

An abstract painting with a complex composition of colors and textures. The background is a mix of vibrant hues including red, blue, yellow, and purple, with visible brushstrokes and splatters. The overall style is expressive and dynamic, with a sense of movement and energy. The colors are layered and blended, creating a rich, multi-dimensional visual experience. The brushwork is varied, with some areas showing fine, detailed strokes and others featuring bold, sweeping gestures. The overall effect is one of artistic freedom and creative exploration.

# Women Philosophers Throughout History: An Open Collection

Prof. Marcy Lascano  
Kevin Watson  
Rafael Martins

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University of Kansas Libraries  
Lawrence, KS 66045

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## Introduction

Vast bibliography<sup>1</sup> and the American Philosophical Association<sup>2</sup> have called attention to the gender-gap in philosophy, *viz.* the fact that women are abysmally underrepresented in all the dimensions of the universe of philosophy: undergraduate majors, graduate programs, faculty<sup>3</sup>, journal editors, and peer-review boards<sup>4</sup>. There are serious reasons to believe that is problematic.<sup>5</sup> Recent studies<sup>6</sup> discuss explanatory hypotheses for the gap. One of them is that philosophy syllabi are invariably devoid of female authors, *especially in introductory courses*.<sup>7</sup> Indeed, evidence shows that “the biggest drop in the proportion of women in philosophy occurs between students enrolled in introductory philosophy classes and philosophy majors.”<sup>8</sup> Georgia State University philosophy program has attempted to address this problem by requiring graduate students teaching introductory-level courses in philosophy to use syllabuses that include at least 20% of women philosophers.<sup>9</sup> However, the scarce availability of texts from women philosophers poses serious challenge for that and other noble initiatives currently on course to narrow up the gender-gap. In other words, it is still very difficult to find trustworthy material published by women philosophers prior to 1923.

That had not always been the scenario, though. If we look at the history of philosophy more carefully, we find a large number of women-authored contributions to philosophy. Notwithstanding, access to that material remains extremely challenging. The majority of those works have not been published since they were originally written and many of them can only be found in a few libraries or on microfilm.<sup>10</sup> To make things even more complicated, uncountable women-authored philosophical classic texts have never been translated into English, making the pool of women-authored philosophical resources even more restricted.

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<sup>1</sup> American Philosophical Association Committee on the Status of Women Reports:

<http://www.apaonlinecsww.org/workshops-and-summer-institutes>

Paxton, Figdor, Tiberius. **Quantifying the Gender Gap: An Empirical Study of the Underrepresentation of Women in Philosophy.** *Hypatia*, v. 27, Issue 4, 2012. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1527-2001.2012.01306.x>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.apaonline.org/page/diversity\\_resources](https://www.apaonline.org/page/diversity_resources)

<sup>3</sup> Women make up 21% of philosophy faculty in the English-speaking world.

<sup>4</sup> Krishnamurthy, Liao, Deveaux, Dalecki. **The Underrepresentation of Women in Prestigious Ethics Journals.** *Hypatia*, v. 32, Issue 4, 2017. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/hypa.12351>

<sup>5</sup> Jenkins, Fiona, and Katrina Hutchison (2013). Introduction: **Searching for Sofia: Gender and Philosophy in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.** In Katrina Hutchison and Fiona Jenkins (Eds.), *Women in Philosophy: What Needs to Change?*(1–20). Oxford University Press.

Friedman, Marilyn (2013). **Women in Philosophy: Why Should We Care?** In Katrina Hutchison and Fiona Jenkins (Eds.), *Women in Philosophy: What Needs to Change?* (21–38). Oxford University Press.

<sup>6</sup> Baron, Dougherty, Miller. **Why Is There Female Under-Representation among Philosophy Majors? Evidence of a Pre-University Effect.** *Ergo*, v. 2, n. 14, 2015.

<https://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/ergo/12405314.0002.014?view=text;rgn=main>

<sup>7</sup> Paxton et. al. 2012; and Hall, Pamela C. (1993). **From Justified Discrimination to Responsive Hiring: The Role Model Argument and Female Equity Hiring in Philosophy.** *Journal of Social Philosophy*, 24(1), 23–45.

<sup>8</sup> Paxton, et. al. 2012

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2013/06/28/georgia-state-tries-new-approach-attract-more-female-students-philosophy>

<sup>10</sup> Atherton, Margaret. **Women Philosophers of the Early Modern Period**, Hackett, 1994.

However, note that these efforts have all been translated into upper level courses, which are almost exclusively for graduate students, leaving yet untouched introductory courses, where the turning point of gender-gap takes place, the critical site of the problem. The current texts and textbooks used in introductory level philosophy courses are often compilations of the most essential classics of philosophy—the vast majority of which fail to include any women philosophers. Both Frederick Copleston’s classic *A History of Philosophy*<sup>11</sup>, in eleven volumes, and the most authoritative encyclopedia of philosophy in Brazil, *Os Pensadores*<sup>12</sup>, in fifty-six volumes, do not include a single woman thinker. Oxford University Press’ *Political Philosophy: The Essential Texts*, edited by Steven Cahn in 2015, does not include any woman until the second half of the twentieth century. These editions misrepresent the philosophical debates of the past for not including a more accurate lineup of thinkers who were active members of those debates. This project addresses that most sensitive stage of early academic life by providing easy and open access to the works of four significant women philosophers for instructors and students interested in diversifying the narrative of their courses.

The work is divided into four sections, each containing an introduction for the included text, references to sections of the texts that we take to be of primary interest, and a list of additional readings instructors and students related to the works. The first text, the *Dialogue of Divine Providence* by Saint Catherine of Siena was produced around 1378, and the second, the *Interior Castle* by Saint Teresa of Avila, written in 1577. Both of them share the method of using meditative practices stressing the introspective and emotive ways of acquiring knowledge, accessing the truth, pursuing self-knowledge, experiencing the divine, and exercising virtue. It is likely that these works, when not ignored, have been secluded from philosophical circles for being taken as plain mysticism or theological preaching. The problem is, to view these works as mere mysticism or theology would be to ignore the epistemological and prudential importance of the works. Both works provide a detailed and sophisticated account of virtue and self-knowledge, as well as providing the tools necessary to acquire them.

The third work, Judith Drake’s *Essay in Defense of the Female Sex*, produced in 1696, aims to address the political state of affairs regarding the rights and social positions of women in the England of the late 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. The central question Drake grapples with in her *Essay in Defense* is “whether the time an ingenious Gentleman spends in the Company of Women, may justly be said to be misemployed, or not?” According to Drake, spending time with others is properly employed when the mind gains either an “Improvement of the Understanding or a Diversion and Relaxation of its Cares and Passions.” It is critical of rationalist ideas often cited as reason to conclude women were intellectually inferior to men, arguing that both sexes are equally susceptible to folly and, as a result, would benefit from greater education.

