may conjecture, that the moving of heaven shall cease, but yet by the certain word of God they cannot prove it. In like manner is his last reason, which he maketh of the end of beasts and plants, but which end he knoweth not. Beasts and plants, saith he, were made for the mutual sustentation of the

life of man ; but this life shall cease, therefore shall they also. But here hath he no answer, if a man should demand, who knoweth whether God have made them to none other end or use ?

Seeing therefore these things be as you see, I suppose it not to pertain to a godly man, to deny the beasts and plants to be restored, in that the Apostle doth here expressly say, that every creature which is now subject to vanity shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. In that the Holy Ghost doth affirm this of every creature, by what reason dare a godly mind exempt any part from this deliverance to come ? Howbeit, neither will the godly mind contend whether every creature shall be renewed ; for the Holy Ghost spake of the creature generally, and not particularly ; and therefore we may not otherwise affirm, because we must not speak but God's word.

Therefore it is the part of a godly man, and of one that hangeth in all things upon the word of God, to learn out of this place, that whatsoever corruption, death, or grief he seeth in any thing, where-soever it be, that (I say) he ascribe that wholly unto his sins, and thereby provoke himself to true repentance. Now as soon as that repentance compelleth him to go to Christ, let him think thus, But this my Saviour and my Head Jesus Christ died for my sins, and therewith, as he took away death, so hath he taken away all the corruption and labour of all things, and will restore them in his time, where-soever they be, in heaven or in earth. Now every creature travaileth and groaneth with us, but we being restored, they also shall be restored. There shall be new heavens, new earth, and all things new.

Thus I wish, that our minds might stay in this generality of the renovation of the world, and not

curiously to search what parts of the world shall be restored, and what shall not, or how all things shall be restored; much more then I would not have us curious nor inquisitive of their place where they shall be, of their action, what they shall do, or of their properties and such-like. For if to have foreknown these things would have made much to godliness, surely the Holy Ghost would most plainly have told them; for according to Christ's promise, he bringeth us into all truth; all truth (I say), such as the knowledge of it would profit us. All the Scripture is given to us for this purpose, that the man of God might be made perfect and instructed to all good works; and truly that can be no good work, which we do, except God teach us the same. He hath prepared the good works wherein we walk. (Eph. ii.) But the certain and bottomless fountain of their good work is, in all things to hang on the beck and pleasure of God, and through our Lord Jesus Christ to look for, with remission of sins, life everlasting and the glory of the resurrection. To the end therefore that we may more fully know our sins, and more make of our redemption from them by Christ, let us set before our eyes death, the hire of sin, and that not only in ourselves, but also in every creature of the world. Howbeit, this let us do, with the hope of so ample a restoration, and never enough to be marvelled at, which shall be even in all things for our renovation by the Lord Jesus Christ, the renewer of all things, whatsoever be in heaven or in earth.

He that with true faith weigheth and considereth these things, will be (as it were) swallowed up in the admiration of so exceeding great benevolence and love of God, our heavenly Father, that he can never admit to yield to this curiosity of searching what kind of things shall be renewed, and how they

shall be renewed, or what state or condition they shall be in when they are renewed. These be the things of the life to come, whercof this foreknowledge is sufficient, that all these things shall be more perfect and happy than the reach of reason is able to look upon the glory of them; for the eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, nor it cannot ascend into man's heart, that God hath prepared for them that love him.

For concerning our resurrection, what other thing do we know beforehand, but that we shall be most happy? even so therefore let us not doubt but that there shall be a deliverance of the creature from the servitude of corruption. And let us consider these things so, that we wholly may bend ourselves to put away all the oldness of our flesh, whence indeed corruption and death doth come, and that we may provoke ourselves to the newness of the spirit, and the life of Christ; wherein is all incorruption and the true taste of the resurrection, for to this end the Holy Ghost did write this by the Apostle. That therefore this Spirit might lead us hereunto, let us pray, and then we shall understand this place of Paul with profit.

If perchance it will move you that the Apostle speaketh not of this deliverance of the creature from corruption in any other place but here, neither any other holy writer; I would you would think that the misery of the restoration of Israel, also of antichrist, is not expounded but in the Apostle's writings, and that but in one place; yea, the manner of our resurrection is not written but in two places. We ought to know that they are the words of the Lord, whatsoever the Apostle hath left to us written.

Again, the simplicity of this place (Rom. viii.) is plain; and thus (my dearly beloved) I have written to you so much as I think is sufficient about this mat-

ter, and therefore need not to tarry herein any longer, or to spend any more time about the answering of that which is but curiosity. God our Father give us now his holy Spirit, to lead us into this and all other necessary truth, in such sort that we may have a lively feeling of eternal life begun in us, that we may become first new, and so look for new heaven and earth, wherein righteousness dwelleth; which God impute to us, and begin in us for his Christ's sake. Amen. Amen.

Your own for ever in the Lord,

JOHN BRADFORD.

To Mr. TRAVES, begging his Prayers, and lamenting his own sinful Condition.

GRACE and mercy from God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ, govern our minds, that sin have not dominion over us. Amen.

Yesternight, a little before supper, I was desired by a neighbour, my mother's friend, against this day to dinner. Unto whom for that a refusal would have been imputed disdainful stateliness, I unwillingly (God to witness), but not unadvisedly, yet foolishly granted to the same; which I advertise you, as mine excuse for not coming this day. And for mine absence yesterday, my vain looking for you to have come with your nearest neighbour, the rather for that I heard him commit to you the survey of his will, hath with some repentance deceived me, though to my hurt and loss, yet to your profit, which else by my coming and troubling you should have been contrary. If you come not to-morrow hither, send me word by the bringer; and if there be no sermon, I will come to you, to have your counsel in such things as by letters I will not now write.

In the mean season, in your communication with

God, I pray you have me, of all sinners a most negligent, unthankful, and wretched, (oh! that from the bottom of my heart I confessed the same unfeignedly!) in remembrance, that at length I might truly convert and return from these greasy fleshpots of Egypt, to feed with his manna, patiently and assuredly expecting his mercy, joyfully sighing for and bearing the badge of his disciples and servants, the cross. I mean to crucify this lucriferous and gluttonous heart, more than most worthy of the rich Epulo's unquenchable thirst, and gnawing worms of Herod. This paper, pen, and ink, yea, the marble stone weepeth, to see my slothful security, and unthankful hardness to so merciful and long-suffering a Lord. I confess it, I confess it, though not tremblingly, humbly, or penitently, yet I confess it, oh! hypocritically I confess it!

Therefore pray, pray for me, that I may repent, and be turned to God, not despising his wrath, and the death of his Son Jesus Christ, but that I may live in the Spirit, and walk in the Spirit, evermore to bewail my carnal security and this *philautiam*, that I may be made a new creature through grace, made meet to receive the new wine of the Gospel into a new vessel, purified by faith, wrought by the spirit of consolation, which may vouchsafe to lead us in all truth and godly living, that we may know God the Father to be in himself the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent. To which most blessed Trinity, be all honour and glory for ever. Amen.

In haste, this Thursday in the morning.

Yours as his own,

JOHN BRADFORD.

To some Person of Quality unknown.

GRACE and virtue from God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ, govern our minds, that sin have not the upper hand of virtue in our souls. Amen.

Whereas your Masterhip hath desired me to have been with you this day, which was never in your company, I being a refuse, an abject, a worldling of this naughty and wretched world, yea, a worse than so, one of the most wretched sinners living :

These things considered on the one side, and your humane gentleness on the other, seeing, I say, that I have disobeyed your most gentle request and desire, I am worthy, if you should entreat with me according to my deserving, not only to go without or want all such ghostly edifying and profit which I might have had of your Mastership, but also to have you from now forth ever to be heavy master to me.

But all this notwithstanding, I will comfort myself with your gentleness, trusting you will not take me at the worst. And thus comforting myself with your gentle humanity, I humbly beseech your Mastership, that you will be content this next week, or the Easter week, or any other time at your pleasure. And surely, if ye will appoint no time, I will come afore I be called. I thank you for your book.

JOHN BRADFORD.

BRADFORD'S Prayer, that God would shorten the Persecution, and restore the true Religion.

As David seeing the angel with the sword ready drawn to plague Jerusalem, cried unto the Lord, and said, " It is I, Lord, that have sinned, and even I

that have done wickedly ; thy hand be upon me, and not upon thy poor sheep ;” wherethrough thou wast moved to mercy, and badest thy angel put up his sword into the sheath, for thou hadst taken punishment enough :

Even so we, O most gracious God, seeing thy fearful sword of vengeance ready drawn, and presently striking against this common weal and thy church in the same ; we, I say, are occasioned every one of us to cast off our eyes from the beholding and narrowly espying of other men’s faults, and do set our own only in sight, that with the same David thy servant, and with Jonah in the ship, we may cry, and say unto thee, that it is we, O Lord, that have sinned, and procured thy grievous wrath upon us.

And thus we, presently gathered, do acknowledge ourselves guilty of most horrible ingratitude for our good King, for thy Gospel and pure religion, and for the peace of the church, and quietness of the commonwealth ; besides our negligences and many other grievous sins, wherethrough we deserved not only these, but much more grievous plagues and punishments, if that thou didst not presently, as thou art wont, extend thy mercy upon us, that thou in thine anger dost remember thy mercy, before we seek or sue for it.

We take boldness, O gracious Lord, and as thou hast commanded us to do in our trouble, we come and call upon thee to be merciful unto us, and of thy goodness in Christ we most humbly pray thee to hold in thy hand, and to cease thy wrath, or at the least to mitigate it ; that this realm may be quietly governed, and the same eftsoons to be an harbourer for thy church and true religion. And which it may please thee to restore again to us, for thy great mercy’s sake, and we shall praise thy name everlastingly through Jesus Christ our only Saviour, Mediator, and Advocate. Amen.

THE
LIFE, DEATH, AND LETTERS,
OF THAT
FAITHFUL SERVANT OF GOD,
LAWRENCE SAUNDERS,
RECTOR OF ALLHALLOWS, IN BREAD STREET,
LONDON.

THE DEWEE AND MISTON
OF THE
VILLAGE OF DEWEE
LAWRENCE SANDERS
A HISTORY OF THE VILLAGE OF DEWEE
1880

THE
HISTORY AND MARTYRDOM
OF
LAWRENCE SAUNDERS,

Burned for the Defence of the Gospel at Coventry, Feb. 8, 1555.

AFTER that Queen Mary, by public proclamation in the first year of her reign, had inhibited the sincere preaching of God's holy word, divers godly ministers of the word, which had the cure and charge of souls committed to them, did notwithstanding, according to their bounden duty, feed their flock faithfully, not as preachers authorized by public authority (as the godly order of this realm was in the happy days of blessed King Edward), but as the private pastors of particular flocks; among whom Lawrence Saunders was one, a man of worshipful parentage. His bringing up was in learning from his youth, in places meet for that purpose, as namely, in the school of Eton: from whence (according to the manner there used) he was chosen to go to the King's college in Cambridge, where he continued scholar in the college three whole years, and there profited in knowledge and learning very much for that time; shortly after that he did forsake the university, and went to his parents, upon whose advice he minded to become a merchant, for that his mother, who was a gentlewoman of good estimation, being left a widow, and having a good portion for him, among his other brethren, she thought to set him up wealthily; and so he coming up to London was bound apprentice with a merchant, named Sir William Chester, who afterward chanced to be She-

riff of London, the same year that Saunders was burned at Coventry.

Thus by the mind of his friends, Lawrence should needs have been a merchant; but Almighty God, which hath his secret working in all things, saw better for his servant, as it fell out in the end; for although that Saunders was bound by fast indenture to play the merchant, yet the Lord so wrought inwardly in his heart, that he could find no liking in that vocation, so that when his other fellows were busily occupied about that kind of trade, he would secretly withdraw himself into some privy corner, and there fall into his solitary lamentations, as one not liking with that kind and trade of life.

It happened that his master being a good man, and hearing his apprentice thus in his secret prayers inwardly to mourn by himself, called him unto him, to know what the cause was of that his solitariness and lamentation; who then perceiving his mind nothing to fancy that kind of life (for so Saunders declared unto him), and perceiving also his whole purpose to be bent to the study of his book and spiritual contemplation, like a good man directed his letters incontinently unto his friends, and giving him his indenture, so set him free. And thus Lawrence Saunders, being ravished with the love of learning, and especially with the reading of God's word, tarried not long time in the traffic of merchandise, but shortly returned to Cambridge again to his study, when he began to couple to the knowledge of the Latin the study of the Greek tongue, wherein he profited in small time very much; therewith also he joined the study of the Hebrew; then gave he himself wholly to the study of the holy Scripture, to furnish himself to the office of a preacher.

In study he was diligent and painful, in godly life he declared the fruits of a well-exercised conscience;

he prayed often, and with great fervour, and in his prayers as also at other times he had his part of spiritual exercises, which his hearty sighing to God declared: in which, when any special assault did come, by prayer he felt present relief; then was his company marvellous comfortable, for as his exercises were special teaching, so in the end they proved singular consolations, wherein he became so expert, that within short space he was able to comfort others which were in any affliction, by the consolation wherewith the Lord did comfort him. Thus continued he in the university till he proceeded Master of Arts, and a long space after.

In the beginning of King Edward's reign, when God's true religion was begun to be restored, after license obtained, he began to preach, and was so well liked of them which then had authority, that they appointed him to read a divinity lecture in the college of Fotheringay, where by doctrine and life he edified the godly, drew many ignorant to God's true knowledge, and stopped the mouth of the adversaries. He married about that time, and in the married state led a life unblameable before all men. The college of Fotheringay being dissolved, he was placed to be Reader in the minster at Litchfield, where he so behaved himself in teaching and living, that the very adversaries did give him a full report, as well of learning as of much godliness. After a certain space, he departed from Litchfield to a benefice in Leicestershire, called Churchlangton, whereupon he keeping residence, taught diligently, and kept a liberal house.

From thence he was orderly called to take a benefice in the city of London, named Allhallows, in Bread Street. Then minded he to give over his cure in the country, and therefore, after he had taken possession of his benefice in London, he departed

from London into the country, clearly to discharge himself thereof. And even about that time began the broil about the claim that Queen Mary made to the crown, by reason whereof he could not accomplish his purpose.

In this trouble, and even among the beginners of it (such I mean as were for the Queen), he preached at Northampton, nothing meddling with the state, but boldly uttered his conscience against popish doctrine and antichrist's damnable errors, which were like to spring up again in England, as a just plague for the little love which the English nation did bear to the blessed word of God, which had been so plentifully offered unto them. The Queen's men, which were there and heard him, were highly displeas'd with him for his sermon, and for it kept him among them as prisoner. But partly for love of his brethren and friends, which were chief doers for the Queen among them, partly because there was no law broken by his preaching, they dismissed him. He seeing the dreadful days at hand, inflamed with the fire of godly zeal, preached with diligence at both these benefices, as time could serve him, seeing he could resign neither of them now, but into the hands of a Papist.

Thus passed he to and fro in preaching, until that proclamation was put forth, of which mention is made in the beginning. At which time he was at his benefice in the country, where he (notwithstanding the proclamation aforesaid) taught diligently God's truth, confirming the people therein, and arming them against false doctrine, until he was not only commanded to cease, but also with force resisted, so that he could not proceed there in preaching. Some of his friends perceiving such fearful menacings, counselled him to fly out of the realm, which he refused to do; but seeing he was with violence kept

from doing good in that place, he returned towards London to visit the flock of which he had there the charge.

On Saturday the 14th of October, as he was coming nigh to the city of London, Sir John Mordant, a counsellor to Queen Mary, did overtake him, and asked him whither he went. "I have (said Saunders) a cure in London, and now I go to instruct my people according to my duty."—"If you will follow my counsel (quoth M. Mordant), let them alone, and come not at them." To this Saunders answered, "How shall I then be discharged before God, if any be sick, and desire consolation; if any want good counsel, and need instruction; or if any should slip into error, and receive false doctrine?"—"Did you not (quoth Mordant) preach such a day," and named the day, "in Bread Street, London?"—"Yes, verily (said Saunders), that same is my cure."—"I heard you myself (quoth M. Mordant), and will you preach now there again?"—"If it please you (said Saunders), to-morrow you may hear me again in that same place, where I will confirm, by the authority of God's word, all that I said then, and whatsoever before that time I taught them."

"I would counsel you (quoth the other) not to preach."—"If you can, and will forbid me by lawful authority, then must I obey," (said Saunders.) "Nay (quoth he), I will not forbid you, but I do give you counsel." And thus entered they both into the city, and departed from each other. M. Mordant, of an uncharitable mind, went to give warning to Bonner, Bishop of London, that Saunders would preach in his cure the next day. Saunders resorted to his lodging, with a mind bent to do his duty; where, because he seemed to be somewhat troubled, one which was there about him, asked him how he did. "In very deed (saith he) I am in prison, till I be in

prison ;” meaning, that his mind was unquiet until he had preached, and that then he should have quietness of mind, though he were put in prison.

The next day, which was Sunday in the forenoon, he made a sermon in his parish, entreating in that place which Paul writeth to the Corinthians, “ I have coupled you to one man, that ye should make yourselves a chaste virgin unto Christ ; but I fear, lest it come to pass, that as the serpent beguiled Eve, even so your wits should be corrupt from the singleness which ye had towards Christ.” He recited a sum of that true Christian doctrine, through which they were coupled to Christ, to receive of him free justification, through faith in his blood.

The papistical doctrine he compared to the serpent’s deceiving ; and lest they should be deceived by it, he made a comparison between the voice of God and the voice of the popish serpent, descending to more particular declaration thereof, as it were to let them plainly see, the difference that is between the order of the church service set forth by King Edward in the English tongue, and comparing it with the popish service then used in the Latin tongue.

The first he said was good, because it was according to the word of God (1 Cor. xiv.), and the order of the primitive church ; the other, he said, was evil, and though in that evil be intermingled some good Latin words, yet was it but as a little honey or milk mingled with a great deal of poison, to make them drink up all. This was the sum of his sermon.

In the afternoon he was ready in his church to have given another exhortation to his people ; but the Bishop of London interrupted him by sending an officer for him. This officer charged him, upon the pain of disobedience and contumacy, forthwith to come to the Bishop his master. Thus, as the

Apostles were brought out of the temple, where they were teaching unto the rulers of the priests, so was Lawrence Saunders brought before the Bishop in his palace of London, who had in his company the aforementioned Sir John Mordant, and some of his chaplains. The Bishop laid no more to Lawrence Saunders' charge, but treason for breaking the Queen's proclamation, heresy and sedition for his sermon.

The treason and sedition his charity was content to let slip until another time; but an heretic he would now prove him, and all those he said which did teach and believe that the administration of the sacraments and all orders of the church are most pure, which do come most nigh to the order of the primitive church. For the church was then but in her infancy, and could not abide that perfection which was afterward to be furnished with ceremonies. And for this cause Christ himself, and after him the Apostles, did in many things bear with the rudeness of that church.

To this Lawrence Saunders answered with the authority of St. Augustine, that ceremonies were even from the beginning invented and ordained for the rude infancy and weak infirmity of man, and therefore it was a token of the more perfection of the primitive church, that it had few ceremonies; and of the rudeness of the church papistical, because it had so many ceremonies, partly blasphemous, partly un-savoury and unprofitable.

After much talk had concerning this matter, the Bishop willed him to write what he believed of transubstantiation. Lawrence Saunders did so, saying, "My Lord, ye do seek my blood, and ye shall have it; I pray God, that ye may be so baptized in it, that ye may thereafter loathe bloodsucking, and become a better man." This writing the Bishop kept

for his purpose, even to cut the writer's throat, as shall appear hereafter.

The Bishop, when he had his will, sent Lawrence Saunders to the Lord Chancellor, as Annas sent Christ to Caiaphas, and like favour found Saunders as did Christ his master before him; but the Chancellor being not at home, Saunders was constrained to tarry for him by the space of four hours in the outer chamber, where he found a chaplain of the Bishop's very merrily disposed with certain gentlemen playing at the tables, with divers others of the same family or house, occupied there in the same exercise.

All this time Saunders stood very modestly and soberly at the screen or cupboard, bare-headed, Sir John Mordant, his guide or leader, walking up and down by him, who (as I said before) was then one of the council. At the last the Bishop returned from the court, whom, as soon as he was entered, a great many suitors met and received, so that before he could get out of one house into another, half an hour was passed. At the last he came into the chamber where Saunders was, and went through into another chamber, where in the mean way Saunders' leader gave him a writing, containing the cause, or rather the accusation of the said Saunders, which when he had perused, "Where is the man?" said the Bishop. Then Saunders, being brought forth to the place of examination, first most lowly and meekly kneeled down, and made curtesy before the table where the Bishop did sit, unto whom the Bishop spake in this wise:

"How happeneth it," said he, "that, notwithstanding the Queen's proclamation to the contrary, you have enterprised to preach?"

Saunders denied not that he did preach, saying, that forsooth, as he saw the perilous times now at hand, he did but (according as he was admonished

and warned by Ezekiel the Prophet) exhort his flock and parishioners to persevere and stand steadfastly in the doctrine which they had learned ; saying also, that he was moved and pricked forward thereunto by the place of the Apostle, wherein he was commanded rather to obey God than man ; and moreover, that nothing more moved or stirred him thereunto, than his own conscience.

“ A goodly conscience merely,” said the Bishop. “ This your conscience would make our Queen a bastard or misbegotten ; would it not, I pray you ? ”

Then said Saunders : “ We (said he) do not declare or say, that the Queen is base or misbegotten, neither go about any such matter ; but for that let them care, whose writings are yet in the hands of men witnessing the same,” not without the great reproach and shame of the author, privily taunting the Bishop himself, which had before (to get the favour of Henry VIII.) written and set forth in print a book of true obedience, wherein he had openly declared Queen Mary to be a bastard. Now M. Saunders, going forwards in his purpose, said : “ We do only profess and teach the sincerity and purity of the word, the which albeit it be now forbidden us to preach with our mouths, yet, notwithstanding, I do not doubt, but that our blood hereafter shall manifest the same.” The Bishop being in this sort prettily nipped and touched, said : “ Carry away this frenzy fool to prison : ” unto whom M. Saunders answered, that he did give God thanks which had given him at the last a place of rest and quietness, whereas he might pray for the Bishop’s conversion.

Furthermore, he that did lie with him afterwards in prison, in the same bed, reported that he heard him say, that even in the time of his examination he was wonderfully comforted, inasmuch as not only

in spirit but also in body, he received a certain taste of that holy communion of saints, whilst a most pleasant refreshing did issue from every part and member of the body unto the seat and place of the heart, and from thence did ebb and flow to and fro unto all the parts again.

This Saunders continued in prison a whole year and three months; in all which space he sent divers letters to divers men, as one to Cramer, Ridley, and Latimer, and other to his wife, and also to others, certifying them both of the public calamity of the time, and also of his private afflictions, and of sundry his conflicts with his adversaries. As in writing to his friend he speaketh of Weston conferring with him in prison, whereof you shall hear anon (by the leave of the Lord), as followeth in the story. In the mean time the Chancellor, after this little talk with Master Saunders (as is aforesaid), sent him to the Marshalsea, &c. For the Caiaphas (Winchester I mean) did nothing but bait him with some of his currish eloquence, and so committed him to the prison of the Marshalsea, where he was kept in prison one whole year and a quarter; but of his cause and estate thou shalt now see what L. Saunders himself did write.

A Parcel of a Letter of LAWRENCE SAUNDERS, sent to the Bishop of Winchester, as an Answer to certain Things wherewith he had before charged him.

“Touching the cause of my imprisonment, I doubt whether I have broken any law or proclamation. In my doctrine I did not, forasmuch as at that time it was permitted by the proclamation to use, according to our conscience, such service as was then established. My doctrine was then agreeable unto my conscience, and the service then used. The act

which I did (he meaneth public teaching of God's word in his own parish, called Allhallows in Bread Street, in the city of London) was such as, being indifferently weighed, sounded to no breaking of the proclamation, or at the least no wilful breaking of it, forasmuch as I caused no bell to be rung, neither occupied I any place in the pulpit, after the order of sermons or lectures; but, be it that I did break the proclamation, this long time of continuance in prison may be thought to be more than a sufficient punishment for such a fault.

“Touching the charging of me with my religion, I say with St. Paul, This I confess, that, after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my forefathers, believing all things which are written in the law and the Prophets, and have hope towards God, &c. (Acts, xxiv.) And herein study I to have always a clear conscience towards God and towards man; so that I call God to witness I have a conscience. And this my conscience is not grounded upon vain fantasy, but upon the infallible verity of God's word, with the witnessing of his chosen church agreeable unto the same.

“It is an easy thing for them which take Christ for their true pastor, and be the very sheep of his pasture, to discern the voice of their true Shepherd from the voice of wolves, hirelings, and strangers, forasmuch as Christ saith (John, x.), My sheep hear my voice; yea, and thereby they shall have the gift to know the right voice of the true Shepherd, and so to follow him, and to avoid the contrary; as he also saith, The sheep follow the shepherd, for they know his voice; a stranger will they not follow, but will fly from him, for they know not the voice of a stranger.

“Such inward inspiration doth the Holy Ghost put into the children of God, being indeed taught of

God, but otherwise unable to understand the true way of their salvation. And albeit that the wolf (as Christ saith) cometh in sheep's clothing, yet he saith, By their fruits ye shall know them. (Matt. vii.) For there be certain fruits whereby the wolf is bewrayed, notwithstanding that otherwise, in sundry sorts of devout holiness in outward show, he seemeth never so simple a sheep. That the Romish religion is ravening and wolfish, it is apparent in three principal points.

“First, it robbeth God of his due and only honour.

“Secondly, it taketh away the true comfort of conscience, in obscuring or rather burying of Christ and his office of salvation.

“Thirdly, it spoileth God of his true worship and service in spirit and truth, appointed in his prescript commandments, and driveth men into that inconvenience, against the which Christ with the Prophet Isaiah doth speak sharply: This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me (Isa. xxvi.); they worship me in vain, teaching the doctrine and precept of men. (Matt. xxv.) And in another place, Ye cast aside the commandment of God, to maintain your own traditions.

“Wherefore I in conscience, weighing the Romish religion, and by indifferent discussing thereof, finding the foundation unstedfast, and the building thereupon but vain; and on the other side, having my conscience framed after a right and uncorrupt religion, ratified and fully established by the word of God, and the consent of his true church, I neither may nor do intend, by God's gracious assistance, to be pulled one jot from the same; no, though an angel out of heaven should preach another Gospel, than that which I have received of the Lord.

“And although that for lack either of such deep knowledge and profound judgment, or of expedite

uttering of that I do know and judge, as is required in an excellent clerk, I shall not be able sufficiently to answer, for the convincing of the gainsayer; yet nevertheless this my protestation shall be of me premised, that for the respect of the grounds and causes before considered, albeit I cannot, *explicita fide*, as they call it, conceive all that is to be conceived, neither can discuss all that is to be discussed, nor can effectually express all that is to be expressed in the discourse of the doctrine of this most true religion, whereunto I am professed; yet do I bind myself, as by my humble simplicity, so by my *fidem implicitam*, that is, by faith in generality (as they call it), to wrap my belief in the credit of the same, that no authority of that Romish religion, repugnant thereunto, shall by any means remove me from the same; though it may hap that our adversaries will labour to beguile us with enticing words, and seek to spoil us through philosophy and deceitful vanity, after the traditions of men, and after the ordinances of the world, and not after Christ, &c."

And thus much of Master Saunders's letter, so much as remaineth thereof. The residue, because it was rent away, I could not adjoin thereunto. Notwithstanding, by this already expressed, it is sufficient to understand how good was the cause and estate of this blessed child of God, being prisoner for Christ's cause. For the defence whereof he wholly bestowed and resigned himself in such sort as he forbade his wife to sue for his delivery: and when other of his friends had by suit almost obtained it, he discouraged them, so that they did not follow their suit, as by his letter following may appear.

A Letter of M. SAUNDERS to his Wife.

“ Grace, mercy, and peace in Christ our Lord, entirely beloved wife, even as unto mine own soul and body, so do I daily in my hearty prayer wish unto you, for I do daily twice at the least in this sort remember you; and I do not doubt (dear wife) but both I and you, as we be written in the book of life, so we shall together enjoy the same everlastingly through the grace and mercy of God, our dear Father, in his Son our Christ. And for this present life, let us wholly appoint ourselves to the will of our good God, to glorify him either by life or by death; and even that same merciful Lord inake us worthy to honour him either way as pleaseth him. Amen.

“ I am merry, I thank my God and my Christ, in whom and through whom I shall (I know) be able to fight a good fight, and finish a good course, and then receive the crown which is laid up in store for me, and all the true soldiers of Christ. Wherefore, wife, let us, in the name of our God, fight lustily to overcome the flesh, the devil, and the world. What our harness and weapons be in this kind of fight, look in the sixth chapter unto the Ephesians, and pray, pray, pray. I would that you would make no suit for me in any wise. Thank you know whom for his most sweet and comfortable putting me in remembrance of my journey whither I am passing. God send us all good speed, and a joyful meeting. I have too few such friends to further me in that journey, which is indeed the greatest friendship. The blessing of God be with you all. Amen.

“ A prisoner in the Lord,

“ L. SAUNDERS.”

This his constancy is sufficiently commended and declared by his valiant buckling with two mighty ene-

mies, antichrist and death. To neither of these did he give place, but by suffering their malice got the victory over them both. One of the conflicts which he had with antichrist and his members, I have gathered out of a letter of his own hand-writing: it was with Dr. Weston, a man whom though I should praise, yet would all good and godly men worthily dispraise. Of this the said Lawrence Saunders thus writeth, in a letter which he sent to one of his friends, which wrote to him to know what Dr. Weston did at the Marshalsea, whereunto he thus answereth:

“ Master Weston came to confer with Master Grimold; what he hath concluded with him, I know not; I wish it may be to God’s glory. Amen. Amen. Master Weston of his gentleness visited me, and offered me friendship in his worldly wily sort, &c. I had not so much good manners as to take it at his hand; for I said that I was well enough, and ready cheerfully to abide the extremity, to keep thereby a good conscience. ‘ You be not asleep in ‘ sin,’ said he. ‘ I would awake (quoth I), and do not ‘ forget to watch and pray.’—‘ What church was ‘ there,’ said he, ‘ thirty years past?’—‘ What ‘ church was there,’ quoth I, ‘ in Elias’s time?’—‘ Joan of Kent,’ said he, ‘ was of your church.’—‘ No,’ quoth I, ‘ we did condemn her as an ‘ heretic.’

“ ‘ Who was of your church,’ said he, ‘ thirty years ‘ past?’—‘ Such,’ quoth I, ‘ as that Romish anti- ‘ christ and his rabble have reputed and condemned as ‘ heretics.’—‘ Wickliffe,’ said he, ‘ Thorp, Old- ‘ castle, &c.’—‘ Yea,’ quoth I, ‘ with many more, ‘ as stories do tell.’

“ ‘ The Bishop of Rome hath,’ said he, ‘ long ‘ time played a part in your railing sermons, but now ‘ be ye sure he must play another manner of part.’—‘ The more pity,’ quoth I, ‘ and yet some com-

‘fort it is to see how that the best learned, wisest, and holiest of you all, have heretofore had him to play a part likewise in your sermons and writings, though now, to please the world, you do turn with the weathercock.’—‘Did you ever,’ said he, ‘hear me preach against the Bishop of Rome?’—‘No,’ quoth I, ‘for I never heard you preach. But I trow you have been no wiser than other, &c.’ with more about the sacrament. Pray, pray. God keep your family and bless it.”

What blessed taste this good man had of God’s holy Spirit, by divers and sundry his letters may right well appear to him that is disposed to peruse the same; whereof certain we have here thought good, the Lord willing, to express, first beginning with that which he wrote out of the Marshalsea to Dr. Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer, prisoners for the like cause of Christ in Oxford.

To the Archbishop CRANMER, Bishop RIDLEY, and Master LATIMER, being Prisoners in Oxford.

“In my most humble wise, I salute you, most reverend fathers in Christ Jesus our Lord. Immortal thanks and everlasting praises be given unto that our Father of mercies, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of saints in light, which hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, by whom we have redemption through his blood, &c. (Col. iii.) O most happy estate, that in an unspeakable wise our life is hid with Christ in God; but whensoever Christ, which is our life, shall shew himself, then shall we also appear with him in glory. (1 Cor. xiii.) In the mean season, as our sight is but in a glass, even in a dark speaking, so we walk in faith, not after outward appearance;

the which faith, although, for want of outward appearance, reason reputeth but as vain; yet the chosen of God do know the effect thereof to bring a more substantial taste and lively fruition of very felicity and perfect blessedness than reason can reach, or senses receive. By this faith we have in our possession all good things, yea, even them which the eye hath not seen, and the ear hath not heard, neither hath entered the heart of man, &c. (Isa. liv. 1 Cor. ii.) Then if hereby we do enjoy all good things, it followeth that we must needs possess, have, and enjoy you, most reverend fathers, who be no small part of our joy and good things given us of God.

“ We heretofore have had the fruition of you by bodily presence to our inexplicable benefit, praised be that our gracious God therefor. And now in spirit we have the experience of unspeakable comfort by your reverend fatherhoods, for that in this so glorious sort ye become a town set upon a hill, a candle upon a candlestick, a spectacle unto the world, both to the angels and unto men. (Matt. v.) So that as we to our great comfort do feel, you also may assuredly say with St. Paul, that the things which happen unto us do chance unto the great furtherance of the Gospel; so that our bonds in Christ are manifest, not only throughout all the judgment-hall, but in all whole Europe; insomuch that many of the brethren in the Lord, being encouraged through our bonds, dare more boldly speak the word without fear.

“ And herein as you have with St. Paul greatly to rejoice, so we rejoice with you, and we do indeed with you give thanks for this worthy excellent favour of our God towards you, that Christ is thus magnified in you, yea, and hereafter shall be magnified in your bodies, whether it be through life or death. Of which thing truly we are assured in our prayers for you and ministering of the spirit; and although

for our own parts Christ is unto you life, and death advantage, and that your desire is (as indeed it were better for you) to be loosed, and to be with Christ; yet for the church of Christ were it much more necessary that ye should abide in the flesh. Yea, that merciful God, even for his Christ's sake, grant that ye may abide and continue for the furtherance of the church, and rejoicing of faith, that the rejoicing thereof may be the more abundant through Christ by your restoring. Amen. Amen.

“ But if it seem better otherwise unto the divine wisdom, that by speedy death he hath appointed you to glorify him, the Lord's will be done. Yea, even as we do rejoice both in your behalfs and also on our own, that God is magnified by life, and should be more abundantly glad for the continuance thereof, so we shall no less rejoice to have the same wrought by death. We shall give thanks for this honour given unto you, rejoicing that you are accounted worthy to suffer for the name of Christ, and that it is given to you of God, not only that ye should believe in him, but also that ye should suffer for his sake. And herein we shall have to rejoice in the behalf of the church of Christ, whose faith may be the faster fixed upon God's verity, being confirmed with three such worthy witnesses. Oh! thanks be to God for this his unspeakable gift.

“ And now, most reverend fathers, that you may understand the truth of us and our estate, how we stand in the Lord, I do assure your reverences, partly by that I perceive by such of our brethren as be here in bonds with me, partly by that I hear of them which be in other places, and partly by that inward experience which I, most unworthy wretch, have of God's good comfort (more abundance whereof I know there is in others), you may be assured (I say) by God's grace, that you shall not be frustrate

of your hope of our constant continuance in the cheerful confession of God's everlasting verity. For even as we have received the word of truth, even the Gospel of our salvation, wherein we believing are sealed with the holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance (the which Spirit certifieth our spirit, that we are the children of God), and therefore God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father (Eph. i. Rom. viii. Gal. iv.), so after such portion as God measureth unto us, we with the whole church of Christ, and with you, reverend fathers, receiving the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, "I believed, and therefore have I spoken;" we also believe, and therefore speak (2 Cor. iv.); for the which we in this dangerous bondage and other afflictions, having even such a fight as we have seen in you, and have heard of you, are in no wise afraid of our adversaries. (Phil. i.)