Finally, Susanna Newcome’s *Enquiry into the Evidence of the Christian Religion*, the first edition of which was published in 1728, in grapples with a number of subjects including the nature and existence of God, human happiness, and what humanity would be rationally required to do were the Christian religion true, among others. The work sets itself up as presenting an argument in favor of the existence of God that does not rest on *a priori* judgement, appealing to Newtonian physics to defend the claim that the chains of cause and effect we experience either require external support for their continued existence or can come to an end—eventually concluding that the cause of the universe must be eternal, independent, unchangeable, intelligent, powerful, perfect, omnipresent, omniscient, and free.

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<sup>11</sup> Continuum editions, various dates, 1946 thru1986.

<sup>12</sup> Sao Paulo: Abril Cultural/Nova Cultural, 1<sup>st</sup> print 1973/5 thru 2004.

## Saint Catherine of Siena

Caterina di Giacomo di Benincasa was born in 1347 in Siena, Italy, and was only thirty-three when she died. She was canonized in 1461 by Pope Pius II, and in 1970, together with Saint Teresa of Ávila, she was named Doctor of the Church by Pope Paul VI, making them the first women to receive this honor. The Catholic Church confers this title to those who significantly contributed to theology and philosophy, through research, writing, and teaching. As of today, there are only four women Doctors of the Church.

Saint Catherine of Siena's works consist of her major treatise *The Dialogue of Divine Providence* produced in 1378, in addition to over three hundred and eighty letters, and twenty-six prayers. She was illiterate for most of her life, and yet was extremely intelligent. So, most of her texts were dictated. Much of *The Dialogue* was dictated while Catherine was in a mystical state of ecstasy. She would speak as if it were God the Father talking directly to her. The resulting text is not structured in a systematic way and contains some repetitions, many amendments (which she thought were necessary), and sometimes interruptions, that can be challenging even for experienced readers. Notwithstanding, the patient reader will find, in the *Dialogue*, philosophical gems in the form of arguments based on unusual premises, guidance for the pursuit of virtue via reflection-inductive practices, and incredibly down-to-earth political criticisms about the Catholic Church's clergymen.

Saint Catherine was very politically influential during the Western Schism of 1378, a split within the Catholic Church lasting until 1417, when there were two, and later three, rival popes, each with his own following, his own Sacred College of Cardinals, and his own administrative offices. She was among those who convinced Pope Gregory XI to leave Avignon and return to Rome for a future reunification of the Church. She then carried out many missions for the pope to negotiate peace with Florence, Pisa, and Luca. She returned to Siena, after Gregory XI's death. But since a lot has been written about the life and political significance<sup>1</sup> of St. Catherine, in this introduction we attempt to sketch some examples of what kind of philosophical substance the reader will find in the Catherinian texts.

## Structure of the Work

Today, most available copies of the *Dialogue* are based on Algar Thorold's abridged translation edited in 1907<sup>2</sup> and republished in 1944<sup>3</sup> and 2010<sup>4</sup>. For that reason, we have selected the original translation by Thorold from 1896<sup>5</sup>. However, Thorold's translation is based on the controversial division of the work in the Italian editions, which separates the book into treatises on divine providence, discretion, prayer, and obedience. But that division may be confusing, because the true structure of the book is not divided under those four themes. The book begins with Catherine's vision

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<sup>1</sup> See for instance, Kohler-Ryan, Renée. Trees in the Garden: Thomas Aquinas, Catherine of Siena, and the Order of Justice. *The Australian Feminist Law Journal*, Vol. 39, 2013.

<sup>2</sup> Thorold, Algar. *The Dialogue of the Seraphic Virgin, Catherine of Siena, Dictated by Her, While in a State of Ecstasy, to Her Secretaries, and Completed in the Year of Our Lord 1370*. Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., London, 1907

<sup>3</sup> *Idem*. Westminster, Md. Newman Bookshop, 1944

<sup>4</sup> *Idem*. TAN Books, 2010

<sup>5</sup> *Idem*. Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., London, 1896



in which she begs God four requests: 1. Petition for her own spiritual needs; 2. For the needs of the Church; 3. For the needs of the whole world; and 4. For God's Providence over every single creature, especially her spiritual father, Raymund of Capua.

After that introductory part, God briefly responds the four petitions. This section is a complete work in itself encompassing chapters 3 to 20.<sup>6</sup> Then, along a series of visions Catherine would have over a year period between 1377 and 1378, she added more detailed answers to the four petitions, which generate her six doctrines: Of the Bridge (chapters 21-87), Of Tears (86-97), of Truth (98-109), Of the Mystical Body (110-134), Of Providence (135-153), and Of Obedience (154-165). She closes the book with a summary of the whole work (166) and a prayer (167).<sup>7</sup>

## Self-Knowledge, Self-Love and Love for Others

For St. Catherine, we cannot experience genuine love, both in the forms of self-love and love towards others, without first seeking self-knowledge. She argues that genuine love requires humility, which is acquired through the understanding that we are not self-sufficient, but rather small, limited, and imperfect creatures. The view can be put as a general perfectionist principle: that inner perfection is a necessary prerequisite for outer virtues

There are multiple substantial differences between Greek ancient philosophy and Catherinian virtue ethics which invite comparative studies. Socrates' pursuit of knowledge, for instance, also leads him to a kind of humility, *epistemic* humility more precisely.<sup>8</sup> His acknowledgment of his ignorance has served as a starting point for generations of philosophers on. Now, note that while this recognition leads Socrates to craft a dialogical pursuit of knowledge, known as *elenchus*, based on a series of intercalations between propositions and refutations<sup>9</sup>, the same humility leads Catherine to retire herself to the "cell of self-knowledge"<sup>10</sup>, a well-known aspect of her theorizing as well as of her actual life. For Catherine, in the solitude of a cell we gather together the soul's three powers of memory, understanding, and will, which allows for a gradual access to God's truth and the truth about ourselves. The connection between knowing those truths and acting accordingly is then established via the Catherinian argument that can be put in the following terms: to know ourselves leads to know God's

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<sup>6</sup> The first petition is answered in chapter 3. In chapters 13-15, God answers the second petition. The response to the third petition appears in chapters 16-18. Chapters 19-20 close with the answer to the fourth petition.