"And forasmuch as we have such an office, even as God hath had mercy on us, we go not out of kind, but even with you, after our little power, we labour to maintain the faith of the Gospel, knowing most certainly, that though we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of this power might be God's, and not ours, yet shall we not be dashed in pieces; for the Lord will put his hand under us. When we are troubled on every side, yet are we not without shift; when we are in poverty, we are not utterly without something; when we suffer persecution, we are not forsaken therein; when we are cast down, yet we shall not perish. (2 Cor. v.) But to communicate with our sweet Saviour Christ in bearing the cross, it is appointed unto us, that even with him also we shall be glorified; for it is a true saying, if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him; if we be patient, we shall also

reign with him ; if we deny him, he shall also deny us. (2 Tim. ii.) Wherefore be we of good cheer, always bearing about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus might appear also in our body. For we know, that He which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up us also by the means of Jesus, and shall join us to himself together with you. Wherefore we are not wearied ; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our tribulation, which is momentary and light, prepareth an exceeding and eternal weight of glory unto us, while we look not on the things which are seen, but on the things which are not seen ; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. (2 Cor. iv.)

“ We testify unto you, reverend fathers, that we draw these waters with joy out of the wells of the Saviour ; and I trust we shall continually with you bless the Lord, and give thanks to the Lord out of the wells of Israel. We trust to be merry together at that great supper of the Lamb, whose spouse we are by faith, and there to sing that song of everlasting hallelujah. Amen. Yea, come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.”

Another letter written to his wife, wherein is to be seen how this worthy warrior prepared himself to the appointed fight, and to keep his standing in Christ's camp.

LAWRENCE SAUNDERS *to his Wife.*

“ Grace and comfort in Christ Jesus, our only comfort in all extreme assaults. Amen.

“ Fain would this flesh make strange of that which the spirit doth embrace. O Lord, how loath is this loitering sluggard, to pass forth in God's path ! It

fantasieth forsooth much fear of fray-bugs, and were it not for the force of faith which pulleth it forward by the rein of God's most sweet promise, and of hope which pricketh on behind, great adventures there were of fainting by the way. But blessed, and everlastingly blessed be that heavenly Father of ours, who in his Christ, our sufficient Saviour, hath vouchsafed to shine in our hearts, that he giveth us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; and having this treasure in our earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power might be God's, and not ours, we are (according to his good will) troubled on every side, yet are we not without shift; we are in poverty, but yet not without that is sufficient; we suffer persecution, but are not forsaken therein; we are cast down, nevertheless we perish not; we bear in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus might also appear in our body. (2 Cor. iv.)

“Wherefore, by the grace of our Christ, we shall not be wearied, neither be dismayed by this our probation through the fire of affliction, as though some strange thing had happened unto us, but by his power we shall rejoice, inasmuch as we are partakers of Christ's passion, that when he doth appear, we may be merry and glad, knowing that our tribulation, which is momentary and light, prepareth an exceeding and an eternal weight of glory unto us, while we look not on the things which are seen, but on the things which are not seen. (2 Cor. iv.) They that sow in tears, shall reap in joy; for he that goeth on his way weeping and scattering his good seed, shall doubtless come again with joy, and bring his whole sheaves with him. (Psa. cxxvi.) Then, then shall the Lord wipe away all tears from our eyes; then, then shall be brought to pass the saying which is written, Death is swallowed up in victory; Death, where is thy

sting? Hell, where is thy victory? Yea, thanks be to God, which hath given us victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

“ In the mean season, it remaineth for us to follow St. Peter’s bidding: let them, saith he (1 Pet. iv.), that are troubled, according to the will of God, commit their souls to him with well doing, as a faithful Creator and Maker. He is our Maker, we are his handywork and creatures, whom now, when he hath made, he doth not leave and forsake, as the shipwright doth the ship, leaving it at all adventures to be tossed in the tempest; but he comforteth us his creatures, and in him we live, move, and have our being; yea, not only that, but now that he hath in his dear Christ repaired us, being before utterly decayed, and redeemed us, purging us unto himself as a peculiar people by the blood of his Son, he hath put on a most tender good will and fatherly affection towards us, never to forget us, unto whom by such promises he hath plighted such faith, that though it were possible that the mother could forget her infant, and not be tender-hearted to the child of her womb, yet may not it be that his faithful believers should be forgotten of him. (Isa. xlix.)

“ He biddeth us to cast our care on him, and saith, that assuredly he careth for us (1 Pet. v.); and what though for a season he doth suffer us to be turmoiled in the troublous tempests of temptation, and seemeth as in much anger to have given us over and forgotten us? let not us, for all that, leave off to put our trust in him, but let us with goodly Job conclude in ourselves and say, Even though he kill me, yet will I put my trust in him. (Job, xiii.) Let us with the blessed Abraham hope, even contrary to hope, by belief unto that our loving Lord, who though for our probation he suffereth us to be afflicted, yet will he not be always chiding, neither

keepeth he his anger for ever; for he knoweth whereof we be made, he remembereth that we are but dust. (Psa. ciii.) Wherefore, look how high the heaven is in comparison of the earth, so great is his mercy towards them that fear him. Look how wide the east is from the west, so far hath he set our sins from us; yea, like as a father pitieth his own children, even so is he the Lord merciful unto them that fear him. Oh! what great cause of rejoicing have we in our most gracious God! We cannot but burst forth into the praising of such a bountiful benefactor, and say with the same Psalmist, Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is in within me praise his holy name. Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.

“ Dear wife, riches I have none to leave behind me, wherewith to endow you after the worldly manner. But that treasure of tasting how sweet Christ is unto hungry consciences (whereof I thank my Christ I do feel part, and would feel more), that I bequeath unto you, and to the rest of my beloved in Christ, to retain the same in sense of heart always. Pray, pray. I am merry, and I trust I shall be merry, maugre the teeth of all the devils in hell. I utterly refuse myself, and resign myself unto my Christ, in whom I know I shall be strong, as he seeth needful. Pray, pray, pray.

“ LAWRENCE SAUNDERS.”

As the said Master Saunders was in prison, strait charge was given to the keeper, that no person should speak with him. His wife yet came to the prison-gate, with her young child in her arms, to visit her husband. The keeper, though for his charge he durst not suffer her to come into the prison, yet did he take the little babe out of her arms, and brought him unto his father. Lawrence Saunders, seeing him, rejoiced

greatly, saying, he rejoiced more to have such a boy, than he should if two thousand pounds were given him. And unto the standers by, which praised the goodliness of the child, he said, "What man, fearing God, would not lose his life present, rather than by prolonging it here, he should adjudge this boy to be a bastard. his wife a whore, and himself a whoremonger? Yea, if there were no other cause, for which a man of my estate should lose his life, yet who would not give it to avouch this child to be legitimate, and his marriage to be lawful and holy?"

I do, good reader, recite this saying, not only to let thee see what he thought of priests' marriage, but chiefly to let all married couples and parents learn to bear in their bosoms true affections; natural, but yet seasoned with the true salt of the Spirit, unfeignedly and thoroughly mortified to do the natural works and offices of married couples and true parents, so long as with their doing they may keep Christ with a free confessing faith, and in conscience unsoiled; otherwise both they and their own lives are to be forsaken, as Christ required them to be denied, and given in his cause.

And now to come to the examination of this good man: after that the Bishops had kept him one whole year and a quarter in prison, at the length they called him, as they did the rest of his fellows, openly to be examined. Of the which his first examination, the effect and purport thus followeth:

The Examination of LAWRENCE SAUNDERS.

Praised be our gracious God, who preserveth his from evil, and doth give them grace to avoid all such offences as might hinder his honour, or hurt his church. Amen.

Being convented before the Queen's most ho-

nourable council, sundry Bishops being present; the Lord Chancellor began to speak in such form as followeth :

L. Chan. It is not unknown that you have been a prisoner, for such abominable heresies and false doctrine as hath been sown by you, and now it is thought good that mercy be shewed to such as seek for it; wherefore, if now you will shew yourself conformable, and come home again, mercy is ready. We must say, that we have fallen in manner all; but now we be risen again, and returned to the catholic church, you must rise with us, and come home unto it. Give us forthwith a direct answer.

Saund. My Lord, and my Lords all, may it please your honours to give me leave to answer with deliberation.

Chan. Leave off your painting and pride of speech, for such is the fashion of you all, to please yourselves in your glorious words. Answer yea or nay.

Saund. My Lord, it is no time for me now to paint; and as for pride, there is no great cause why it should be in me. My learning I confess to be but small, and as for riches or worldly wealth, I have none at all: notwithstanding, it standeth me in hand to answer to your demand circumspectly, considering that one of these two extreme perils is like to fall upon me; the losing of a good conscience, or the losing of this my body and life. And I tell you truth, I love both life and liberty, if I could enjoy them without the hurt of my conscience.

Chan. Conscience! you have none at all, but pride and arrogancy, dividing yourselves by singularity from the church.

Saund. The Lord is the knower of all men's consciences; and where your Lordship layeth to my charge this dividing myself from the church (as you do mean, and is now among you concluded upon, as I

do understand), I do assure you, that I live in the faith wherein I have been brought up since I was fourteen years old, being taught that the power of the Bishop of Rome is but usurped, with many other abuses springing thereof. Yea, this I have received even at your hands that are here present, as a thing agreed upon by the catholic church and public authority.

Chan. Yea marry, but I pray you, have you received by consent and authority all your heresies of the blessed sacrament of the altar?

Saund. My Lord, it is less offence to cut off an arm, hand, or joint of man, than to cut off the head; for the man may live, though he do lack an arm, hand, or joint, and so he cannot without his head. But you, all the whole sort of you, have agreed to cut off the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome, whom now you will have to be the head of the church again.

Bishop of Lond. And if it like your Lordship, I have his hand against the blessed sacrament. How say you to that?

Saund. What I have written, that I have written; and further I will not accuse myself. Nothing have you to burden me withal, for breaking your laws since they were in force.

Chan. Will you be obstinate, and refuse liberty?

Saund. My Lord, I may not buy liberty at such a price; but I beseech your Honours, to be means to the Queen's Majesty for such a pardon for us, that we may live and keep our consciences unclogged, and we shall live as most obedient subjects. Otherwise I must say for myself, that by God's grace I will abide the most extremity that man may do against me, rather than to do against my conscience.

Chan. Ah, sirrah! you will live as you list. The Donatists did desire to live in singularity, but indeed

they were not meet to live on earth ; no more be you, and that you shall understand within these seven days, and therefore away with him.

Saund. Welcome be it, whatsoever the will of God shall be, either life or death. And I tell you truly, I have learned to die ; but I exhort you to beware of shedding of innocent blood. Truly it will cry. The Spirit of God rest upon all your Honours ! Amen. This is the sum and form of my first examination. Pray, &c.

This examination being ended, the officers led him out of the place, and so stayed until the rest of his fellows were likewise handled, that they might have them all together to prison. Lawrence Saunders standing among the officers, seeing there a great multitude of people, opened his mouth and spake freely, warning them all of that which by their falling from Christ to antichrist they did deserve, and therefore exhorting them by repentance to rise again, and to embrace Christ with stronger faith, to confess him to the end, in the defiance of antichrist, sin, death, and the devil ; so should they retain the Lord's favour and blessing.

The copies of his other examinations and excommunications came to the hands of such as do keep them still in secret. But in them as he defended Christ's cause stoutly, so warned he the pharisaical Bishops and Papists of their hypocrisy and tyranny freely, and cleared himself of their unjust quarrellings truly. After he was excommunicate and delivered to the secular power, he was brought by the Sheriff of London to the prison called the Counter, in his own parish in Bread Street, whereat he rejoiced greatly, both because he found there a fellow-prisoner, Master Cardmaker, with whom he had christian and comfortable conference, and also because

out of prison, as before out of a pulpit, he might preach to his parishioners, as by his letter hereafter shall be declared.

The fourth day of February, the Bishop of London did come to the prison, where he was to degrade him, which when he had done, Lawrence Saunders said to him, "I thank God I am none of your church."

The day following, in the morning, the Sheriff of London delivered him to certain of the Queen's guard, which were appointed to carry him to the city of Coventry, there to be burned. The first night they came to St. Alban's, where Master Grimoald (a man who had more store of good gifts than of great constancy) did speak with him.

After Master Saunders had given him a lesson meet for his lightness, he took a cup in his hand, and asked him if he would pledge him of that cup of which he would begin to him. Grimoald, by his shrugging and shrinking shewing what he was, said, "Of that cup which is in your hand I will pledge you; but of that other which you mean, I will not promise you."—"Well," said Master Saunders, "my dear Lord Jesus Christ hath begun to me of a more bitter cup than mine shall be, and shall I not pledge my most sweet Saviour? Yes, I hope."

After they were come to Coventry, the same night a poor shoemaker, which was wont to serve him of shoes, came to him after this manner, and said, "O my good master, God strengthen and comfort you."—"Gramercie, good shoemaker," quoth Master Saunders, "and I pray thee to pray for me, for I am the unmeetest man for this high office, that ever was appointed to it; but my gracious God and dear Father is able to make me strong enough." That same night he was put into the common gaol

among other prisoners, where he slept little, but spent the night in prayer and instructing of others.

The next day, which was the eighth of February, he was led to the place of execution in the park, without the city, going in an old gown and a shirt, bare-footed, and oft-times fell flat on the ground, and prayed. When he was come nigh to the place, the officer appointed to see the execution done, said to Master Saunders that "he was one of them which marred the Queen's realm with false doctrine and heresy, wherefore thou hast deserved death," quoth he; "but yet, if thou wilt revoke thine heresies, the Queen hath pardoned thee; if not, yonder fire is prepared for thee."

To whom Master Saunders answered, "It is not I, nor my fellow-preachers of God's truth, that have hurt the Queen's realm, but it is yourself, and such as you are, which have always resisted God's holy word; it is you which have and do mar the Queen's realm. I do hold no heresies; but the doctrine of God, the blessed Gospel of Christ, that hold I, that believe I, that have I taught, and that will I never revoke." With that the tormentor cried, "Away with him." And away from him went Master Saunders with a merry courage towards the fire. He fell to the ground, and prayed; he rose up again, and took the stake to which he should be chained, in his arms, and kissed it, saying, "Welcome the cross of Christ: welcome everlasting life;" and being fastened to the stake, and fire put to him, full sweetly he slept in the Lord.

And thus have ye the full history of Lawrence Saunders, whom I might well compare to St. Lawrence, or any other of the old martyrs of Christ's church, both for the fervent zeal of the truth and Gospel of Christ, and the most constant patience in his sufferings, as also for the cruel torments that he in his

patient body did sustain in the flame of fire; for so his cruel enemies handled him, that they burned him with green wood, and other smothering, rather than burning fuel, which put him to much more pain, but that the grace and most plentiful consolation of Christ, which never forsaketh his servants, and gave strength to St. Lawrence, gave also patience to this Lawrence, above all that his torments could work against him; which well appeared by his quiet standing, and sweet sleeping in the fire, as is above declared.

A Letter sent to Mr. FARRAR, Bishop of St. David's, Doctor TAYLOR, Master BRADFORD, and M. PHILPOT.

GRACE, mercy, and peace in Jesus Christ our Lord, &c. Good fathers and dear brethren, be thankful unto our most gracious God, which hath preserved us, and shall (I doubt not), from blaspheming his blessed name; yea, not only that, but also out of the mouths of very babes and sucklings shall be set forth his praise. They offer us (forsooth) our liberty and pardon, so that we will rise with them unto that faith which we with them were fallen from: yea or no must be answered in haste. They will not admit any needful circumstances, but all (as heretofore) most detestable and abominable. Rise with them we must unto the unity, and pardon (say I) of me must not be so dearly purchased. A pardon I desire to live with an unclogged conscience. The Donatists (say they) sought for such a singularity,

but they were not meet to live in a commonwealth; no more be you, as you shall shortly understand. Wherefore away with him; yea the time was named; within this sevendnight. There be twelve hours in the day. (John, xi.) Death shall be welcome (say I), as being looked for long since, and yet do justice ye were best, for Abel's blood cried, ye wot what. The Spirit of God be upon you, and God save your Honours. Thus departed I from them. Pray, pray; ah! ah! I am a child, and cannot speak. My brother P. shall shew you more herein. By him send me word what you have done. , Fare ye well, and pray, pray. I would gladly meet with my good brother Bradford on the backside about eleven of the clock. Before that time I cannot start out, we have such outwalkers, but then will they be at dinner.

Yours, as you know,
L. SAUNDERS.

A Letter which LAWRENCE SAUNDERS did write to his Wife, and others of the faithful, after his Condemnation to the Fire; written the last of January 1555, out of the Counter in Bread Street.

THE grace of Christ, with the consolation of the Holy Ghost, to the keeping of faith and a good conscience, confirm and keep you for ever vessels to God's glory! Amen.

Oh! what worthy thanks can be given to our gracious God for his unmeasurable mercies plentifully poured upon us! And I, most unworthy wretch, cannot but pour forth at this present, even from the bottom of my heart, the bewailing of my great ingratitude and unkindness towards so gracious a good God and loving Father. I beseech you all, as for my other sins, so especially for that sin of my un-

thankfulness, crave pardon for me in your earnest prayers, commending me to God's great mercies in Christ.

To number these mercies in particular, were to number the drops of water which are in the sea, the sands on the shore, the stars in the sky. O, my dear wife, and ye, the rest of my friends, rejoice with me; I say, rejoice with thanksgiving, for this my present promotion; in that I am made worthy to magnify my God, not only in my life, by my slow mouth and uncircumcised lips, bearing witness unto his truth; and also by my blood, to seal the same, to the glory of my God, and confirming of his true church. And as yet I testify unto you, that the comfort of my sweet Christ doth drive from my phantasy the fear of death.