<sup>7</sup> For a very illuminating discussion on the structure of the book, see Benedict Ashley O.P.'s Guide to Saint Catherine's Dialogue In: Callahan, John Leonard (ed.) *Cross and Crown: A Thomistic Quarterly of Spiritual Theology*. vol. 29, St. Louis: Herder, 1977. And also McDermott, Thomas O.P. *Catherine of Siena: Spiritual Development in Her Life and Teaching*. NY: Paulist Press, 2008. p. 234

<sup>8</sup> For the scholarship on the humility theory of wisdom attributed to Socrates, see Ryan, Sharon, "Wisdom", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2018 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2018/entries/wisdom/>

<sup>9</sup> *Elenchus* is a philosophical discussion in the form of a dialogue and almost everything written by Plato follows this method. *Crito* is a great starting point among Plato's Socratic dialogues, followed by the first three books of the *Republic*, where Socrates interviews people about the nature of justice. Woodruff, Paul, "Plato's Shorter Ethical Works", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2018 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2018/entries/plato-ethics-shorter/>

<sup>10</sup> Catherine sometimes uses "cell" referring to the three years she spent in solitude in her room of her family house in between the years 1363-1367. But she also employs "cell" to refer to knowledge of one's inner self, as well as other terms such as a house, tomb, valley, stable, night, moonlight, grace, abyss, tug, wood, enclosed garden, dew, fire, light, vessel, cave, well. McDermott, 2008, p. 282

truths; to know God's truth leads to love God; to love God is to love what He loves; God loves our neighbors; therefore, we shall love our neighbors as God does.<sup>11</sup>

While for Socrates, the acquisition of some possible knowledge is, in a way, a collective endeavor, Catherine would spend long stretches of time in seclusion and, later in life, she would also fast for very long periods, which ultimately led her to death at thirty-three. Catherine's reflective seclusion was inspired by the asceticism of the Desert Fathers<sup>12</sup>, today known as orthodox Christian asceticism<sup>13</sup>. According to ascetic readings of passages of the Bible<sup>14</sup>, the renouncing of material possessions, abstaining from sensual and physical pleasures, withdrawing from public gatherings, and even fasting, would allow for a state of inner calmness necessary for the most transparent knowledge of oneself. And for Catherine, only in this elevated state of mind one can *experience* non-selfish self-love and thereby open oneself to act motivated by genuine love for others. Historically, the practice of self-starvation by St. Catherine is probably the most popular case of *anorexia mirabilis*, or holy anorexia, which has attracted interested among psychiatrists as well.<sup>15</sup>

## Perfection in Isolation and in Public

The contrast between virtue performed alone versus virtues performed within collectives, say, the city, the army, or our families, appears again when we compare Catherinian virtue theory to that of Aristotle in several ways. It may pass unnoticed, but the conclusion of Aristotle's function argument carries a strong qualification about the pursuit of a good life, *viz.* that the good life requires the "active life of virtue".

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<sup>11</sup> This argument appears in different places in the *Dialogue* and other works of hers and in her biographies, not always in its completeness. For instance, in Capua's *The Life of Catherine of Siena*, Conleth Kerns (trans.). Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1980, chapter 121, p. 116, reads "for my grace you must now begin to bear fruit not only in yourself but in other souls as well. I have no intention whatever of parting you from myself, but rather of making sure to bind you to me all the closer, by the bond of your love for your neighbor." In the *Dialogue*, chapter 7: "the service you cannot render me you must do for your neighbors. Thus, it will be evident that you have me within your soul by grace, when with tender loving desire you are looking out for my honor and the salvation of your neighbor". Then in chapter 60: "They love their neighbors with the same love with which they love me". More clearly in chapter 89: "So she loves every person with the same love she sees herself loved with, and this is why the soul, as soon as she comes to know Me, reaches out to love her neighbors." And again, in chapter 96: the soul "shows her love by genuinely loving what I love and hating what I hate".

<sup>12</sup> Desert Fathers were Christian hermits who lived mainly in the Scetes desert of Egypt around third century AD. It started as a movement after Christianity became legal in Egypt. Politically, it was an alternative way to seek higher grace and display strength of faith, since Christians were not persecuted anymore, at least by the rule of law, and so public martyrdom became less necessary. But regardless of its historical origins and religious purposes, asceticism is often practiced as way of acquiring a deeper form of self-knowledge, which can serve different purposes.

<sup>13</sup> Asceticism derives from Greek term *askesis*, which means exercise or training. Asceticism is the practical exercise of a cluster of philosophical views encompassing, for instance, human nature, rationality, psychology, and the value of knowledge, which converge into a lifestyle characterized by isolation, abstinence, and extreme frugality. Although asceticism is part of most religious traditions, it does not have to necessarily serve spiritual purposes, as it appears in the contexts of politics and athletics in ancient Greek philosophy. In the Catherinian works, asceticism appears not just as a way of penance and connection with God, but especially as a way of acquiring self-knowledge.

<sup>14</sup> For instance, Matthew 19:21: Jesus answered, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

<sup>15</sup> Espi Forcen, Fernando. Anorexia Mirabilis: The Practice of Fasting by Saint Catherine of Siena in the Late Middle Ages in *The American Journal of Psychiatry*. Vol. 170, Issue 4, 2013, pp.370-1.

Aristotle's function argument<sup>16</sup> is about what ought one to do, if one wants to live well. It connects a view of human nature, namely, that human beings are rational, with a substantial view about well-being: the good life is the life of virtue. Its standard conception goes as follows:

1. The good for something/doing well...in general, for whatever has a function and characteristic action, seems to depend on its function, the same seems to be true for a human being, if a human being has some function. Book 1, chap. 7, line 25, 1097b
2. [The function of human beings] is some sort of life of action of the part of the part of the soul that has reason. And: Human function is activity of the soul in accord with reason. 1098a5
3. Virtue (the good for something) is to exercise one's function "well and finely" (which may lead to "superior achievement) 1098a10-15
4. If the function of human beings is to reason, then to be a virtuous human being is to reason well. 1098a10-15

**Conclusion:** The human good is activity of the soul in accord with virtue, and indeed with the best and most complete virtue, if there are more virtues than one. 1098a15-20

Aristotle opens his study on ethics, later called *Nicomachean Ethics* with an investigation about the nature of human wellbeing, or what is the good life for rational creatures like us. He evaluates what the good is according to two conceptual tests. The good must be complete in itself, *viz.* it is desirable for itself, it is not desirable for the sake of some other good, and all other goods are desirable for its sake<sup>17</sup> And the good must be self-sufficient, *viz.* all by itself makes life desirable and lacking in nothing<sup>18</sup>: when we have it, when do not desire anything further. Aristotle calls that state of mind *eudaimonia*.

Scholars dispute whether *eudaimonia* is best translated as "happiness", "flourishing", simply "wellbeing" or, if it should remain as an untranslatable technical term.<sup>19</sup> Semantic skirmishes notwithstanding, Aristotle observes that we would be misguided to think that *eudaimonia* is "*enduring and not prone to fluctuate*"<sup>20</sup>, since it is obvious that life has its ups and downs. So, he asks: how can we say that someone *is* happy, if happiness is a *transitory* activity of the mind? And for practical matters, how can we be happy during lifetime? Aristotle then argues that in order to know when something is doing well or what it means for something to do well, we need to first know exactly what that thing is, be it a knife, a flute, a soldier, a parent, or a human being simpliciter. Then, Aristotle deploys a

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<sup>16</sup> The function argument is laid out and defended along book 1 of the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Aristotle summarizes it in book 1, chapter 7, 1097a – 1098b

<sup>17</sup> *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book 1, Chapter 7. 1097a30.

<sup>18</sup> 1097b16.

<sup>19</sup> For more on the semantic imprecision of "eudaimonia", see Kraut, Richard, "Aristotle's Ethics", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2018 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL =

<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2018/entries/aristotle-ethics/>, section 2: "Aristotle thinks everyone will agree that the terms "*eudaimonia*" ("happiness") and "*eu zēn*" ("living well") designate such an end. The Greek term "*endaimon*" is composed of two parts: "*eu*" means "well" and "*daimon*" means "divinity" or "spirit". To be *eudaimon* is therefore to be living in a way that is well-favored by a god. But Aristotle never calls attention to this etymology in his ethical writings, and it seems to have little influence on his thinking. He regards "*eudaimon*" as a mere substitute for *eu zēn* ("living well"). These terms play an evaluative role and are not simply descriptions of someone's state of mind."

<sup>20</sup> *Nicomachean Ethics*, (1100a-1100b, specifically line 35)

metaphysical view according to which we individuate things according to their function, or in other words, to know what something is, *is* to know what its function is. Once we know what the function of something is, it is even intuitive, Aristotle suggests, that for something to do well, is to discharge or exercise its function well. When something exercises its function well, we say its *virtuous*.

Knowing something's function is not always as obvious as that of a knife, a flute, or even a soldier. What if we want to make a more generalized inquiry, and try to say what would be the general function of all and every human being, just like the function of all and every knife? According to Aristotle's individuation theory<sup>21</sup>, to know something's function then we need inquire what is that what the thing does uniquely, and nothing else can do equally properly. Aristotle then makes the substantive claim that the function of human beings is to be rational, since reason is what sets them apart from everything else, i.e. their uniqueness. By the same token, if the function of human beings is to be rational, then, to do well is to reason well. Now, what does it mean to reason well for human beings, *in practice*?

Before we set the conclusion, remember that the state of eudaimonia is *transitory*. So, all we can do, Aristotle argues, is to *remain in pursuit* of that state of mind or affairs. At this point, he concludes that *the good life* is the likely unfolding of our constant pursuit of virtue, the "*active life of virtue*" in his words. So, in short, we have: 1. to be virtuous is to exercise one's function well; 2. The function of human beings is to be rational. 3. Therefore to be a virtuous human being is to reason well. 4. If we reason well, "we shall live well"<sup>22</sup>.

But note that along with the function argument, there is a corollary argument for the *dynamism* or *practicality* of virtue: the good life requires constant exercise. If the moments that make up a good life are transitory and prone to fluctuate, we are naturally interested in how to make those good times more qualified and enduring. Indeed, says Aristotle "the most honorable among the virtues themselves are more enduring than other virtues"<sup>23</sup> and it follows that "people devote their lives to them more fully and continually than anything else"<sup>24</sup> have some sort of "stability"<sup>25</sup>. Because this pursuit is a constant activity, it builds up and keeps a certain personal character through time, whose continuity simply *is the good life*.

Given the instances of virtue approached by Aristotle, "active" suggests an outward exercise of virtue, a bodily and mental engagement with surrounding people or an active participation of an event, where the object of the action seems to lie outside the agent. And while Aristotle does theorize about intellectual virtues, not only the virtues he mentions are directed to living a good life in the city, but his function argument also encompasses all other applications of human reason, such as good parenting, music-making, or soldiering amidst warfare. Though that way of seeing virtues strongly appears in her *Letters*, where her political involvement is prominent, in the *Dialogue*, St. Catherine's focus is on the introspective virtues, or virtues amenable to be developed in isolation, because for her,

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<sup>21</sup> *Politics* 1253a18 "all things derive their essential character from their function and their capacity; and it follows that if they are no longer fit to discharge their function, we ought not to say they are still the same things.

<sup>22</sup> 1097b5

<sup>23</sup> *Nicomachean Ethics* 1100b15

<sup>24</sup> 1100b15

<sup>25</sup> 1100b20

outward virtues must stem from inward virtues.<sup>26</sup> But inward virtues, she argues, can only be developed when we know ourselves really well, a kind of knowledge however, which we only can grasp in profound isolation.

The second way St. Catherine differs from Aristotle concerns our knowledge of our rational and physical limitations. Aristotle states several times that we lack in self-sufficiency, and since an active life of virtue requires resources and conditions<sup>27</sup> which we can only access and create via a division of labor, we have a natural impulse<sup>28</sup> to live in city, i.e. a union of those who cannot exist without one another.<sup>29</sup> But the city, Aristotle argues, does not come to existence just for the sake of mere survival; it should also lead humans to *thrive*.<sup>30</sup> Once the connection between pursuing the life of virtue and living in the city is established, Aristotle thinks human life, or at least *good* human life, is impossible without the city<sup>31</sup>: “the man who is isolated, who is unable to share in the benefits of political association, or has no need to share because he is already self-sufficient, is no part of the city, and must therefore be either a beast or a god...Man, when perfected (in the city), is the best of animals; but if he be isolated from law and justice he is the worst of all.”<sup>32</sup> Once Aristotle concludes that the city is a natural and inescapable development of human beings, he goes on to discuss what then would be the best constitution for the city, *viz.* the constitution that best allows for the exercise and development of the most suitable virtues for human flourishing.

St. Catherine on the other hand is interested in an inner-knowledge of ourselves that allows us to overcome our original limitations. Then, overcoming those limitations leads us to a re-evaluation of ourselves, and our relations to the world, and everyone else we connect with. Again, the direction of thought goes from inward virtues to outward virtues.<sup>33</sup> The subject of spiritual development is very prominent in Catherine’s works. Taking an alternative route to that of Aristotle, she argued that human development necessarily includes periods in isolation, sometimes renunciation to all material goods, except for means of survival, and even fasting. But why is such extreme asceticism necessary for spiritual and human development? For Catherine, certain virtues can only be found, or must in part be developed in isolation, especially the virtue of self-knowledge, upon which, on her view, all others depend.<sup>34</sup> While it is undeniable that we can better see some truths about ourselves with the help of others, there are dimensions of the self which we can only grasp in complete isolation.

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<sup>26</sup> “They not only consist of those virtues which are done by means of the body, that is, with an exterior act”, but bodily virtues performed alone, without discretion [here in the sense of inner-knowledge], “her perfection will be impeded.” *Dialogue*, chapter 9.

<sup>27</sup> Aristotle observes that the good life “requires external goods...for it is impossible, or at least not easy, to act virtuously if we lack the resources.” In short: deprivation of external goods hinders virtue. *Nicomachean Ethics* 1099b1

<sup>28</sup> “Men form cities by natural impulse.” *Politics* 1252a24.

<sup>29</sup> This is in fact the shortest argument for why Aristotle famously concludes that man is by nature a political animal. Aristotle, *Politics*. Chapter 2. The claim about lacking in self-sufficiency also appears in *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book 1, but that’s a different context in which Aristotle uses self-sufficiency as a test for determining intrinsic value.