But if my dear husband, Christ, do for my trial leave me alone a little to myself, alas! I know in what case I shall be then; but if for my proof he do so, yet I am sure he will not be long or far from me. Though he stand behind the wall and hide himself (as Solomon says in his mystical ballad, Can. ii.), yet will he peep in by a cleft to see how I do. He is a very tender-hearted Joseph, though he speaks roughly to his brethren, and handle them hardly; yea, and threaten grievous bondage to his best beloved brother, Benjamin; yet cannot he contain himself from weeping with us, and upon us, with falling on our necks, and sweetly kissing us. Such, such a brother, is our Christ unto all; wherefore hasten to go unto him, as Jacob did, with his sons and family, leaving their country and acquaintance. Yea, this our Joseph hath obtained for us, that Pharaoh the infidel shall minister unto us chariots wherein at ease we may be carried to come unto him; as we have had experience how our very adversaries do help us unto our everlasting bliss by

their speedy dispatch; yea, and how all things have been helpings hereunto; blessed be our God. Be not afraid of fray-bugs which lie by the way; fear, rather, the everlasting fire; fear the serpent which hath that deadly sting of which by bodily death they shall be brought to taste which are not grafted in Christ, wanting faith and a good conscience, and so are not acquainted with Christ the killer of death.

But, oh! my dear wife and friends, we, we whom God hath delivered from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son, by putting off the old man, and by faith putting on the new, even our Lord Jesus Christ, his wisdom, holiness, righteousness, and redemption; we, I say, have to triumph against the terrible spiteful serpent the devil, sin, hell, death, and damnation. For Christ our brazen serpent hath pulled away the sting of this serpent, so that now we may boldly, in beholding it spoiled of his sting, triumph, and with our Christ and all his elect say, Death, where is thy sting? Hell, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, who hath given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Cor. xv.)

Wherefore be merry, my dear wife, and all my dear fellow-heirs of the everlasting kingdom. Always remember the Lord; rejoice in hope; be patient in tribulation; continue in prayer, and pray for us now appointed to the slaughter, that we may be unto our heavenly Father a fat offering and an acceptable sacrifice. I may hardly write to you, wherefore let these few words be a witness of commendation to you, and all them which love us in the faith; and namely unto my flock, among whom I am resident by God's providence, but as a prisoner.

And although I am not so among them as I have been, to preach to them out of a pulpit, yet doth God now preach unto them by me, by this my im-

prisonment and captivity, which now I suffer among them for Christ's Gospel's sake, bidding them to beware of the Romish antichristian religion and kingdom, requiring and charging them to abide in the truth of Christ, which is shortly to be sealed with the blood of their pastor; who though he be unworthy of such a ministry, yet Christ, their high Pastor, is to be regarded; whose truth hath been taught them by me, is witnessed by my chains, and shall be by my death, through the power of that high Pastor. Be not careful, good wife; cast your care upon the Lord, and commend me unto him in repentant prayer, as I do you, and our Samuel, whom even at the stake I will offer as myself unto God. Fare ye well all in Christ, in hope to be joined with you in joy everlasting. This hope is put up in my bosom. Amen, amen. Pray, pray.

*To Mrs. LUCY HARRINGTON, a godly Gentlewoman,
and friendly to him in his Troubles.*

YOUR most gentle commendations, whereof this messenger made remembrance unto me, was for two causes very comfortable. First, for that thereby I understood of the state of your health and bodily welfare, for the which I give thanks unto God, who grant the long continuance thereof to his honour and fatherly good will, whereunto I will daily say, Amen. And further, I was refreshed by the expressing of your mindful friendship towards me, far unworthy thereof. Wherein I take occasion of much rejoicing in our so gracious a God and merciful Father, who as he hath in his unmeasurable mercy by faith handfasted us his chosen children unto his dear Son our Christ, as the spiritual spouse of such an heavenly husband, so he linketh us by love one unto another, being by that bond compact together, with

charitable readiness to do good one to another; so that first to the glory of our God, and his Christ, then to our own joying in the testimony of a good conscience, and last of all to the stopping of the mouths and confusion of our adversaries, we bear the badge as the right spouse of our Christ, which himself noted in this saying: "Herein shall all men know that ye be my disciples, if ye one love another." (John, xiii.)

Then further, by this bond of mutual love is set forth the fatherly providence of God toward us his children, that though it be he that careth for us, in whom we live, move, and be; who feedeth all flesh with bodily sustenance; yet hath he appointed us in these present necessities to stand in his stead, one unto another; wherein is not only set forth our dignity, but also that unspeakable accord and unity among us, the many members in his mystical body. And though that, either for lack of ability, or else through distance of place, power and opportunity of helping one another do fail, yet wonderful is the working of God's children, through the spirit of prayer, as whereby they fetch all heavenly influence from Christ their celestial head, by his spirit to be measured severally, as may serve to the maintenance of the whole body.

Thus doth our faithful prayer, which we make one for another, distribute and scatter God's bountiful blessings both ghostly and bodily, when ordinary ability lacketh, and when the arm may not reach forth such God's riches. According hereunto I well perceive and understand your readiness to do good unto all; and especially I have experience of your ready good will towards me, in your hearty desire to stretch out your helping hand to relieve my lack; and of your help to be extended to me in the other spiritual sort, by your good prayer, I doubt not; as

also therein assure you of my help, being all that I may do, and yet the same not so much as I would do.

My need concerning bodily necessities is as yet furnished by God's provision, so that I am not driven to any extremity; wherefore to be burdensome to you, as your gentle benevolence provoketh me, the Lord reward you therefor. If God make me worthy to be as his witness at this present, in giving this corruptible body to burn for the testimony of his truth; it is enough for me to say to you that I have a poor wife and child, whom I love in the Lord, and whom I know for my sake you will tender when I am departed hence.

To be short, I say unto you, as I say unto myself, rejoice in the Lord, cast your care on him, for he careth for us, &c.; and according to the time present, let us with our Christ, and all his dear disciples, weep; let us with him (I say) weep awhile, that we may laugh with him everlastingly. Let us consider of what sort of people they were whom St. John, by revelation, did behold in the heavenly bliss and everlasting joy. These are they (said the Angel unto him, Rev. vii.) which came out of great tribulation, and made their garments white in the blood of the Lamb, and therefore are they in the presence of the seat of God, and serve him day and night in his temple, and He that sitteth in the seat will dwell among them; they shall hunger no more, neither thirst; neither shall the sun light on them, neither any heat; for the Lamb which is in the midst of the seat shall feed them, and shall lead them unto fountains of living water, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. Though we sow in sorrow we shall reap in great joy, and for this hope's sake we seek the things above, and forsake the things present.

I beseech you give most hearty salutations unto my good Lady Fitzwilliams, unto whom I wish, as

to you and to myself in all good things. The grace of God be always with you, and that good family. Amen.

L. SAUNDERS.

Another Letter to Mrs. LUCY HARRINGTON.

GRACE and mercy, &c. It happeneth oftentimes that abundance of matter bringeth with it much vehemence of friendly affection, maketh men dumb; and even then chiefly when there is most eager purpose of speaking, silence doth suppress, and causeth the party so affected imperfectly to express that he goeth about to utter. Such impediment by much matter mingled with fervency of affection feel I sometimes in myself, letting the utterance, either by tongue or writing, of the abundance of the heart. The love of our most gracious God and heavenly Father bestowed upon us in the merits of Christ our Saviour, who may by conceit of mind comprehend? passing, indeed, all understanding; much less may the same by any means be expressly uttered.

And as such heavenly blessings, which by faith we fetch from above, be inexplicable, so is it hard to utter, when the faithful are set on fire by love, their readiness to reach forth and to give by charity, as by faith they have received. But, alas! we carry this treasure in earthen vessels; many times faith is feeble, and then love loseth her fervour: pray we, therefore, Lord increase our faith, and love forthwith will be on fire. And immortal thanks be given unto our God, who in our Christ hath bestowed upon us the first fruits of his Spirit, who crieth in our hearts, *Abba*, Father. And (as St. Paul saith, Rom. viii.; 2 Cor. iv.) seeing we have the same spirit of faith according as it is written, I believed and therefore I have spoken, we also believe, and

therefore we speak. Yea, God knoweth, this Spirit putteth in us a mind to speak, but in attempting thereof we are driven with Moses to say, O Lord, I am slow-mouthed, and of uncircumcised lips; and with Jeremy, O Lord, I cannot speak. (Exod. viii. Jer. i.)

Albeit that this enforceth the opening of such abundance of heart in my tender Christian duty to be declared towards you, yet I beseech you, let this be settled in your understanding, that as St. Paul expresseth unto the Corinthians, that they were in his heart either to live or to die, with many other such sayings uttered unto them, and the Galatians expressing as vehement affection towards them; so in some part I would be like affected towards all God's children, and especially towards you, whom I know in Christ, and to whom I will not say how much I am indebted. I thank you for your great friendship and tender good will towards my wife; yea, that good gracious God recompense you, which may worthily with the more countervail the same, and fulfil that which lacketh of thankful duty in us.

And because of that which heretofore I have conceived of you, and of your more than natural love towards me and mine, I make myself thus bold to lay this burden upon you, even the care and charge of my said poor wife I mean, to be unto her a mother and mistress, to rule and direct her by your discreet counsel. I know she conceiveth of you the same that I do, and is thankful unto God with me for such a friend; and therefore I beseech you, even for Christ's sake, put never from you this friendly charge over her, whether I live longer, or shortly depart. But to charge you otherwise, thanks be to God, neither I, neither she, have any such extreme need; if we had, I would be as bold with you as mine own mother. I beseech you, give my hearty salutations

unto Master Fitzwilliams, and my good Lady, with thanks also for my poor wife and child. The Lord recompense them.

L. SAUNDERS.

Furthermore, as touching his fatherly care and affection to his wife and his little child, the same is lively set forth in another letter which he did write to his wife, wherein he admonished her that she should not resort much to the prison where he was, for danger of trouble that might ensue; the tenour of whose letter here followeth.

Another Letter to his Wife, with a certain Remembrance to Master HARRINGTON and Master HURLAND.

GRACE and comfort, &c. Wife, you shall do best not to come often unto the grate where the porter may see you. Put not yourself in danger where it needs not; you shall, I think, shortly come far enough into danger by keeping faith and a good conscience, which (dear wife) I trust you do not slack to make reckoning and account upon, by exercising your inward man in meditation of God's most holy word, being the sustenance of the soul, and also by giving yourself to humble prayer; for these two things be the very means how to be made members of our Christ meet to inherit his kingdom.

Do this, dear wife, in earnest, and not leaving off, and so we two shall with our Christ and all his chosen children enjoy the merry world in that everlasting immortality; whereas, here will nothing else be found but extreme misery, even of them which most greedily seek this worldly wealth; and so, if we two continue God's children grafted in our Christ, the same God's blessing which we receive shall also settle

upon our Samuel: though we do shortly depart hence, and leave the poor infant (to our seeming) at all adventures; yet shall he have our gracious God to be his God; for so he hath said, and he cannot lie, I will be thy God, saith he, and the God of thy seed; yea, if you leave him in the wilderness destitute of all help, being called of God to do his will, either to die for the confession of Christ, either any work of obedience that God which heard the cry of the little poor infant of Agar, Sarah's hand-maiden, and did succour it, will do the like to the child of you or any other fearing him, and putting your trust in him.

And if we lack faith, as we do indeed many times, let us call for it, and we shall have the increase both of it and also of any other good grace needful for us, and be merry in God, in whom also I am very merry and joyful. O Lord, what great cause of rejoicing have we to think upon that kingdom, which he voucheth safe for his Christ's sake freely to give us, forsaking ourselves and following him. Dear wife, this is truly to follow him, even to take up our cross, and follow him; and then, as we suffer with him, so shall we reign with him everlastingly. Amen. Shortly, shortly. Amen.

My dear friends, Master Harrington and Master Hurland, pray, pray, and be merry in God; and I beseech you as you may, let the good brethren abroad be put in mind of our dear tried brethren and sisters, who have (the Lord be praised) made known their constancy in confessing the truth, to the glory of God, and comfort (I doubt not) of his church abroad. Thus have they sown spiritual things, confessing Christ. I trust they will not be forgetful that they may reap of them which are of ability and at liberty, their carnal things. Hereof I speak now, because of my tender desire towards these dear brethren here now in bonds, and in other places, and also for

that I doubt whether I may have wherewith to write hereafter. The keeper saith he must needs see that we write not at all. The devil roareth, but be of good cheer; he will shortly be trodden under foot, and the rather by the blood of martyrs. Salute in my most hearty manner good Mrs. Harrington and my good Lady F. I am theirs as long as I live, and pray for them. Desire them to do likewise for me and for all us sheep appointed to the slaughter.

A prisoner in the Lord,

LAWRENCE SAUNDERS.

Another Letter to his Wife, to M. ROBERT HARRINGTON, and M. HURLAND, &c.

GRACE and comfort, &c. Dear wife, rejoice in our gracious God, and his and our Christ, and give thanks most humbly and heartily to him for this day's work, that in any part I, most unworthy wretch, should be made worthy to bear witness unto his everlasting verity, which antichrist with his, by main force (I perceive), and by most impudent pride and boasting, will go about to suppress. Remember God alway, my dear wife, and so shall God's blessing light upon you and our Samuel. O remember alway my words, for Christ's sake; be merry, and grudge not against God, and pray, pray. We be all merry here, thanks be unto our God, who in his Christ hath given us great cause to be merry, by whom he hath prepared for us such a kingdom, and doth and will give unto us some little taste thereof even in this life, and to all such as are desirous to take it. Blessed, saith our Christ (Matt. vi.), be they which hunger and thirst after righteousness, for such shall be satisfied. Let us go, yea, let us come to seek such treasure, and that with whole purpose of heart, to cleave unto the Lord, to find such riches

in his heavenly word, through his Spirit, obtained by prayer.

My dear friends and brethren, Master Harrington and Master Hurland, pray, pray. The spirit is ready, but the flesh is weak. When I look upon myself, being astonished and confounded, what have I else to say, but those words of Peter (Luke, v.), Lord, go from me, for I am a sinful man. But then feel I that sweet comfort, The word of the Lord is a lantern unto my feet, and a light unto my paths, and this is my comfort in my trouble. (Psa. cxix.) Then am I bold with the same Peter to say, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. (John, vi.) This comfort have I when the Giver thereof doth give it. But I look for battles, which the root of unfaithfulness, the which I feel in me, will most eagerly give unto my conscience, when we come once to the combat. We be (I ween) within the sound of the trump of our enemies. Play ye that be abroad the part of Moses, praying in all places, lifting up pure hands, and God's people shall prevail (1 Tim. ii.); yea, our blood shall be their perdition, who do most triumphantly spill it; and we then being in the hands of our God, shall shine in his kingdom, shall stand in great steadfastness against them which have dealt extremely with us. And when these our enemies shall thus see us, they shall be vexed with horrible fear, and shall wonder at the hastiness of the sudden health, and shall say with themselves, having inward sorrow and mourning for very anguish of mind, These are they whom we sometimes had in derision, and jested upon; we fools thought their lives to be madness, and their end to be without honour; but, lo! how they are accounted among the children of God. (Wisd. v.) The blessing of God be with you all, &c.

LAWRENCE SAUNDERS.

To the Professors of the Gospel and true Doctrine of our Saviour Jesus Christ in the Town of Litchfield.

GRACE and peace, with a continuance in unfeigned faith and a good conscience, be unto you in Christ Jesu. Amen.

At what time it pleased that gracious God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, wonderfully to work the deliverance of their offspring, the Israelites, even as he brought to pass the same by his mighty arm, so did he thereunto admit man's ministry as his ordinary instrument, and therefore instructed first Moses, that faithful servant of his, what was to be done, as also with what cheerful courage he should do the same. These people, by the hand of this Moses, were brought by no small perils, the midway toward their promised patrimony, whenas it pleased God to take unto himself his servant Moses from this miserable vale. (Deut. xxxiv.)

In whose place he appointed Joshua, that worthy leader of the Lord's people, who not only for his part did boldly take in hand so dangerous an enterprise, but also with earnest study stirred up his said people with lusty courage to go forward in the appointed passage of their jeopardous journey; yea, he was able abundantly to comfort them with such comforts as he himself received of his God, who at sundry times assured him thereof, saying unto him thus, Even as I was with Moses, so will I be with thee; I will not forsake thee, neither leave thee; be thou therefore of good courage and strong, fear not, neither be dismayed, for I am with thee in all that thou takest in hand. (Josh. i.) Whatsoever things be written, are written for our doctrine, &c.

Dearly beloved, albeit that in these days it may be said truly that ye have very few such captains to

be compared with Moses or Joshua, God's singular jewels; yet that same Lord, which is no changeling, but even the same merciful and almighty defender of all his people at all times, doth and shall in some degree direct you his chosen children in the high way toward your heavenly inheritance, by the hand of a Moses, in some part resembling these two principal patterns. For though we your brethren, who heretofore by our vocation have sitten in the chair of Moses, and be ghostly captains as Moses and Joshua unto you; though, I say, we well know and acknowledge, how little we have to boast of, as of ourselves; yet this we have to rejoice of in the Lord our God, that as we have been of him appointed unto such a place and function, so we do not altogether degenerate.

For first unto our own strengthening, even that gracious God, which biddeth us to be strong by the operation of his Spirit, performeth the same in some part in us all, glory be unto him therefor. Also in the word of the Lord we testify unto you to be strong in the Lord, and shrink not back because of the sundry temptations assaulting you in the passage unto your country through the wilderness of this world. Be content to be proved, as those people were. Do not addict yourselves unto the fleshpots of Egypt (Exod. xvi.), most unthankfully relinquishing the promised possession. We give you to know what warrant we have of prosperous success in such our proceedings; no less (be ye assured) than those former captains, Moses and Joshua, had. For besides that all the same most comfortable promises, which made them and their people to be bold to proceed in their enterprise, do belong unto us, we have to rejoice in our God for his unmeasurable mercies more plentifully poured upon us by that abundant grace in his dear Son our Christ, in whom he offereth us all

fulness of favour and benevolence, all readiness of deliverance, appointing all credit without care to be given unto such a governor.