<sup>30</sup> 1252b27

<sup>31</sup> *Politics*, 1253a2 “he who is without a city, by reason of his own nature and of some accident, is either a poor sort of being, or a being higher than man”...“he is in the position of a solitary advanced piece in a game of draughts.” 1253a25 “the individual is not self-sufficient when he is isolated”

<sup>32</sup> idem

<sup>33</sup> This direction appears in various of her allegories, such as the “tree of virtue”.

<sup>34</sup> Prov 19:2 “Desire without knowledge is not good, and one who moves too hurriedly misses the way.” And Sir 18:20: “Before judgment comes, examine yourself; and at the time of scrutiny you will find forgiveness.”

Catherine's emphasis on knowledge of the self derives from the relevance *Genesis* 1:26-27<sup>35</sup> assumed after St. Augustine.<sup>36</sup> We have been created in likeness to God, and so the first step in search of knowing God is knowing ourselves. Without true self-knowledge we only have a distorted conception of God in himself. Self-knowledge leads to humility as we have seen with Socrates, makes us acknowledge we are not self-sufficient as we have seen with Aristotle, and now with Catherine we see it leads to the virtuous kind of self-love. Virtuous self-love sublimates traditional egoistic self-love because it not only leaves room for, but also motivates the love of others. According to this view we come to the help of our neighbors, not because we would ultimately benefit from that attitude, but because we love what God loves, and God loves us all equally since He sees ourselves *as equals* before Him.

But note that our sublimation of what Catherine calls "mercenary love"<sup>37</sup> comes through *in the cell of self-knowledge*. In the *Dialogue*, chapter 60 we read:

"Because coming to perfect self-knowledge, they may know that of themselves they are nothing and have no grace...but when in the cell of self-knowledge we learn we have been created in resemblance to God and so also share in his will, and since God equally loves all of us, we acquire virtuous love, loving others like God loves them, for what they are in themselves and not only out of self-advantage."

Why this overcoming takes place in isolation? In the allegory of the peaceful sea as a mirror, Catherine is subliminally talking about the traditional opposition between reason versus sentiment, and the sought supremacy of the former over the latter. In that allegory, she compares the water surface to that of a mirror and equates our emotions in tempest to an ocean of turbulent waters, and so when you attempt to gaze upon your reflection on the water surface, and you will not see your true self, since you are only met with a distorted image of yourself. In isolation, our thunderous emotions decant to leave only the most peaceful sentiments, resembling the indefectible paralyzed surface of the most secluded lake.

Within the terrain of imagery, Catherine tries to show that if we effortlessly try to look inside of ourselves with what she calls the "eye of the intellect", we will develop the art of life, not by quashing our emotions, especially self-love, but by channeling our love of ourselves and our love of others into more balanced expressions, such as virtuous self-love and genuine love for others. Although the goal is in part a virtue to be exercised in public, it is one to discovered and first exercised in isolation.

## Discretion and Prudence

Together with self-knowledge, discretion holds a central place in Catherine's thought. Catherine uses the word "discretion" to refer to both discernment and prudence.<sup>38</sup> Her meaning of

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<sup>35</sup> Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness....So God created mankind in his own image; in the image of God he created them.

<sup>36</sup> In his *On The Trinity*, Augustine devotes chapters 8 to 10 to an investigation on the human mind, because he is interested in discovering the true nature of man, without which the search for God's truths would be flawed from the start. These chapters have had large influence for the philosophy of mind. Augustine. *On the Trinity*. (Matthews, Gareth (ed.), McKenna, Stephen (trans.)) Cambridge University Press, 2002.

<sup>37</sup> *Dialogue*, chapter 60

<sup>38</sup> For an analysis of the meanings of "discretion" as discernment and/or prudence along all the works of St. Catherine, see Ragazzi, Grazia Mangano. *Obedying the Truth: Discretion in the Spiritual Writings of Saint Catherine of Siena*. Oxford University Press, 2014.

“discernment” is close to the concept of practical reason, and her meaning of “prudence” also tracks our contemporary usage, that is, just one dimension of practical rationality, or one virtue among others. However, the reader must note that she often uses “prudence” to also refer to the ability of practical discernment, a habit that also appears in Aquinas’ *Summa Theologica*.<sup>39</sup> In the *Dialogue*, the notion of discretion is introduced in the context of what virtues should we develop and exercised. As we have seen, Catherine argues that in the pursuit of self-knowledge, we humble ourselves as we learn about our imperfections and the greatness of God. Discretion, she claims, can only work in plenitude after that humility has been established. In chapter 9, Catherine defines discretion as:

“The virtue of discretion is no other than a true knowledge which the soul should have of herself and of Me [God], and in this knowledge is virtue rooted. Discretion is the child of self-knowledge, and, wedding with charity has indeed many other descendants, as a tree which has many branches; but that what gives life to the tree, to its branches, and its root, is the ground of humility, in which it is planted, which humility is the foster-mother and nurse of charity, by whose means this tree remains in the perpetual calm of discretion. Because otherwise the tree would not produce the virtue of discretion, or any fruit of life, if it were not planted in the virtue of humility, because humility proceeds from self-knowledge. And I have already said to thee, that root of discretion is a real knowledge of self and of My goodness, by which the soul immediately, and discreetly, renders to each one his due.”<sup>40</sup>

In Catherine’s texts there is no unequivocal image of discretion, but one quite useful is her definition of discretion, *qua* capacity of discernment, as “the knife which slays and cuts off all self-love founded in self-will.”<sup>41</sup> Selfish love is the origin of all sins, argues Catherine, because you are loving yourself for your own sake and not for the sake of God. We have to love ourselves in the right, i.e. humble, way so that we can love others in the right way, *viz.* because they are created in resemblance to God just like each one of ourselves, and not because loving others would ultimately benefit ourselves.<sup>42</sup> So, in its discerning role, discretion divides, like a knife, virtuous from vicious acts by cutting off the good from the bad kind of self-love. Charity, then, understood as genuine love for others, emerges as the cardinal Catherinian virtue prescribed by humbled discretion acquired through self-knowledge.

Catherine’s views bear interesting connections with the works of Saint Augustine (354-430) and Saint Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274) yet to be better explored. For instance, self-knowledge is also a central topic in St. Augustine’s reflections, which led him to investigate the metaphysics of inner life: “By the Platonic books I was admonished to return into myself...With you as my guide I entered into my innermost citadel (Ps.29:11)...I entered and with my soul’s eye, such as it was, saw above that same eye of my soul the immutable light higher than my mind.”<sup>43</sup> The allegory of “inner citadel” reminds us of Catherine’s cell of self-knowledge, both seeing the dive into oneself as a necessary stage for the attainment of perfection, for Catherine, and of eternal happiness, for Augustine. Augustine and Catherine also agree on the tripartite division of the faculties of the soul into memory, intellect and the will<sup>44</sup>. Therefore, it is not controversial to claim that Augustine indeed influenced Catherine,

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<sup>39</sup> Aquinas, Thomas. *Thomas Aquinas Selected Writings*. (McInerney, Ralph (ed)). Penguin Books, 1998.

<sup>40</sup> *Dialogue*, chapter 9. Giving one what one is due is also one of the conceptions of justice canvassed in the first three books of Plato’s *Republic*.

<sup>41</sup> In *Dialogue*, chapters 11 and 122, Catherine talks about how injustice proceeds from selfishness and dark lack of discretion.

<sup>42</sup> In the opening of the first section of the *Groundwork*, Kant makes a similar argument against egoistic motivations behind apparently altruistic actions, though in an entirely secular manner, appealing solely to the value of human rationality. Kant, Immanuel. *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*. (Gregor, Mary and Timmermann, Jens (trans. And ed.)) Cambridge University Press, 2012.

<sup>43</sup> Augustine. *Confessions*. (Chadwick, Henry (trans.)). Oxford University Press, 1991. Book VII, (x16) p.123.

<sup>44</sup> In Book XV of *On The Trinity*, Augustine defends his view of the “rational soul”. Augustine. *On the Trinity*. (Matthews, Gareth (ed.), McKenna, Stephen (trans.)) Cambridge University Press, 2002. Catherine frequently refers to the tripartite

though its extent is a matter of debate among scholars, since she had no *direct* knowledge of Augustine writings, and probably only accessed those ideas via church preachers.<sup>45</sup>

Equally influential for Catherine was Thomas Aquinas who is known for merging the Christian tradition of *discretion* derived from the bible with the Aristotelian conception of *prudence*. Aquinas use of “prudence” is similar to Catherine’s use to refer to our capacity of discernment, not just between virtue and vice, but also to balance out which virtues to exercise and develop, rather than referring to a particular virtue, namely, the virtue of pursuing one’s own well-being. In the case of prudence as a measuring skill Aquinas and subsequently in Catherine, prudence is a knife that cuts the right amount of time and energy devoted to each of one’s virtues in concrete situations, says Aquinas:

“To be conformed to right reason is the proper purpose of any moral virtue. The intent of temperance is to prevent us straying from reason because of our lusts; of fortitude lest we forsake the judgment of right reason because of fear or rashness. Such an end is prescribed for us by our natural reason, which bids each to act according to reason. Yet *quite how and through what we strike the virtuous mean, this is the business of prudence*. For though keeping the mean is the aim of moral virtue, nevertheless it is the correct marshalling of the means to the end that the mean is found.”<sup>46</sup>

There is a lot yet to be discussed about the role of prudence as discretion and its relation to the other virtues in Aquinas and Catherine. For instance, both Aquinas’s prudence and Catherine’s discretion require self-knowledge as a necessary vestibule for the life of virtue as well as both are concerned with the unity and coherence of a virtuous life, *viz.* how to best blend solitary contemplation and an active life in public settings.

A lot more can be said in lieu of Catherine’s works relations with other great philosophers. Here we have tried to provide the reader a sample of the possible lines of investigation and why her views could be of interest to philosophers. There are also a number of other less purely philosophical topics to explore, such as Catherine’s use of allegories, her mysticism, and her political activity. In the following we provide some bibliographical guidance to primary sources as well as to secondary bibliography.

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division of the soul or one of its parts along the *Dialogue*. For instance, chapter 4, she talks about *memory* in order to remember the benefits of the virtuous life, *intellect* so as to see and know the truth, and the *will* so as to act according to virtue.

<sup>45</sup> Ragazzi, Grazia Mangano. *Obeying the Truth: Discretion in the Spiritual Writings of Saint Catherine of Siena*. Oxford University Press, 2014. p. 137

<sup>46</sup> Summa vol. 36 prudence. See Ragazzi p. 141 summa I-II q 56 a.3 qq 57 58 61 In questions 47 to 56 of the II-II of the Summa Theologica



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THE DIALOGUE OF  
THE SERAPHIC VIRGIN  
CATHERINE OF SIENA

DICTATED BY HER, WHILE IN A STATE OF ECSTASY, TO  
HER SECRETARIES, AND COMPLETED IN THE  
YEAR OF OUR LORD 1370

*TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL ITALIAN*

WITH AN INTRODUCTION ON THE STUDY OF MYSTICISM

BY

ALGAR THOROLD

COLL. CHRISTI REGIS  
BIB. MAJ.  
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## INTRODUCTION.

"I AM persuaded," said Claude Bernard, "that the day will come, when the man of science, the philosopher and the poet will all understand each other." Whatever we may think of this prophecy, we most of us feel that the one-sided absolutism of the past, whether religious or scientific, is no longer possible. The inevitable vehemence of the reaction against bigotry and superstition has, in a measure, spent itself, and the best minds of the present, influenced by the spirit of Socrates' claim to wisdom, are cautiously and tentatively feeling their way to a nicer adjustment of the scales of thought.

That these should ever be poised in perfect equilibrium is no doubt impossible in this world of clashing categories; but the undoubted truths to be found in extremes are beginning to be recognised as partial and relative, as only fragmentary elements in the ultimate synthesis.

From the conviction that the whole truth is not to be found in any partial utterance of humanity, the passage is easy to the opinion, that for a really philosophical appreciation of our nature, an impartial examination of all the sides of man is necessary. The philosopher, the scientist, the artist, the saint must all contribute. Contemporary non-religious thought, like its predecessor of an earlier day, is becoming persuaded that some good thing may come even out of Nazareth. The thin, dry optimism of sectarian Christianity and of official materialism we see now to be not so much erroneous as unthinkable. We have done, it may be hoped for ever, with "the proofs which proved, and the explanations which explained nothing."

A hundred years ago truth seemed a simpler matter to our fathers. They stood on the threshold of the modern industrial world, to them a coming golden age tipped with the brightness of rising science. Exact knowledge and universal education were to make men happy and wise and good. Kings and priests were gone, or, at least, the back of their despotism was broken; these incubi, the causes of all his misery, removed, man, a well-meaning creature, and more than capable of taking care of himself, would begin at last to live, and, in the normal exercise of his natural functions, hitherto artificially strapped down by theological and political tyrants, would find true satisfaction and, consequently, the perfect happiness of his being. But they counted without machine-looms or the law of heredity, of which they derided the theological expression in the doctrine of original sin.

The true value of the Revolution did not lie in the supposed sagacity of its political wisdom, and even less in its social results, which we have with us to-day, but in the indomitable hope and faith which animated some of its greatest illustrations. It is impossible to read the best French moralists of the Revolutionary period—say, Vauvenargues and Condorcet—without being struck by the deep spiritual earnestness which underlay much in them that was flimsy as argument, mistaken as fact, frothy and unreal as sentiment.