Yea, and that same his Christ, who is made of him our anointed Saviour, is now become our grand captain; yea, what is he not unto us, to do us good? He is our shepherd, we be his people, and the sheep of his pasture; he is our husband, we be his spouse. (John, x.) He hath promised to be with his church always, yea, and that effectually to be with it, even as the head to give life unto the members and parts of the body, even as the vine-stock to quicken the vine-branches, and even as the most loving husband to tender, cherish, defend, and keep his well-beloved spouse. Let us be bold to commit ourselves unto such a safe conductor, casting our care upon him; for were it not that he many times more careth for us, than we can for ourselves, it would not be well with us. Full little did Peter perceive any cause of grievance for that perilous fall, which after befell. (Luke, xiv.) But that suffragan shepherd beforehand espied the spiteful desire of that wolfish Satan to sift his Peter, that silly poor sheep, and therefore prayed unto his Father that Peter's faith might not faint.

Such a shepherd shall he be always unto his people, humbly complaining unto him in extreme dangers; and great cause have we so to do, considering not only the greedy desire of this Satan most tyrannously raging like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour (1 Pet. v.), but also the imbecility in ourselves, being such as is not able to withstand the least of his assaults; but, on the contrary, being overwhelmed with the waves, which he stirreth up by these tempests of his temptations, we are compelled to cry with those disciples, who in their extremity cried, Save us, Lord, or else we perish. (Matt. viii.)

The times be perilous ; we must therefore be circumspect, and not salace ourselves in carnal security, but being content to enter into the ship of Christ's cross, and objecting ourselves to all jeopardous passages in the adventurous journeying to our heavenly country, let us for this present voyage account it comfort enough to have the fellowship of such a fellow-venturer. He once being in the ship with his disciples, did with his word assuage the swelling of the sea so dangerous ; he hath not left us alone in the ship of this frail flesh, but joineth with us in this dangerous journey, as well by his once being subject unto all bodily infirmities as we be (sin only except), as also by his assuring us of his gracious assistance, now that he is become before his heavenly Father, our Prince, our Priest, and our Prophet, always present and ready to help by his power, propitiation, and inspiration of his holy Spirit.

And what though he for a season do sleep, and do so suffer us (unto our feelings) to sink ? He will be awaked, being pulled by prayer ; and therefore doth he delay our speedy deliverance, even to fortify our faith by importune prayer. Let us then with iustance apply this business, and the rather in respect of the dangerous doting of this old age of the world ; for it is with the men of this latter age of the world, as it is with a very aged man, who for impotency of the powers both of the mind and the body is brought to much imbecility. Then do the wits by weakness wander out of the way : the body, by feebleness and default of the former strength, doth stagger, and full weakly doth any limb or part of that wretched body execute the function unto it belonging. In like manner is it with the church of Christ in this doting old age of the world. There is nothing suchfulness in God's graces as heretofore hath been in the

primitive church and the times immediately ensuing. There is less perfection in the faith, fear, and love towards God, and charity towards the brethren. There is less zeal to confess God, and less constancy to continue in God's truth, than was heretofore: and this is not strange unto them which do observe the forespeaking of the Scriptures, as well of the Prophets of our Saviour Christ, as also of his Apostles, by whom it hath been signified beforehand what dangerous days should come in the latter times, as Matt. xxiv. 2 Thess. ii. 1 Tim.] ii. 2 Tim. iii. 2 Pet. ii.

Wherefore let us, which are come into these latter dangerous times, first consider how that the Holy Ghost hath given us warning thereof, and also that we by proof have experience of the verifying of the same; let us now (I say) the more earnestly apply our humble petition unto that merciful Father, and his Son our sweet Saviour, who is the head of his church, even this his body (weak though it be), that he will vouchsafe not so much to observe the backsliding and shrinking of this his feeble body, as to respect the forespeakings of these perilous times; and let us with and in the name of the whole church remember often the prayer of David (Psa. lxxi.), Lord, cast me not away in the time of mine old age, when my strength doth decay.

That time of the church is even now present; and truly, if we be instant in prayer, we be not without warrant of God's promises to obtain that we pray for. Yea, call upon me (saith he) in the day of thy trouble, and I will deliver thee. (Psa. xl.) For the elect's sake it is said, the dangerous days shall be shortened (Matt. xxiv.); yea, faithful is He that will not suffer us to be tempted above that we be able to abide; we may be bold to put our gracious God in remembrance of his old mercies, and with David

say, O God! we have heard with our ears, and our fathers have declared unto us the noble works that thou didst in their days, and in the old time before them. (Psa. xliv.) The testimonies of his word do teach us how he hath from the beginning alway gathered unto himself a congregation and church, unto the which his chosen church he hath bound himself by his covenant of mercy to be their God and Saviour, and besides that hath poured upon them his sundry blessings and benefits.

But again, it is to be seen in the Scriptures how that even these peculiar God's people did at sundry times fall from that their heavenly profession, as well to idolatry and false gods' service, as also unto dissolute living, thereby provoking God's wrathful plagues and punishments, the which indeed oftentimes, as they were often deserved, so they fell upon them. But even as the God of Israel did visit the offences of his people with his rod of chastisement, so did he not at any time take away his mercies from them, and that for that covenant of mercy made unto them in Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, their forefathers. (Psa. lxxxix.) And therefore, when at any time through his grace they did by repentance turn unto him, he most fatherly embraced them with the arms of his mercy.

These things be written for us, that we in semblable wise should consider first the dignity whereunto we have been called, that is, even to be his church and people. Yea, in comparing our profession with either the heathenish Turks and infidels, or unto the people which are professed unto this hypocritical papistry, we have to advance ourselves as the true children of Christ, for that we bear the right badges of God's true people, and that is the earnest desire towards the propagation of God's most holy word, and the right use of the sacra-

ments agreeable to the same, having joined therewith a readiness of heart and mind to suffer affliction and persecution for the confession of our faith, or at the least rather than we will deny or put away faith and a good conscience. And besides these outward notes and tokens, declaring that we be the true church, there is a nearer token in God's elect, which is the inward testimony of God's spirit, which beareth witness unto our spirit that we be God's children, causing us to cry, Abba, Father, and being, indeed, the earnest penny of our salvation. (Rom. viii.)

But notwithstanding that we be thus promoted by our God, and dignified by his grace, yet must we consider how unworthily we have used in sundry wise these God's graces and blessings; yea, so unthankfully we have received them, that no less plagues by God's just judgment belong unto us, than was at that time due unto those his people; wherefore let us faithfully confess that we have offended with our forefathers; the which being done in our conversion unto the Lord our God with our whole heart, let us assure ourselves that even as he hath and doth visit our sins with this captivity of body and conscience, and such other plagues being his rod of chastisement, so hath he not taken away his mercy from us, but will plentifully visit us with the same, even for that covenant of mercy made unto us, not in Abraham, Isaac, and David, but in that promised seed of Abraham, in that spiritual David, even Jesus Christ, who is that peaceable Solomon, making peace between us and his Father by the offering of his body and shedding of his blood, by whose means we must look for the guilt of our sins to be forgiven, and the plagues thereby purchased to be taken away. And now (dearly beloved) we be taught by that heavenly Spirit which our God hath given

unto us, to seek comfort in these times of affliction, not in hope of rebellion, or fulfilling unprofitable, yea, pestilent, Welsh prophecies, but in the most comfortable and glad tidings of the heavenly promises assured in his dear Christ.

And touching this most miserable estate of the ghostly captivity of conscience and bodily bondage wherein for our sins presently we be holden, let us first most obediently kiss this rod of our Father by obedient submission, to abide all extremity that man may do unto us, rather than to forego faith and a good conscience. Let us also beseech our heavenly Father, for his Christ's sake, to leave off beating us, and to take away the rod, either by converting the hearts of those which afflict and persecute us (for so did he sometime take away the rod, as, namely, by converting of Nebuchadnezzar and Manasses); or else if such wicked scourges be not to be converted, but be reprobates, vessels of God's wrath, children of perdition, such upon whom it pleaseth God to shew his judgments, and in whom he will shew his power: if, I say, they be such, let us wish most earnestly that our God will speedily arise, that his and our enemies may shortly be scattered.

Yea, he knoweth what these execrable erectors of the Romish religion are; they be the proud builders of the Babylonical towers; they will climb up into God's kingdom by their own attempts, not expecting and waiting for God's help; yea, that Lord be judge betwixt them and us; he knoweth that as their buildings tend unto the destruction of that true and only foundation Christ, so our building by God's word hath and doth tend to the substantial laying of that only foundation, and to the establishing of Christ's chosen church upon that same rock, with an unfeigned faith and pure conscience, and also unto the building upon the same faith all fruitful works of the

Spirit, to serve God in holiness and righteousness, &c. Yea, that ever-living Lord knoweth the earnest desire of our hearts, is even the greedy expectation of the glorious coming of that great Judge, unto whose judgment (lo! heaven and earth be witness, and ye God's saints) we do appeal, in the mean season abiding our God's good pleasure to do with us that may most redound unto his glory, whether to live or die, nothing doubting in him to be strengthened, merely and cheerfully to make a sacrifice and burnt-offering for the confirmation of this infallible verity taught by us, and once received of you. And join with us, dear fellow-heirs, as we join with you, in humble prayer, that even as all we be by faith handfasted unto our husband, and knit unto our head Jesu Christ, and also be kindled by love one to another, as mutual members in this mystical body, so we may persevere and continue unto the end, and that by and in our Christ we may increase more, and abound in the spirit of grace and prayer, whereby to fetch all heavenly influence from that our head Christ one for another, even as in the body one member ministereth unto another. Amen. Amen.

In the Marshalsea, 17th October 1554.

A prisoner in the Lord, trusting shortly to be
with the Lord,

L. SAUNDERS.

Another Letter ^{29th} Mrs. HARRINGTON.

GRACE, mercy, and peace, in Jesu Christ. Amen.

Such is the knot wherewith true Christians are compacted and joined together as members in the mystical body of Christ, that no man can express the commodities so well as they which thereof have experience; and yet neither can they by words be able to

utter that which therein the conscience conceiveth passing indeed all understanding. And hereof can I, unworthy wretch, somewhat speak of experience, for that by exercise of the inward man and practice of conscience, I have some acquaintance with my good God and his sweet Christ, and namely, now in this my present estate it pleaseth that merciful Lord to give me some taste of his mercies, by the assurance and the sealing up of his gracious promises in my conscience by his holy Spirit; whereby I do feel the incomparable benefit of his heavenly blessing poured upon us his chosen congregation. We be called in Christ with a holy vocation, we be grafted in him as branches in that so heavenly a vine (John, xv.), we be knit unto him as the sundry members of that body, whereof he only is the head, in whom all the body is coupled together in every joint, wherewith one ministereth unto another according to the operation, as every part hath his measure, and increaseth the body unto the edifying of itself in love; and we be handfasted unto him, as the spiritual spouse of so heavenly a husband, even flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone (Eph. iv. v.); so that to the faithful believer what can be lacking unto perfect felicity in such a communion and precious partaking with Christ in all heavenly treasures?

For from him we may fetch abundant fulness to supply our extreme emptiness; we be quick in him as lively branches in the vine-stock; we be made alive unto God in him, as members of the body do live by the head; and we be ^{by} faith in him accepted as his dear spouse: and in this matrimonial bond and covenant he hath made with us a most happy exchange; he hath taken unto him what we brought, and giveth us all that is his, be it never so precious, so entirely he loved us. Thus be we made rich in him, as

many as thus know him, and thus do believe him to be ours.

And blessed be that heavenly Father, who hath hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hath revealed the same unto his chosen little ones (Luke, x.), who with holy Paul do count all things but loss, and do judge them but dung, for the excellent knowledge of Christ Jesu the Lord, to win him, and to be found in him, not having righteousness of themselves, but the righteousness which cometh of God through faith in Christ, in knowing him and the virtue of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his passion, to be conformable unto his death, whereby to attain the resurrection from death. (Phil. iii.) This, this is that treasure hid in the field whereof is spoken Matt. xiii.; the which a man findeth and hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. This is that pearl, &c.

Now even as the conceiving of this communion and fellowship which we have with Christ bringeth such peace as passeth all understanding, so (as I said) the Christian knitting of faithful believers in this Christ's mystical body, is unto the understanders a joyful joining and enjoying, and a profitable fruition one of another, as in the body one member thereof ministereth unto another, thereby taking comfort one in another, whereof St. Paul most lively and comfortably speaketh in the fourth chapter to the Ephesians, which words be above mentioned. The bond of this compacting and knitting of us together is love; for even as our head Christ by his unmeasurable mercy and unspeakable love towards us doth assure himself unto us to be one with us, we being in him and he in us; so this love is by his Spirit poured into our hearts, whereby we be taught, that the faithful believers, as they are in number many,

so are they in Christ many members making but one body.

And hereof ensueth the careful compassion and cheerful rejoicing of one for another, as occasion requireth. Hereof proceedeth not only thankfulness unto God for his graces received, but also a continual perseverance in praying one for another, thereby to purchase the mutual partaking of his manifold blessings needful for us. And finally, hereby is wrought in us a lively feeling of a spiritual welfare, even as in the body one member is the better for the welfare of the other; and thus much hereof, which, as I do not amplify as an idle speculation without some practice of the same, so must I confess, that I am far from that feeling which I ought and also would have thereof. Notwithstanding, I yield most humble thanks unto my God, who hath practised me in some comfortable unfeigned experience of the same; and as I somewhat have felt, so I somewhat have spoken. (2 Cor. iv.) And yet the rather do I rejoice to enlarge herein unto you (my dear Christian friend, good Mrs. Harrington), for that I do well know, that you have drunk of the holy Spirit with other, unto whom the knowledge hereof seemeth not foolishness (as it doth unto worldlings), but is indeed the wisdom of God, and the high power of God to save all them that believe it. And because I do esteem you as one of the members belonging unto that mystical body, I do with no small comfort many times remember you, giving God thanks for you, and daily do I by name remember you in my prayers; yea, and also your family, that you may in the fear of God consider your great charge; and that the rather by your abiding in the true reverend fear of God, they whom you have charge of, may be virtuously transformed into the same. Amen. Amen.

I doubt not but that you have learned the lesson

of St. Paul unto his Timothy, Have faith and a good conscience; the which while some have put from them, they have made shipwreck of their faith. (1 Tim. i.) I know I shall not need to bid you fly from idolatry, yea, that most detestable idol of the mass. The Lord minister unto you right understanding in all things, and pray, pray, and for me also, for I know I both have and shall fare the better for your prayer. I can tell you by experience, that our Christ is even that sweet Saviour that we have taken him to be, and he will be the helper at an extreme pitch. Oh! how sweet is he unto them that will be the simple sheep of his pasture! They can say with the faith of David (Psa. xxiii.), The Lord is my Shepherd, and I shall lack nothing, &c. I can be merry in him, I thank him therefor, and I thank you for your remembrance of me, whereof I understand by your letters unto Master James Haddon. I would not refuse the blessing of your benevolence, in ministering unto my necessity, if my case so required; but I thank God, I am not as yet in any need, therefore be not you therein careful. And for this time no more but pray, pray, and I pray that good God, even our own God, to keep you always. Amen. In haste, the 21st of November 1553, a prisoner in the Lord.

Yours, as you know,

L. SAUNDERS.

To his Wife a little before his burning.

GRACE and comfort in Christ. Amen. Dear wife, be merry in the mercies of our Christ, and ye also my dear friends. Pray, pray for us every body. We be shortly to be dispatched hence unto our good Christ. Amen. Amen. Wife, I would you sent me my shirt, which you know whereunto it is conse-

crated. Let it be sewed down on both sides, and not open. Oh! my heavenly Father, look upon me in the face of thy Christ, or else I shall not be able to abide thy countenance, such is my filthiness. He will do so, and therefore I will not be afraid what sin, death, hell, and damnation can do against me. O wife, always remember the Lord. God bless you, yea, he will bless thee, good wife, and thy poor boy also; only cleave thou unto him, and he will give thee all things. Pray, pray, pray.

A Letter written to a certain Backslider from the Truth of God's Word, which he had both professed and taught.

IN mine own name and in the name of many other, your old familiars and acquaintance, I do write unto you in heaviness of heart, for that we have heard of your fall. Oh! how much better had it been for you never to have set your hand to the plough, than negligently to look back; yea, and foolishly to follow the plough that tilleth not God's field, but turneth up the roots of that seed, which in times past you yourself have sown. Alas! how foolish a builder were you, that would enterprise to build upon the rock Christ, seeing in yourself not only the lack of those things which be required to the finishing of that work, but also the lack of a will to have them; as appeareth by that, that you go about to overthrow that little which you seemed to have mightily builded upon that rock. How foolish a virgin have you declared yourself to be, which have gone forth to meet the bridegroom, and tarried so long for his coming, not having oil in store, but are now driven when you hear the voice of the forerunner to seek at them that sell. You banqueted with the children of the bride-

groom, so long as he was with us ; but now he is gone, you leave us alone to fast. You were contented to be fed at Christ's hand with five thousand ; but when he willeth not to seek the meat that perisheth, you depart. The children of Israel were much to be blamed, for that they desired to be in Egypt again, and yet was their lack and labour then more in desert than yours in London.

Alas ! wretched man, what hath caused thee thus to cast away thyself, once knowing the truth, and to take in hand to be a minister in antichrist's church ? Art thou so soon weary of the heavenly manna, and so ready to return to thy old vomit again ? We thought thou hadst been so clean escaped through the word of grace, that thou hadst been a worthy man ; to be a comfort to them that stand, a succour to the weak, and a help to them that fall ; and art thou now rolled in thy filthy puddle again, and art become a helper to put other into the same ? Oh ! more than damnable doings, the forgiveness whereof far passeth the hope of man ! And were it not that things impossible to man are possible with God, we should utterly despair of thy return.