The Revolution stated the human problem in collective terms, forgetting that the only authority which can address men collectively must transcend them individually, that is, must represent the Divine. Mere multiplicity, as such, must return to unity under pain of disintegration. Now, the revealed symbols apart, the highest human manifestation is the individual raised to the quintessence of personality called genius, for he, only, has, in a supreme degree, will and intellect; and will and intellect move the world. The *Philosophes*, whether deists or atheists, by hypothesis, ruled the conception of the Divine out of relation to man, and therefore had no message for him as an individual. He was considered, primarily, as a social item, and

formed, in juxtaposition to, not in fusion with, other such items, the modern State-fetish, that grotesque parody of an individual. The result of all this is, to-day, evident enough. Modern society, the creation of the Revolution, is based on ignorance, or, at least, disregard of the distinction between organic and mechanical unity.

For a society, as for a work of art, there are two kinds of unity. This quality may result from the careful observance of certain rules imposed from without on the subject-matter, without any regard for the inner unity of thought, in which case it is purely mechanical. Of this, the dramatic works of Boileau are a classical example. Organic unity, on the other hand, results from the harmonious expression of an idea, of a word made flesh, as, for instance, the "Parsifal" of Wagner.

Mechanical unity, being expressive of no idea, may perfectly well result from anonymous collaboration, supposing the formula to be equally accessible to all the workers, but organic unity, like the idea which informs it, is necessarily the creation of an individual. For ideas are of the individual.

The modern state, resulting as it does from anonymous collaboration, expresses no idea; its unity is therefore only mechanical, arising from the juxtaposition, not the fusion, of its components; for, herds of men can only be fused into the organic unity of a nation by the philosopher's stone of politics, an Idea, a word becoming flesh in a nation, its necessary social expression. Such were the great Assyrian and Egyptian dynasties, the Jewish Theocracy, and in its purer days, the French Monarchy, with its significant war-cry, "Gesta Dei per Francos."

It is by incarnation that an idea becomes an ideal, and without ideals neither nations nor men can live. In the pages of "Compromise" Mr. John Morley bitterly laments the lack of idealism in contemporary English politics, but, with the elaborate short-sightedness so characteristic of his greater master, Mill, he fails to see its antecedent.

But it is not my intention to dwell on the political results of the Revolution, which have been abundantly and minutely

set forth by Taine. So much as has been said was, however, a necessary prelude to the estimate of its effects in the spiritual domain.

Without such an estimate, it is wholly impossible to appreciate the mystical movement of to-day, or, in any degree, to determine what permanent value underlies its manifestations, often grotesque, sometimes contemptible. France is a better field for the consideration of such effects than England, for France, besides being the original home of the Revolution, is a sort of moral forcing-house for ideas ; while Englishmen are still tinkering at a theory and endeavouring to reduce it to some impotent truism with which the British elector shall feel quite at home, Frenchmen have reached its final expression in their national life and literature.

The best part of a nation's soul betrays itself in its art, for a national art is an attempt to eternise the types held worthy of admiration by the spiritual leaders of a people. The supreme art of Frenchmen is their prose. Should the Latin Decadence issue fatally, the French tongue will live for ever as the third great classical language. There has been a special reason for its development during this and the last century—the appearance of a new literary type, the man of letters, whom, as Mr. Morley has pointed out, the future historian will find to have been the one original creation of the times. There were great brigands before Napoleon, there were political *condottieri* before Boulanger, there were Tribunes of the People before Marx and Lasalle, there were no professional men of letters before the Fathers of the Encyclopædia. Originating with Voltaire, Diderot and D'Alembert, the type, checked in development by the outbreak of the Revolution which needed letters as little as chemistry,\* and by the Philistine militarism of the First Consul, arrived at maturity in the person of Renan, who was also a complete embodiment of the effects of the Revolution in spiritual matters. It is important that we should face the truth about this man. He raised opportunism to the dignity of an idea ; he was the Vautrin of the intellect ;

\* Lavoisier was brutally told that the Republic did not need chemists.



his influence reigned supreme for forty years among the majority which, incapable of honest introspection, accepts the dicta of the superior person in the place of genuine experience. For the modern man of letters reigns by his prestige due to the skill with which he re-presents to his readers their current ideas. A practical man of talent, he shows us that part of ourself, that we at once recognise, crowned with the flowers of his rhetoric, and, seduced by the implied compliment, we acclaim him. The Genius, the creative artist, the "intuitive by love," shows us those depths of ourself that seem strange and foreign to us, but of which we dimly guess the existence, when passion or insight wears threadbare for a moment the smooth lustre of our daily habit ; of such moments we are ashamed, and, irritated at the vision of a genius, proceed to decry him.

The work of Renan was to turn religion into religiosity, but he was, after all, but one, though the chief, of a group. It was the task of Zola to apply to the criticism of contemporary life, by means of the experimental novel, the gospel traced by Renan in the "Avenir de la Science." *L'homme métaphysique est mort*, was Zola's text, and with metaphysics were to be buried religion and mysticism of every kind. The ὄδος ἄνω was to be turned into a blind alley where rubbish might be shot. The experimental novel professed to depict life as perceptible, in its more general aspects, to the senses, with a minimum of ideation. An admirer of Zola recently pointed jubilantly to the fact that the number of copies issued of the Rougon-Macquart series would, if piled one on the other, overtop the Eiffel Tower, and the school has, in fact, found its success rather in the quantity than in the quality of its work. This judgment may seem too sweeping, and several masterpieces produced by writers of the school will occur to the reader, but it will appear on closer examination that the works of the naturalist school possessing supreme literary quality, have, in reality, whatever their label, been conceived outside the formula of naturalism. They are at most the brilliant heresies of a very dull and pedantic orthodoxy. They deal either with types unreal in themselves, as the superb "La Faustin"

of Edmond de Goncourt, or the thread of circumstances, through which the story progresses, is abnormal in a high degree, as in Zola's "Bête Humaine," in which coincidences are forced to an extent rarely attempted by the most audacious romanticist. Flaubert, the greatest of the so-called naturalist masters, could never destroy the romantic and mystical side of his nature to which he gave a free rein in "Salammbô," and the "Tentation de St. Antoine." He is quite as romantic, that is, as *unreal*, in "Madame Bovary." The Emma Bovarys whom we know do not commit suicide, they are a plague to their husbands and every one connected with them for a certain time, and in the end usually become *dévotés* of a low order.

Perhaps the finest work produced in the domain of pure naturalism has been Joris-Karl Huysmans' "Sœurs Vatard," published in 1879. But Huysmans was not to remain a naturalist. In 1884, "À Rebours" sounded the note, not so much of reaction as of revolt, emphasised in 1893 by "Là Bas." The first chapter of this powerful and lurid book contains the judicial process of naturalism.