But knowing that with God there is no impossibility, we will not only advertize thee to remember from whence thou art fallen, that thou mayest seek to rise again ; but we will also pray that He to whom thy return is possible, will vouchsafe of his infinite mercies to work it in thee. Thou hast with Judas sold thy most loving and gentle Master ; repent thee with Peter, and no doubt thou shalt find mercy.

To fall is a thing annexed to the corrupt nature of man ; but to lie still in the filthy puddle of perdition, is to despise God, the author and first maker of nature. To fall into the darkness of error, is a point of man's ignorance ; but to walk on still in darkness, is to love darkness more than light. To

wink at the brightness of the sun, is a weakness of the eyes ; but to fly the light, is to be of the night. To leave the rough way that leadeth unto life, and walk in the pleasant way that leadeth unto perdition, is to love this life ; but not to leave that way when we are warned, is to despise the life to come. Briefly, to leave the good things undone, that God commandeth, and to do that evil which he forbid-
deth, is to deserve everlasting damnation at his hand, that rewardeth every man according to his works ; but not to repent of that evil when God calleth by his means, is to kindle the wrath of God against the impenitent and obstinate sinner.

Lest you therefore should be found a despiser of God, the author of nature ; a lover of darkness more than light ; not of the day, but altogether of the night ; a lover of this life, and a hater of the life to come ; and finally, such a one as would kindle the wrath of God against you ; repent, and come again to Christ. Remember what joy there is in heaven among the angels at the conversion of a sinner. Forget not thy merciful Spouse, which would not cast off the adulterous Israel when she had committed whoredom with stocks and stones ; notwithstanding that he had purged her from her filth, and married her to himself.

Be mindful of that loving Lord, who hath said, I will not the death of a sinner, but rather that he convert and live ; and in what day soever the sinner doth repent him of his sin from the bottom of his heart, I will remember his iniquity no more. (Ezek. xviii.) What should separate us from the love of this Lord ? What should make us to fly from this our Captain ? Should the weariness of an arm ? should the lack of such things as the fancy would have ? Better it were for us to enter into life with weary arms and thin cheeks, than with lovely countenances.

and lusty limbs to be cast into hell fire. Make not provision for the flesh with the loss of your soul. Believe Him that hath promised all things necessary to them that seek the kingdom of God and the righteousness thereof. He hath not at any time deceived you, why then should you seek such shameful shifts to make provision for the flesh?

Have not you yourself had experience of the care that he taketh for them that put their trust in him? And now, why are you fallen from him for the belly's sake?

Thus have I written to call you back again, if you be not clean gone out of the way; but an if you be so given over to error, that you think light to be darkness, and darkness to be light; good to be evil, and evil to be good; Christ to be Belial, and Belial to be Christ; the temple of God to be the synagogue of Satan, and the synagogue of Satan to be the temple of God; then I have nothing to say unto you, but the Lord confound both you and all such. But with God's grace we trust to hear better of you.

The 20th of September 1555.

To Master ROBERT GLOVER and JOHN GLOVER, two worthy Brethren as in the Flesh, so in the Lord; the one afterwards a Martyr, the other a faithful Confessor.

My dearly beloved; and mine own hearts in the Lord, with all yours and the rest which with you unfeignedly fear God, and comfort yourselves in his sweet Christ, I beseech you be thankful unto that merciful Lord always for his unspeakable goodness, and among other for me his most unworthy minister. I thank my God Christ, I was never better acquainted with him in all my life, and I perceive he is no less loving than his word warranteth him to be.

Be thankful, I say, and pray, pray. The prayer of the righteous availeth much. I was at this present much occupied, else I would have enlarged in some matter needful, &c. The devil roareth, because he cannot have his foul will; he must be at length (I ween) eased by the blood of God's saints, and yet that shall be his bane be he sure, and that shortly by God's goodness. Be merry, and fear not, little flock, saith our sweet Comforter, for it pleaseth your Father to provide a kingdom for you. (Luke, xii.) Even so, Amen, come, Lord Jesu, come quickly.

The heavenly blessing of God be with you all.
In the Marshalsea, 28th October 1553.

A prisoner of the Lord, the Lord's name be
blessed for ever,

LAWRENCE SAUNDERS.

*Another Letter to M. ROBERT and JOHN GLOVER,
written the same Morning that he was burnt.*

GRACE and consolation in our sweet Saviour Christ. Oh! my dear brethren, whom I love in the Lord, being loved of you also in the Lord, be merry and rejoice for me, now ready to go up to that mine inheritance, which I myself indeed am most unworthy of, but my dear Christ is worthy, who hath purchased the same for me with so dear a price. Make haste, my dear brethren, to come unto me, that we may be merry with that joy, which no man shall take from us. Oh! wretched sinner that I am, not thankful unto this my Father, who hath vouchsafed me worthy to be a vessel unto his honour. But, O Lord, now accept my thanks, though they proceed out of a not enough circumcised heart.

Salute my good sisters, your wives; and, good

sisters, fear the Lord. Salute all other that love us in the truth. God's blessing be with you always. Amen. Even now towards the offering of a burnt sacrifice, O my Christ, help, or else I perish.

LAWRENCE SAUNDERS.

The first of these is the fact that the
 second is the fact that the
 third is the fact that the
 fourth is the fact that the
 fifth is the fact that the
 sixth is the fact that the
 seventh is the fact that the
 eighth is the fact that the
 ninth is the fact that the
 tenth is the fact that the

I am very glad to hear that
 you are all well and hope
 to hear from you again soon.
 With best wishes,
 Yours truly,
 [Name]

A P P E N D I X

TO THE

SIXTH VOLUME;

CONTAINING SOME ACCOUNT OF

LADY JANE GREY

AND

HER REMAINS.

A B E M D E

STORY

THE

...

THE LIFE
OF
LADY JANE GREY,
§c.

LADY Jane Grey was an illustrious personage of the blood royal of England, by both parents: her grandmother on her father's side, Henry Grey, Marquis of Dorset, being queen consort to Edward IV.; and her grandmother on her mother's, Lady Frances Brandon, being daughter to Henry VII. queen dowager of France, and mother of Mary queen of Scots. Lady Jane was born 1537, at Bradgate, her father's seat in Leicestershire, and very early gave astonishing proofs of the pregnancy of her parts; in-somuch, that upon a comparison with Edward VI. who was partly of the same age, and thought a kind of miracle, the superiority has been given to her in every respect. Her genius appeared in the works of her needle, in the beautiful character in which she wrote; besides which, she played admirably on various instruments of music, and accompanied them with a voice exquisitely sweet in itself, and assisted by all the graces that art could bestow. These, however, were only inferior ornaments in her character; and as she was far from priding herself on them, so, through the rigour of her parents in exacting them, they became her grief more than her pleasure.

Her father had himself a tincture of letters, and was a great patron of the learned. He had two chaplains, Harding and Aylmer, both men of dis-

tinguished learning, whom he employed as tutors to his daughter; and under whose instructions she made such a proficiency as amazed them both. Her own language she spoke and wrote with peculiar accuracy; the French, Italian, Latin, and, it is said, Greek, were as natural to her as her own; she not only understood them, but spoke and wrote them with the greatest freedom: she was versed likewise in Hebrew, Chaldee, and Arabic, and all this while a mere child. She had also a sedateness of temper, a quickness of apprehension, and a solidity of judgment, that enabled her not only to become the mistress of languages, but of sciences; so that she thought, spoke, and reasoned, upon subjects of the greatest importance, in a manner that surprised all.

With these endowments she had so much mildness, humility, and modesty, that she set no value upon those acquisitions; she was naturally fond of literature, and that fondness was much heightened as well by the severity of her parents in the feminine part of her education, as by the gentleness of her tutor Aylmer in this: when mortified and confounded by the unmerited chiding of the former, she returned with double pleasure to the lessons of the latter, and sought in Demosthenes and Plato, who were her favourite authors, the delight that was denied her in all other scenes of life, in which she mingled but little, and seldom with any satisfaction. It is true, her alliance to the crown, as well as the great favour in which the Marquis of Dorset, her father, stood with Henry VIII. and Edward VI. unavoidably brought her sometimes to court, and she received many marks of Edward's attention, yet she seems to have continued for the most part in the country, at Bradgate.

Here she was with her beloved books in 1550, when the famous Roger Ascham called on a visit to

the family in August; and all the rest of each sex being out a-hunting, he went to wait upon Lady Jane in her apartment, and found her reading the "Phædon" of Plato in the original Greek. Astonished at it, after the first compliments, he asked her, why she lost such pastime as there needs must be in the park? at which smiling, she answered, "I wist all their sport in the park is but a shadow to that pleasure that I find in Plato. Alas! good folk, they never felt what true pleasure meant."

This naturally leading him to inquire how a lady of her age had attained to such a depth of pleasure, both in the Platonic language and philosophy, she made the following very remarkable reply: "I will tell you, and I will tell you a truth, which perchance you will marvel at: one of the greatest benefits which ever God gave me is, that he sent me so sharp and severe parents, and so gentle a school-master. For when I am in presence either of father or mother, whether I speak, keep silence, sit, stand, or go, eat, drink, be merry or sad; be sewing, playing, dancing, or doing any thing else, I am so sharply taunted, so cruelly threatened, yea, presently sometimes with pinches, rips, and bobs, and other ways (which I will not name for the honour I bear them), so without measure misordered, that I think myself in hell, till time come that I must go to Mr. Aylmer, who teacheth me so gently, so pleasantly, with such fair allurements to learning, that I think all the time nothing while I am with him; and when I am called from him, I fall on weeping, because whatsoever I do else but learning is full of grief, trouble, fear, and wholly misliking unto me. And thus my book hath been so much my pleasure, and bringeth daily to me more pleasure and more, and that in respect of it all other pleasures in very deed be but trifles and troubles unto me." What reader is not melted

with this speech? What scholar does not envy Ascham's felicity at this interview? He was, indeed, very deeply affected with it, and to that impression we owe the discovery of some farther particulars concerning this lovely scholar.

At this juncture he was going to London, in order to attend Sir Richard Morrison on his embassy to the Emperor Charles V. ; and in a letter written the December following to the dearest of his friends, having informed him, that he had had the honour and happiness of being admitted to converse familiarly with this young lady at court, and that she had written a very elegant letter to him, he proceeds to mention this visit at Bradgate, and his surprise thereon, not without some degree of rapture. Thence he takes occasion to observe, that she both spoke and wrote Greek to admiration ; and that she had promised to write him a letter in that language, upon condition that he would send her one first from the Emperor's court. But this rapture rose much higher while he was penning a letter addressed to herself the following month.

There speaking of these interviews, he assures her, that among all the agreeable varieties which he had met with in his travels abroad, nothing had occurred to raise his admiration like that incident in the preceding summer, when he found her, a young maiden by birth so noble, in the absence of her tutor, and in the sumptuous house of her most noble father, at a time, too, when all the rest of the family both male and female, were regaling themselves with the pleasures of the chase ; I found, continues he, ὦ Ζεῦ καὶ Θεοί, O Jupiter, and all ye Gods, I found, I say, the divine virgin diligently studying the divine "Phædon" of the divine Plato in the original Greek. Happier, certainly, in this respect than in being descended, both on the father and mother's

side, from kings and queens. He then puts her in mind of the Greek epistle she had promised, prompting her to write another also to his friend Stürmius, that what he had said of her, whenever he came, might be rendered credible by such authentic evidence.

If Lady Jane received this letter in the country, yet it is probable she did not stay there long after, since some changes happened in the family which must have brought her to town; for her maternal uncles, Henry and Charles Brandon, both dying at Bugden, the Bishop of Lincoln's palace, of the sweating sickness, her father was created Duke of Suffolk October 1551; Dudley, Earl of Warwick, was also created Duke of Northumberland the same day; and in November the Duke of Somerset was imprisoned for a conspiracy against him as privy-counsellor. During this interval came the Queen-dowager of Scotland from France, who, being magnificently entertained by King Edward, was also, among other ladies of the blood royal, complimented as her grandmother by Lady Jane, who was now at court, and much in the King's favour. In the summer of 1552 the King made a great progress through some parts of England, during which Lady Jane went to pay her duty to His Majesty's sister, the Lady Mary, at Newhall in Essex; and in this visit her piety, and zeal against popery, prompted her to reprove the Lady Ann Wharton, for making a curtesy to the host, which being carried by some officious person to the ear of the princess, was retained in her heart, so that she never loved Lady Jane afterwards; and indeed the events of the following year were not likely to work a reconciliation.

The Dukes of Suffolk and Northumberland, who were now, upon the fall of Somerset, grown to the height of their wishes in power, upon the decline of

the King's health in 1553, began to think how to prevent that reverse of fortune, which, as things then stood, they foresaw must happen upon his death. To obtain this end no other remedy was judged sufficient, but a change in the succession of the crown, and transferring it into their own families.

What other steps were taken preparatory to this bold attempt, may be seen in the general history, and is foreign to the plan of this memoir, which is concerned only in relating the part that was destined for Lady Jane to act in the intended revolution; but this was the principal part; in reality the whole centred in her. Those excellent and amiable qualities which had rendered her dear to all who had the happiness to know her, joined to her near affinity to the King, subjected her to become the chief tool of an ambition notoriously not her own.

Upon this very account she was married to the Lord Guildford Dudley, fourth son to the Duke of Northumberland, without being acquainted with the real design of the match, which was celebrated with great pomp in the latter end of May, so much to the King's satisfaction that he contributed bounteously to the expense of it from the royal wardrobe. In the mean time, though the populace were very far from being pleased with the exorbitant greatness of the Duke of Northumberland, yet they could not help admiring the beauty and innocence which appeared in Lord Guildford and his bride.

But the pomp and splendour attending their nuptials was the last gleam of joy that shone in the palace of Edward, who grew so weak in a few days after, that Northumberland thought it high time to carry his project into execution. Accordingly, in the beginning of June, he broke the matter to the young monarch; and having first made all such colourable objections as the affair would admit against

His Majesty's two sisters Mary and Elizabeth, as well as Mary Queen of Scots, he observed, that, "the Lady Jane, who stood next upon the royal line, was a person of extraordinary qualities; that her zeal for the reformation was unquestioned; that nothing could be more acceptable to the nation than the prospect of such a princess; that in this case he was bound to set aside all partialities of blood and nearness of relation, which were inferior considerations, and ought to be overruled by the public good." To corroborate this discourse care was taken to place about the King those who should make it their business to touch frequently upon this subject; enlarge upon the accomplishments of Lady Jane, and describe her with all imaginable advantages; so that, at last, the King's affections standing for this disposition of the crown, he yielded to overlook his sisters, and set aside his father's will: agreeably to which, a deed of settlement being drawn up in form of law by the judges, was signed by His Majesty and all the Lords of the Council.

This difficult affair once accomplished, and the letters patent having passed the seals before the close of the month, the next step was to concert the properest method for carrying this settlement into execution, and, till that was done, to keep it as secret as possible. To this end Northumberland formed a project which, if it had succeeded, would have made all things easy and secure. He directed letters to the Lady Mary in her brother's name, requiring her attendance at Greenwich, where the court then was; and she had got within half a day's journey of that place, when the King expired, July 6, 1553; but, having timely notice of it, she thereby avoided the snare which had been so artfully laid to entrap her. The two dukes, Suffolk and Northumberland, found it necessary to conceal the King's decease, that they

might have time to gain the city of London, and to procure the consent of Lady Jane, who was so far from having any hand in this business, that, as yet, she was unacquainted with the pains that had been taken to procure her the title of queen.

At this juncture, Mary sent a letter to the privy-council, in which, though she did not take the title of queen, yet she clearly asserted her right to the crown, took notice of their concealing her brother's death, and of the practice into which they had since entered; intimating, that there was still room for reconciliation, and that, if they complied with their duty in proclaiming her queen, she could forgive, and even forget, what was past; but, in answer to this, they insisted upon the indubitable right, and their own unalterable fidelity to Queen Jane, to whom they persuaded the Lady Mary to submit.

These previous steps being taken, and the tower and city of London secured, the council quitted Greenwich and came to London; and July 10, in the forenoon, the two last-mentioned dukes repaired to Durham House, where the Lady Jane resided with her husband as part of the Northumberland family. There the Duke of Suffolk, with much solemnity, explained to his daughter the disposition the late King had made of his crown by letters patent; the clear sense the privy-council had of her right; the consent of the magistrates and citizens of London; and, in conclusion, himself and Northumberland fell on their knees, and paid their homage to her as queen of England. The poor lady, somewhat astonished at their discourse, but not at all moved by their reasons, or in the least elevated by such unexpected honours, returned them an answer to this effect: "That the laws of the kingdom and natural right standing for the King's sisters, she would beware of burdening her weak

conscience with a yoke which did belong to them ; that she understood the infamy of those who had permitted the violation of right to gain a sceptre ; that it were to mock God and deride justice to scruple at the stealing of a shilling, and not at the usurpation of a crown.

“ Besides,” said she, “ I am not so young, nor so little read in the guiles of fortune, to suffer myself to be taken by them. If she enrich any, it is but to make them the subject of her spoil ; if she raise others, it is but to pleasure herself with their ruins ; what she adored but yesterday, is to-day her pastime ; and, if I now permit her to adorn and crown me, I must, to-morrow, suffer her to crush and tear me to pieces. Nay, with what crown does she present me ! a crown which hath been violently and shamefully wrested from Catharine of Arragon, made more unfortunate by the punishment of Ann Boleyn, and others that wore it after her ; and why then would you have me add my blood to theirs, and be the third victim from whom this fatal crown may be ravished with the head that wears it ? But in case it should not prove fatal unto me, and that all its venom were consumed, if fortune should give me warranties of her constancy, should I be well advised to take upon me these thorns which would dilacerate, though not kill me outright ; to burden myself with a yoke, which would not fail to torment me, though I were assured not to be strangled with it ? My liberty is better than the chain you proffer me, with what precious stones soever it be adorned, or of what gold soever framed. I will not exchange my peace for honourable and precious jealousies, for magnificent and glorious fetters ; and, if you love me sincerely, and in good earnest, you will rather wish me a secure and quiet fortune, though mean,

than an exalted condition exposed to the wind, and followed by some dismal fall."

However, she was at length prevailed upon by the exhortations of her father, the intercession of her mother, the artful persuasions of Northumberland, and, above all, the earnest desires of her husband, whom she tenderly loved, to yield her assent to what had been, and was to be done. And thus, with a heavy heart, she suffered herself to be conveyed by water to the Tower, where she entered with all the state of a queen, attended by the principal nobility, and, which is very extraordinary, her train supported by the Duchess of Suffolk, her mother, in whom, if in any of this line, the right of succession remained. About six in the afternoon, she was proclaimed with all due solemnities in the city; the same day she also assumed the regal title, and proceeded afterwards to exercise many acts of sovereignty; but passing over the transactions of her short reign, which are the subjects of the general history, it is more immediately our business to conclude this article with her behaviour on her fall.

Queen Mary was no sooner proclaimed than the Duke of Suffolk, who then resided with his daughter in the Tower, went to her apartment, and, in the softest terms he could, acquainted her with the situation of their affairs, and that, laying aside the state and dignity of a queen, she must again return to that of a private person; to which, with a settled and serene countenance, she made this answer: "I better brook this message than my former advancement to royalty; out of obedience to you and my mother, I have grievously sinned, and offered violence to myself. Now I do willingly, and as obeying the motions of my soul, relinquish the crown, and endeavour to salve those faults committed by others (if at least so great a fault can be salved) by

a willing relinquishment and ingenuous acknowledgment of them."

Thus ended her reign, but not her misfortunes. She saw the father of her husband, with all his family, and many of the nobility and gentry, brought prisoners to the Tower, for supporting her claim to the crown; and this grief must have met with some accession from his being soon after brought to the block. Before the end of the month, she had the mortification of seeing her father, the Duke of Suffolk, in the same circumstances with herself; but her mother, the Duchess, not only remained exempt from all punishment, but had such an interest with the Queen, as to procure the Duke his liberty, on the last day of the month. Lady Jane, and her husband, being still in confinement, were, November 3, 1553, carried from the Tower to Guildhall, with Cranmer and others, arraigned, and convicted of high treason, before Judge Morgan, who pronounced on them sentence of death, the remembrance of which afterwards affected him so far, that he died raving.

However, the strictness of their confinement was mitigated in December, by a permission to take the air in the Queen's garden, and other little indulgences. This might give some gleam of hope; and there are reasons to believe the Queen would have spared her life, if Wiatt's rebellion had not happened; but her father's being engaged in that rebellion, gave the ministers an opportunity of persuading the Queen, that she could not be safe herself, while Lady Jane and her husband were alive; yet, Mary was not brought without much difficulty to take them off. The news made no great impression upon Lady Jane; the bitterness of death was passed; she had expected it long, and was so well prepared to meet her fate, that she was very little discomposed.

But the Queen's clemency hurt her more than her justice. The day first fixed for her death was Friday, February the 9th, and she had, in some measure, taken leave of the world by writing a letter to her unhappy father, who she heard was more disturbed with the thoughts of being the author of her death, than with the apprehension of his own. In this serene frame of mind, Dr. Feckenham, abbot of Westminster, came to her from the Queen, who was very desirous she should die professing herself a papist, as her father-in-law had done. The Abbot was, indeed, a very fit instrument, if any had been fit for the purpose, having, with an acute wit, and a plausible tongue, a great tenderness in his nature.

Lady Jane received him with much civility, and behaved towards him with so much calmness and sweetness of temper, that he could not help being overcome with her distress; so that, either mistaking, or pretending to mistake, her meaning, he procured a respite of her execution till the 12th. When he acquainted her with it, she told him, "that he had entirely misunderstood her sense of her situation; that, far from desiring her death might be delayed, she expected and wished for it as the period of her miseries, and her entrance into eternal happiness. Neither did he gain any thing upon her in regard to popery; she heard him, indeed, patiently, but answered all his arguments with such strength, clearness, and steadiness of mind, as shewed plainly that religion had been her principal care.

On Sunday evening, which was the last she was to spend in this world, she wrote a letter in the Greek tongue, as some say, on the blank leaves at the end of a Testament in the same language, which she bequeathed as a legacy to her sister, the Lady

Catharine Grey; a piece which, if we had no other left, it is said, were sufficient to render her name immortal.

In the morning, the Lord Guildford earnestly desired the officers, that he might take his last farewell of her; which, though they willingly permitted, yet upon notice, she advised the contrary, "assuring him that such a meeting would rather add to his afflictions than increase his quiet; wherewith they had prepared their souls for the stroke of death; that he demanded a lenitive, which would put fire into the wound, and that it was to be feared her presence would rather weaken than strengthen him; that he ought to take courage from his reason, and derive constancy from his own heart; that if his soul were not firm and settled, she could not settle it by her eyes, nor confirm it by her words; that he should do well to remit this interview to the other world; that there, indeed, friendships were happy, and unions indissoluble, and that theirs would be eternal if their souls carried nothing with them of terrestrial which might hinder them from rejoicing." All she could do was to give him a farewell out of a window, as he passed to the place of his dissolution, which he suffered on the scaffold on Tower Hill with much Christian meekness. She likewise beheld his dead body wrapped in a linen cloth, as it passed under her window to the chapel within the Tower.

And about an hour after, she was led to a scaffold. She was attended by Feckenham, but was observed not to give much heed to his discourses, keeping her eyes steadfastly fixed on a book of prayers, which she had in her hand. After some short recollection, she saluted those who were present with a countenance perfectly composed; then taking leave of Dr. Feckenham, she said, "God

will abundantly requite you, good Sir, for your humanity to me, though your discourses gave me more uneasiness than all the terrors of my approaching death." She next addressed herself to the spectators in a plain and short speech; after which, kneeling down, she repeated the Miserere in English. This done, she stood up, and gave to her women her gloves and handkerchief, and to the Lieutenant of the Tower, her Prayer-book.

In untying her gown, the executioner offered to assist her; but she desired he would let her alone; and turning to her women, they undressed, and gave her a handkerchief to bind about her eyes. The executioner, kneeling, desired her pardon, to which she answered, "Most willingly." He desired her to stand upon the straw, which, bringing her within sight of the block, she said, "I pray dispatch me quickly;" adding presently after, "Will you take it off before I lay me down?" The executioner answered, "No, Madam." Upon this, the handkerchief being bound close over her eyes, she began to feel for the block, to which she was guided by one of the spectators. When she felt it, she stretched herself forward, and said, "Lord, into thy hands I commend my spirit;" and immediately her head was separated at one stroke.

Her fate was universally deplored, even by the persons best affected to Queen Mary; and, as she is allowed to have been a princess of great piety, it must certainly have given her much disquiet to begin her reign with such an unusual effusion of blood, especially in the present case of her near relation, one formerly honoured with her friendship and favour, who had indeed usurped, but without desiring or enjoying, the royal diadem which she assumed, by the constraint of an ambitious father and an imperious mother, and which, at the first mo-

tion, she cheerfully and willingly resigned. This made her exceedingly lamented at home and abroad; the fame of her learning and virtue, having reached over Europe, excited many commendations, and some express panegyrics in different nations, and different languages. Immediately after her death, there came out a piece intitled, "The precious Remains of Lady Jane Grey."

*The Communication had between Lady JANE GREY
and Dr. FECKENHAM, Abbot of Westminster.*

Peck. Madam, I lament your heavy case, and yet I doubt not but that you bear out this sorrow of yours with a constant and patient mind.

Jane. You are welcome unto me, Sir, if your coming be to give Christian exhortation. And as for my heavy case (I thank God), I do so little lament it, that rather I account the same for a more manifest declaration of God's favour towards me than ever he shewed me at any time before. And therefore there is no cause why either you, or other, which bear me good will, should lament or be grieved with this my case, being a thing so profitable for my soul's health.

Feck. I am here come to you at this present, sent from the Queen and her council, to instruct you in the true doctrine of the right faith, although I have so great confidence in you, that I shall have, I trust, little need to travail with you much therein.

Jane. Forsooth, I heartily thank the Queen's Highness, which is not unmindful of her humble subject; and I hope likewise that you no less will do your duty therein both truly and faithfully, according to that you were sent for.

Feck. What is then required of a Christian man?

Jane. That he should believe in God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, three Persons and one God.

Feck. What! is there nothing else to be required or looked for in a Christian, but to believe in him?

Jane. Yes; we must also love him with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our mind, and our neighbour as ourself.

Peck. Why, then faith justifieth not, nor saveth not.

Jane. Yes, verily, faith (as Paul saith) only justifieth.

Peck. Why, St. Paul saith, If I have all faith without love, it is nothing.

Jane. True it is; for how can I love him whom I trust not? or how can I trust him whom I love not? Faith and love go both together, and yet love is comprehended in faith.

Peck. How shall we love our neighbour?

Jane. To love our neighbour is to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, and give drink to the thirsty, and to do to him as we would do to ourselves.

Peck. Why, then it is necessary unto salvation to do good works also, and it is not sufficient only to believe.

Jane. I deny that, and I affirm that faith only saveth; but it is meet for a Christian, in token that he followeth his master Christ, to do good works, yet may we not say that they profit to our salvation; for when we have done all, yet we be unprofitable servants, and faith only in Christ's blood saveth us.

Peck. How many sacraments are there?

Jane. Two; the one, the sacrament of baptism; and the other, the sacrament of the Lord's supper.

Peck. No; there are seven.

Jane. By what Scripture find you that?

Peck. Well, we will talk of that hereafter. But what is signified by your two sacraments?

Jane. By the sacrament of baptism, I am washed with water, and regenerated by the Spirit, and that washing is a token to me that I am the child of God. The sacrament of the Lord's supper offered unto me is a sure seal and testimony that I am by the blood of Christ, which he shed for me on the cross, made partaker of the everlasting kingdom.

Feck. Why, what do you receive in that sacrament? Do you not receive the very body and blood of Christ?

Jane. No, surely; I do not so believe; I think that at the supper I neither receive flesh nor blood, but bread and wine, which bread, when it is broken, and the wine, when it is drunken, putteth me in remembrance how that for my sins the body of Christ was broken, and his blood shed on the cross; and with that bread and wine I receive the benefits that come by the breaking of his body, and shedding of his blood, for our sins on the cross.

Feck. Why, doth not Christ speak these words: Take, eat, this is my body? Require you plainer words? doth he not say it is his body?

Jane. I grant he saith so; and so he saith, I am the vine, I am the door; but he is never the more for that the door nor the vine. Doth not St. Paul say, "He calleth things that are not, as though they were?" (Rom. iv.) God forbid that I should say that I eat the very natural body and blood of Christ; for then either I should pluck away my redemption, or else there were two bodies or two Christs. One body was tormented on the cross; and if they did eat another body, then had he two bodies; or if his body were eaten then, was it not broken upon the cross? or if it were broken upon the cross, it was not eaten of his disciples.

Feck. Why, is it not as possible that Christ by his power could make his body both to be eaten and broken, and to be born of a woman without seed of man, as to walk upon the sea, having a body, and other such-like miracles as he wrought by his power only?

Jane. Yes, verily; if God would have done at his supper any miracle, he might have done so; but I say, that he then minded no work nor miracle, but only

to break his body, and shed his blood on the cross, for our sins. But I pray you to answer me to this one question, where was Christ when he said, Take, eat, this is my body? was he not at the table when he said so? he was at that time alive, and suffered not till the next day. What took he but bread? what brake he but bread? and what gave he but bread? Look, what he took, he brake; and look, what he brake, he gave; and look, what he gave, they did eat: and yet all this while he himself was alive, and at supper before his disciples, or else they were deceived.

Fech. You ground your faith upon such authors as say and unsay both with a breath, and not upon the church, to whom you ought to give credit.

Jane. No, I ground my faith upon God's word, and not upon the church; for if the church be a good church, the faith of the church must be tried by God's word, and not God's word by the church, either yet my faith. Shall I believe the church, because of antiquity, or shall I give credit to the church that taketh away from me the half part of the Lord's supper, and will not let any man receive it in both kinds? which thing if they deny to us, then deny they to us part of our salvation. And I say, that it is an evil church, and not the spouse of Christ, but the spouse of the devil, that altereth the Lord's supper, and both taketh from it, and addeth to it. To that church, say I, God will add plagues, and from that church will he take their part out of the book of life. Do they learn that of St. Paul, when he ministered to the Corinthians in both kinds? Shall I believe this church? God forbid!

Fech. That was done for a good intent of the church, to avoid an heresy that sprung on it.

Jane. Why, shall the church alter God's will and

ordinance for good intent? How did king Saul? The Lord God defend.

With these and such-like persuasions he would have had her lean to the church, but it would not be. There were many more things whereof they reasoned, but these were the chiefest.

After this, Feckenham took his leave, saying, that he was sorry for her; for I am sure, quoth he, that we two shall never meet.

Jane. True it is (said she), that we shall never meet, except God turn your heart; for I am assured, unless you repent, and turn to God, you are in an evil case; and I pray God, in the bowels of his mercy, to send you his holy Spirit, for he hath given you his great gift of utterance, if it pleased him also to open the eyes of your heart.

A Letter of the Lady JANE sent unto her Father.

FATHER, although it hath pleased God to hasten my death by you, by whom my life should rather have been lengthened, yet can I so patiently take it, as I yield God more hearty thanks for shortening my woful days, than if all the world had been given unto my possessions, with life lengthened at my own will. And albeit I am well assured of your impatient dolours, redoubled manifold ways, both in bewailing your own woe, and especially (as I hear) my unfortunate state, yet, my dear father (if I may without offence rejoice in my own mishap), meseems in this I may account myself blessed, that, washing my hands with the innocency of my fact, my guiltless blood may cry before the Lord, mercy to the innocent.

And yet though I must needs acknowledge that being constrained, and, as you wot well enough, continually assayed, in taking upon me I seemed to consent, and therein grievously offended the Queen and

lier laws ; yet do I assuredly trust that this my offence towards God is so much the less, in that, being in so royal estate as I was, mine enforced honour blended never with mine innocent heart. And thus, good father, I have opened unto you the state wherein I presently stand. Whose death at hand, although to you perhaps it may seem right woful, to me there is nothing that can be more welcome than from this vale of misery to aspire to that heavenly throne of all joy and pleasure with Christ our Saviour : in whose steadfast faith (if it may be lawful for the daughter so to write to the father) the Lord that hitherto hath strengthened you, so continue you, that at the last we may meet in heaven with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

At what time her father was flourishing in freedom and prosperity in the time of King Edward, there belonged unto him a certain learned man, student and graduate of the university of Oxford, who then being chaplain to the said Duke, and a sincere preacher (as he appeared) of the Gospel, according to the doctrine of that time set forth and received, shortly after that the state of religion began to alter by Queen Mary, altered also in his profession with the time, and of a Protestant became a friend and defender of the Pope's proceedings.

At whose sudden mutation and inconstant mutability, this Christian lady being not a little aggrieved, and most of all lamenting the dangerous state of his soul in sliding so away for fear from the way of truth, writeth her mind unto him in a sharp and vehement letter, which (as it appeareth to proceed of an earnest and zealous heart), so would God it might take such effect with him as to reduce him to repentance, and to take better hold again for the health and

wealth of his own soul. The copy of the letter is this as followeth :

A Letter of the Lady JANE to Master HARDING, late Chaplain to the Duke of Suffolk, her Father, and then fallen from the Truth of God's most holy Word.

So oft as I call to mind the dreadful and fearful saying of God, "That he which layeth hold upon the plough and looketh back, is not meet for the kingdom of heaven;" and on the other side, the comfortable words of our Saviour Christ to all those that, forsaking themselves, do follow him; I cannot but marvel at thee, and lament thy case, which seemedst sometime to be the lively member of Christ, but now the deformed imp of the devil; sometime the beautiful temple of God, but now the stinking and filthy kennel of Satan; sometime the unspotted spouse of Christ, but now the unshamefaced paramour of antichrist; sometime my faithful brother, but now a stranger and apostate; sometime a stout Christian soldier, but now a cowardly runaway.

Yea, when I consider these things, I cannot but speak to thee, and cry out upon thee, Thou seed of Satan, and not of Judah, whom the devil hath deceived, the world hath beguiled, and the desire of life subverted and made thee of a Christian an infidel, wherefore hast thou taken the testament of the Lord in thy mouth? wherefore hast thou preached the law and the will of God to others? wherefore hast thou instructed others to be strong in Christ, when thou thyself dost now so shamefully shrink, and so horribly abuse the testament and law of the Lord? when thou thyself preachest, not to steal, yet most abominably stealest, not from men, but from God, and committing most heinous sacrilege, robbest

Christ thy Lord of his right members, thy body and soul, and chooseth rather to live miserably with shame to the world, than to die, and gloriously with honour to reign with Christ, in whom even in death is life. Why dost thou now shew thyself most weak, when indeed thou oughtest to be most strong? The strength of a fort is unknown before the assault; but thou yieldest thy hold before any battery be made.

O wretched and unhappy man! what art thou but dust and ashes? And wilt thou resist thy Maker that fashioned thee and framed thee? Wilt thou now forsake Him that called thee from the custom-gathering among the Romish anti-christians, to be an ambassador and messenger of his eternal word? He that first framed thee, and since thy first creation and birth preserved thee, nourished and kept thee, yea, and inspired thee with the spirit of knowledge (I cannot say of grace), shall he not now possess thee? Darest thou deliver up thyself to another, being not thine own, but his? How canst thou, having knowledge, or how durst thou neglect the law of the Lord, and follow the vain traditions of men? and whereas thou hast been a public professor of his name, become now a defacer of his glory?

Wilt thou refuse the true God, and worship the invention of man, the golden calf, the whore of Babylon, the Romish religion, the abominable idol the most wicked mass? Wilt thou torment, again rend and tear the most precious body of our Saviour Christ with thy bodily and fleshly teeth? Wilt thou take upon thee to offer up any sacrifice unto God for our sins, considering that Christ offered up himself (as Paul saith) upon the cross a lively sacrifice once for all? Can neither the punishment of the Israelites (which for their idolatry they so oft received), nor the terrible threatenings of the pro-

phets, nor the curses of God's own mouth, fear thee to honour any other God than him? Doest thou so regard Him that spared not his dear and only Son for thee, so diminishing, yea, utterly extinguishing, his glory, that thou wilt attribute the praise and honour due unto him to the idols, which have mouths and speak not, eyes and see not, ears and hear not, which shall perish with them that made them?

What saith the Prophet Baruch, when he recited the Epistle of Jeremy written to the captive Jews? Did he not forewarn them that in Babylon they should see gods of gold, silver, wood, and stone, borne upon men's shoulders, to cast fear before the heathen? But be not ye afraid of them (saith Jeremiah), nor do as others do; but when you see others worship them, say you in your hearts, It is thou, O Lord, that oughtest only to be worshipped; for as for those gods, the carpenter framed them and polished them; yea, gilded be they, and laid over with silver and vain things, and cannot speak. He sheweth, moreover, the abuse of their dealings: how the priests took off their ornaments, and apparelled their women withal; how one holdeth a sceptre, another a sword, in his hand, and yet can they judge in no matter, nor defend themselves, much less any other, from either battle or murder; nor yet from gnawing of worms, nor any other evil thing. These, and such-like words, speaketh Jeremiah unto them, whereby he proveth them to be but vain things and no gods; and at last he concludeth thus, "Confounded be all they that worship them."

They were warned by Jeremiah, and thou as Jeremiah hast warned others, and art warned thyself, by many scriptures in many places: God saith he is a jealous God, which will have all honour, glory, and

worship given to him only; and Christ saith, in the fourth of Luke, to Satan which tempted him, even to the same Satan, the same Belzebub, the same devil, which hath prevailed against thee, “It is written (saith he, Matt. iv.), Thou shalt honour the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.”

These, and such-like, do prohibit thee and all Christians to worship any other God than which was before all worlds, and laid the foundations both of heaven and earth; and wilt thou honour a detestable idol invented by Romish popes, and the abominable college of crafty cardinals? Christ offered himself up once for all, and wilt thou offer him up again daily at thy pleasure? But thou wilt say, thou doest it for a good intent!—O sink of sin! O child of perdition! Dost thou dream therein of a good intent where thy conscience beareth thee witness of God’s threatened wrath against thee? How did Saul, who for that he disobeyed the word of the Lord for a good intent, was thrown from his worldly and temporal kingdom? Shalt thou then, that dost deface God’s honour, and rob him of his right, inherit the eternal and heavenly kingdom?

Wilt thou, for a good intent, dishonour God, offend thy brother, and danger thy soul, wherefor Christ hath shed his most precious blood? Wilt thou, for a good intent, pluck Christ out of heaven, and make his death void, and deface the triumph of his cross, by offering him up daily? Wilt thou, either for fear of death, or hope of life, deny and refuse thy God, who enriched thy poverty, healed thy infirmity, and yielded to thee his victory, if thou couldest have kept it? Dost thou not consider that the thread of thy life hangeth upon Him that made thee, who can (as his will is) either twine it harder to last the longer, or untwine it again to break it the sooner?

Dost thou not, then; remember the saying of David, a notable king, to teach thee a miserable wretch, in his hundred-and-fourth Psalm, where he saith thus: "When thou takest away thy Spirit, O Lord, from men, they die, and are turned again to their dust; but when thou lettest thy breath go forth, they shall be made, and thou shalt renew the face of the earth." Remember the saying of Christ in his Gospel, Matt. x. "Whosoever seeketh to save his life, shall lose it; but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, shall find it;" And in the same place, "Whosoever loveth father or mother above me, is not meet for me; he that will follow me, let him forsake himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." What cross? the cross of infamy and shame, of misery and poverty, of affliction and persecution, for his name's sake.

Let the oft falling of those heavenly showers pierce thy stony heart; let the two-edged sword of God's holy word shear asunder the sinews of worldly respects, even to the very marrow of thy carnal heart, that thou mayest once again forsake thyself, and embrace Christ: and like as good subjects will not refuse to hazard all in the defence of their earthly and temporal governor; so fly not like a white-livered milksop from the standing wherein thy chief Captain Christ hath set thee in array of this life. *Viriliter age, confortetur cor tuum sustinet Dominum.* Fight manfully, come life come death; the quarrel is God's, and undoubtedly the victory is ours.

But thou wilt say, I will not break unity. What! not the unity of Satan and his members? not the unity of darkness, the agreement of antichrist and his adherents? Nay, thou deceivest thyself with the fond imagination of such an unity as is among the enemies of Christ. Were not the false prophets in an unity? were not Joseph's brethren and Jacob's

sons in an unity? were not the heathen, as the Amalekites, the Perizites, and Jebusites, in an unity? were not the Scribès and Pharisees in an unity? Doth not king David testify, *Convenerunt in unum adversus Dominum?* Yea, thieves, murderers, conspirators, have their unity. But what unity? Tully saith of amity, *Amicitia non est, nisi inter bonos*. But mark, my friend, yea, friend, if thou be not God's enemy; there is no unity but where Christ knitteth the knot among such as be his. Yea, be well assured, that where his truth is resident, there it is verified that he himself saith, "I am not come to send peace on the earth, but a sword, &c. but to set one against another, the son against the father, and the daughter against the mother-in-law." Deceive not thyself, therefore, with the glittering and glorious name of unity; for anti-christ hath his unity not yet in deed, but in name.

The agreement of ill men is not an unity, but a conspiracy. Thou hast heard some threatenings, some curses, and some admonitions out of the Scriptures, to those that love themselves above Christ. Thou hast heard also the sharp and biting words to those that deny him for love of life. Saith he not, "He that denieth me before men, I will deny him before my Father in heaven?" (Matt. x.) And to the same effect writeth Paul (Heb. vi.), "It is impossible (saith he) that they which were once lightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted of the good word of God, if they fall and slide away, crucifying to themselves the Son of God afresh, and making of him a mocking-stock, should be renewed again by repentance." And again saith he, "If we shall willingly sin after we have received the knowledge of his truth, there is no oblation left for sin, but the terrible expectation of judgment and fire which shall devour the adversaries." Thus St. Paul

writeth, and this thou readest, and dost thou not quake and tremble?

Well, if these terrible and thundering threatenings cannot stir thee to cleave unto Christ, and forsake the world, yet let the sweet consolations and promises of the Scriptures, let the example of Christ and his Apostles; holy martyrs and confessors, encourage thee to take fast hold by Christ. Harken what he saith: "Blessed are you when men revile you, and persecute you, for my sake; rejoice, and be glad, for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you." (Matt. v.) Hear what Isaiah the prophet saith: "Fear not the curse of men, be not afraid of their blasphemies, for worms and moths shall eat them up like cloth and wool; but my righteousness shall endure for ever, and my saving health from generation to generation. What art thou then (saith he) that fearest a mortal man, the child of man, that fadeth away like a flower, and forgettest the Lord that made thee, that spread out the heavens, and laid the foundation of the earth? I am the Lord thy God, that make the sea to rage, and be still, whose name is the Lord of hosts. I shall put my word in thy mouth, and defend thee with the turning of an hand." (Isa. lvii.)

And our Saviour Christ saith to his disciples, "They shall accuse you, and bring you before princes and rulers for my name's sake, and some of you they shall persecute and kill; but fear you not (saith he), nor care you what you shall say, for it is the Spirit of your Father that speaketh within you. Even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Lay up treasure for yourselves (saith he), where no thief cometh, nor moth corrupteth. Fear not them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but fear Him that hath power to destroy both soul and body. If ye were of the world, the world would love

his own ; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.”

Let these and such-like consolations, taken out of the Scriptures, strengthen you to Godward. Let not the examples of holy men and women go out of your mind, as Daniel and the rest of the Prophets ; of the three children of Eleazarus, that constant father ; of the seven of the Maccabees' children ; of Peter, Paul, Stephen, and other apostles and holy martyrs in the beginning of the church ; as of good Simeon, archbishop of Soloma ; and Zetrophone, with infinite other under Sapoires, the king of the Persians and Indians, who contemned all torments devised by the tyrants for their Saviour's sake.

Return, return again into Christ's war, and, as cometh a faithful warrior, put on that armour that St. Paul teacheth to be most necessary for a Christian man. (Eph. vi.) And, above all things, take to you the shield of faith, and be you provoked by Christ's own example to withstand the devil, to forsake the world, and to become a true and faithful member of his mystical body, who spared not his own body for our sins.

Throw down yourself with the fear of his threatened vengeance for this so great and heinous offence of apostacy, and comfort yourself on the other part with the mercy, blood, and promise of Him that is ready to turn unto you whensoever you turn unto him. Disdain not to come again with the lost son, seeing you have so wandered with him. Be not ashamed to turn again with him from the swill of strangers to the delicates of your most benign and loving Father, acknowledging that you have sinned against heaven and earth ; against heaven, by staining the glorious name of God, and causing his most sincere and pure word to be evil spoken of through

you ; against earth, by offending so many of your weak brethren, to whom you have been a stumbling-block through your sudden sliding.

Be not abashed to come home again with Mary, and weep bitterly with Peter, not only with shedding the tears of your bodily eyes, but also pouring out the streams of your heart, to wash away out of the sight of God the filth and mire of your offensive fall. Be not abashed to say with the publican, " Lord, be merciful to me a sinner." Remember the horrible history of Julian of old, and the lamentable case of Spira of late, whose case (methinks) should be yet so green in your remembrance, that being a thing of our time, you should fear the like inconvenience, seeing you are fallen into the like offence.

Last of all, let the lively remembrance of the last day be always before your eyes, remembering the terror that such shall be in at that time, with the runagates and fugitives from Christ, which, setting more by the world than by heaven, more by their life than by Him that gave them life, did shrink, yea, did clean fall away from Him that forsook not them; and contrariwise, the inestimable joys prepared for them, that, fearing no peril, nor dreading death, have manfully fought and victoriously triumphed over all power of darkness, over hell, death, and damnation, through their most redoubted Captain Christ, who now stretcheth out his arms to receive you, ready to fall upon your neck and kiss you ; and, last of all, to feast you with the dainties and delicates of his own precious blood, which undoubtedly, if it might stand with his determinate purpose, he would not let to shed again, rather than you should be lost. To whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all honour, praise, and glory everlasting. Amen.

Be constant, be constant ; fear not for any pain ;
Christ hath redeemed thee, and heaven is thy gain.

A Letter written by the Lady JANE, in the End of the New Testament, in Greek, the which she sent unto her Sister, Lady CATHARINE, the Night before she suffered.

I HAVE here sent you (good sister Catharine) a book, which, although it be not outwardly trimmed with gold, yet inwardly it is more worth than precious stones. It is the book (dear sister) of the law of the Lord: it is his testament and last will, which he bequeathed unto us wretches, which shall lead you to the path of eternal joy; and if you with a good mind read it, and with an earnest mind do purpose to follow it, it shall bring you to an immortal and everlasting life: it shall teach you to live, and learn you to die: it shall win you more than you should have gained by the possessions of your woful father's lands. For as if God had prospered him, you should have inherited his lands; so if you apply diligently this book, seeking to direct your life after it, you shall be an inheritor of such riches, as neither the covetous shall withdraw from you, neither thief shall steal, neither yet the moths corrupt.

Desire with David, good sister, to understand the law of the Lord God. Live still to die, that you (by death) may purchase eternal life. And trust not that the tenderness of your age shall lengthen your life; for as soon (if God call) goeth the young as the old: and labour always to learn to die. Defy the world, deny the devil, and despise the flesh, and delight yourself only in the Lord. Be penitent for your sins, and yet despair not: be strong in faith, and yet presume not; and desire with St. Paul to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, with whom, even in death, there is life. Be like the good servant, and even at midnight be waking, lest, when death cometh, and

stealeth upon you like a thief in the night, you be with the evil servant found sleeping, and lest, for lack of oil, you be found like the five foolish women, and like him that had not on the wedding garment, and then ye be cast out from the marriage.

Rejoice in Christ, as I do. Follow the steps of your Master Christ, and take up your cross, lay your sins on his back, and always embrace him. And as touching my death, rejoice as I do (good sister), that I shall be delivered of this corruption, and put on incorruption. For I am assured, that I shall for losing of a mortal life win an immortal life, the which I pray God grant you, and send you of his grace to live in his fear, and to die in the true Christian faith, from the which (in God's name) I exhort you that you never swerve, neither for hope of life, nor for fear of death: for if you will deny his truth for to lengthen your life, God will deny you, and yet shorten your days. And if you will cleave unto him, he will prolong your days to your comfort and his glory, to the which glory God bring me now, and you hereafter, when it pleaseth him to call you. Fare you well, good sister, and put your only trust in God, who only must help you.

Here followeth a certain effectual Prayer, made by the Lady JANE in the Time of her Trouble.

O LORD, thou God and Father of my life, hear me, poor and desolate woman, which flieth unto thee only, in all troubles and miseries. Thou, O Lord, art the only defender and deliverer of those that put their trust in thee; and therefore I, being defiled with sin, encumbered with affliction, unquieted with troubles, wrapped in cares, overwhelmed with miseries, vexed with temptations, and grievously tormented with the long imprisonment of this vile mass of clay, my sinful body, do come unto thee,

O merciful Saviour, craving thy mercy and help, without the which so little hope of deliverance is left, that I may utterly despair of any liberty.

Albeit it is expedient, that, seeing our life standeth upon trying, we should be visited sometime with some adversity, whereby we might both be tried whether we be of thy flock, or no; and also know thee and ourselves the better, yet thou that saidst thou wouldest not suffer us to be tempted above our power, be merciful unto me now a miserable wretch. I beseech thee, which with Solomon do cry unto thee, humbly desiring thee, that I may neither be too much puffed up with prosperity, neither too much pressed down with adversity, lest I, being full, should deny thee, my God; or being too low brought, should despair, and blaspheme thee, my Lord and Saviour.

O merciful God! consider my misery best known unto thee, and be thou now unto me a strong tower of defence, I humbly require thee. Suffer me not to be tempted above my power; but either be thou a deliverer unto me out of this great misery, either else give me grace patiently to bear thy heavy hand and sharp correction. It was thy right hand that delivered the people of Israel out of the hands of Pharaoh, which, for the space of four hundred years, did oppress them, and keep them in bondage. Let it, therefore, likewise seem good to thy fatherly goodness to deliver me, sorrowful wretch (for whom thy Son Christ shed his precious blood on the cross), out of this miserable captivity and bondage, wherein I am now. How long wilt thou be absent? For ever? O Lord, hast thou forgotten to be gracious, and hast thou shut up thy loving kindness in displeasure? Wilt thou be no more entreated? Is thy mercy clean gone for ever, and thy promise come utterly to an end for evermore? Why dost thou

make so long tarrying? Shall I despair of thy mercy, O God? Far be that from me. I am thy workmanship created in Christ Jesus; give me grace, therefore, to tarry thy leisure, and patiently to bear thy works; assuredly knowing that as thou canst, so thou wilt deliver me, when it shall please thee, nothing doubting or mistrusting thy goodness towards me, for thou knowest better what is good for me than I do. Therefore, do with me in all things what thou wilt, and plague me what way thou wilt; only in the mean time arm me, I beseech thee, with thy armour, that I may stand fast, my loins being girded about with verity, having on the breast-plate of righteousness, and shod with the shoes prepared by the Gospel of peace; above all things taking to me the shield of faith, wherewith I may be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked, and taking the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is thy most holy word; praying always with all manner of prayer and supplication that I may refer myself wholly to thy will, abiding thy pleasure, and comforting myself in those troubles that it shall please thee to send me; seeing such troubles be profitable for me; and seeing I am assuredly persuaded that it cannot be but well all that thou doest. Hear me, O merciful Father, for his sake, whom thou wouldest should be a sacrifice for my sins; to whom with thee, and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory. Amen.

These are the Words that the Lady JANE spake upon the Scaffold at the Hour of her Death.*

First, when she mounted upon the scaffold, she said to the people standing thereabout, "Good people, I am come hither to die, and by a law I am con-

* This account of her behaviour at the scaffold contains some particulars not mentioned in her history, as given above.

demned to the same. The fact against the Queen's Highness was unlawful, and the consenting thereunto by me; but touching the procurement and desire thereof by me, or on my behalf, I do wash my hands thereof in innocency before God, and the face of you good Christian people this day;" and therewith she wrung her hands wherein she had her book. Then said she, "I pray you all, good Christian people, to bear me witness that I die a true Christian woman, and that I do look to be saved by no other means, but only by the mercy of God in the blood of his only Son Jesus Christ; and I do confess, that when I did know the word of God, I neglected the same, loved myself and the world, and therefore this plague and punishment is happily and worthily happened unto me for my sins; and yet I thank God of his goodness, that he hath thus given me a time and respite to repent. And now, good people, while I am alive, I pray you assist me with your prayers." And then kneeling down, she turned to Feckenham, saying, "Shall I say this Psalm?" and he said, "Yea." Then said she the Psalm of *Miserere mei Deus*, in English, in most devout manner, to the end; and then she stood up and gave her maiden Mistress Ellen her gloves and handkerchief, and her book to Master Bruges, and then she untied her gown, and the hangman pressed upon her to help her off with it, but she desiring him to let her alone, turned towards two gentlewomen, who helped her off therewith, &c. giving to her a fair handkerchief to knit about her eyes.

Then the hangman kneeled down and asked her forgiveness, whom she forgave most willingly. Then he willed her to stand upon the straw, which doing she saw the block; then she said, "I pray you dispatch me quickly." Then she kneeled down, saying, "Will you take it off before I lay me down?" and the

hangman said, "No, Madam." Then tied she the handkerchief about her eyes, and feeling for the block, she said, "What shall I do? Where is it? where is it?" One of the standers-by guiding her thereunto, she laid her head upon the block, and then stretched forth her body, and said, "Lord, into thy hands I commend my spirit;" and so finished her life, in the year of our Lord God 1554, the 12th day of February.

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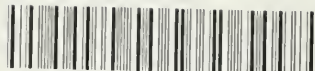
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