The evidence is summed up and judgment pronounced justly enough, though not without the touch of bitterness proverbially attributed to perverts with regard to the church of their baptism. Huysmans is not alone. Paul Verlaine in "Sagesse," "Impénitence Finale," "Crimen Amoris," and many other well known *chef-d'œuvres*, has given sublime expression to the Catholic Mythos. In a few verses of incomparable perfection, Stéphane Mallarmé sings a no less exalted mysticism. It is needless to enumerate a list of names doubtless well known to the reader, as space does not permit detailed criticism of the work connected with them; it may be enough to state here that, whether decadent or symbolist, neo-catholic or neo-buddhist, contemporary schools of French literature unite in being uncompromisingly anti-naturalist.\* The young Frenchmen of to-day look for inspiration rather to the earlier work of

\* An exception must be made in favour of the strong work of J. H. Rosny, who seems to be the only serious writer of the new generation professing adherence to the old methods.

Victor Hugo, to Baudelaire, to Villiers-de-l'Isle-Adam, and to Barbey d'Aurevilly, who said of his generation that, if he were not already a Catholic by conviction, he would become one in order to have a place of vantage, *d'où cracher sur ces gens-là*.

Naturalism, then, has only saved itself in the proportion in which it has been unfaithful to its formula—that is, it has failed. But note the far-reaching implications of its failure. The experimental novel was not presented to us as one among many possible literary modes (its rise and decline would then have possessed only a technical and historical interest for the literary student), but as the interlinear artistic translation of the text of life as conceived by the “scientific organisers.” If the experimental novel has failed, it is because they have not succeeded. This great literary experiment has, in fact, reduced to the absurd the “philosophic” pretensions on which it was based. A fine naturalistic novel, in the strict sense of the word, is an impossibility, because natural science alone can no more “organise” human life than knowledge of the chemical constituents of colours can make a man an art critic.

The new spirit which breathes in so much of the best contemporary work is so widely diffused that it does not escape the dangers attaching to fashion. Many a contemporary “neo-catholic,” and “neo-buddhist” regards his soul as one among other picturesque poses for his temperament. There will be moments when a Faun will replace St. Francis as the “symbol” of his longings. A specimen of this kind of thing is Mr. John Davidson's “Ballad of a Nun,” the more regrettable that Mr. Davidson has shown himself capable of no ordinary work. Here the Faun is clothed indeed in the religious habit, but the garb is irksome, and the best part of the poem, the part in which we enjoy thoroughly artistic expression, is when the robe of penance is hastily twitched up to the shaggy knee and the hoofed feet merrily twinkle in a dance—symbolic? Yes, and we know too well of what. For such “mysticism” as this a whole-souled person can feel nothing but sorrow. This may lead us to the consideration of another danger to

which the new movement is exposed. Any new form of thought inevitably appears at first as the negation of the immediately preceding form. It is only when the first effervescence has passed away, when we come to see—with grief, unless we are philosophers—that the face of the world seems little changed by the soul-compelling beauty of our personal vision, that we realise the dependence of our ideas on their historical antecedents, and that we are, in fact, our father's sons. So we proceed to develop and assimilate where, at first, we had scornfully denied. The present movement inevitably appears as a reaction against science. In reality, however, it is no reaction against science as such, a proceeding which would be as ridiculous as it would be futile, but only against that false estimate of the scope of the "natural" sciences, as the supreme and only means by which, in the words of Condorcet, right judgment was to become an "almost universal quality, so that the habitual state of men throughout a nation should be to be led by truth, to submit in conduct to the rules of morality, feeding on sweet and pure sentiments." And the good but mistaken man added: "This is the point to which the labours of genius and the progress of light must infallibly conduct us." Such promises have duped us, and some of those who realise how they have been beguiled are disposed to execrate the very name of their deceiver. But we should not forget, on the one hand, that these illusory assurances were not contained in the simple solemn utterances of the oracle itself, but rather in the glosses added by its overzealous ministers, and, on the other, that psychology need not cease to be a science because physiological methods of investigation are insufficient for it.

For the sake of their own stability and permanence, the leaders of the present movement cannot take refuge from materialism by running their heads into the sand of irresponsible fantasy, nor can they afford to lose hold of the truth contained in, even if inadequately expressed by, naturalism, which has inserted in our very marrow a passion for exactitude. The romantic elegy, with its humanity *de dessus de pendule*, is no longer possible; no system, philo-

sophical or religious, that has not a real application to life, as it is in its humblest and most elementary details, has the remotest chance of success. The problem of modern thought remains what it has always been, namely, to "synthetise the here or real of antiquity with the hereafter or ideal of mediævalism," and both these elements must appear in any attempted solution. We must not shrink in disgust from naturalism ; we must go through it to what lies beyond, to what people who dislike the word supernatural may perhaps be willing to call ultranatural. For the famous controversy which, to many, even to-day, is beginning to have but a historical interest, is, after all, only a matter of terms.

No serious theologian really holds "miracles" to represent the caprices of the Eternal Mind. We all remember the story, quoted by Newman, of the old priest who, in spite of repeated correction, persisted in saying, "Quod ore mumpsimus" instead of "sumpsimus," when taking the ablution at Mass. His "mumpsimus," he insisted, was as good as his corrector's "sumpsimus." And no doubt it was. What is vital and essential to recognise is that mysticism is no sickly delusion of this or that morbid individual, but as real a part of the experience of man as the nervous system. It may be defined as the reduction to the emotional modality of the highest concept of the intellect, or, more briefly, the habit of the love of God.

So far from being a delusion it is one of the most exact sciences. To suggest a parallel—the unlearned music-lover rejoices in what is to his consciousness the pleasant sensation of his favourite art, he revels in simple, physical pleasure, and at most transfers it to the sentimental nerve centres.

"For do but note a wild and wanton herd,  
 Or race of youthful and unhandled colts,  
 Fetching mad bounds, bellowing, and neighing loud,  
 Which is the hot condition of their blood ;  
 If they but hear perchance a trumpet sound,  
 Or any air of music touch their ears,  
 You shall perceive them make a mutual stand,  
 Their savage eyes turned to a modest gaze,  
 By the sweet power of music." *Merchant of Venice.*

Yet there is no art of which the expression is governed by such rigid laws ; an exact mathematical structure underlies the wailing so human, as we say, of the violins. Mystical science is the counterpoint of the soul's symphony : *Ascensiones in corde suo disposuit*. Man's approach to God is regulated by the strictest laws, and follows a true mathematical curve. This is equally true conversely of the man who has put these things behind him and deliberately drowns his spirit in his instinctive life. Final impenitence is not so easy, and by no means to be reached until the necessarily intervening stages have been painfully and laboriously passed through. He was an amateur theologian, if a great poet, who sang of the "easy descent of Hell." The professional touch is surer. The Prophet tells us that "the way of the transgressor is hard."

The great mystics, then, are not maniacs revelling in individual fantasies ; they have but developed, to the full extent of their power, tendencies existing, in germ at least, in all normally developed men of all time. For the science of union with God is not the monopoly of any religion, though some may bring to it a more exact terminology, and may possess vaster resources with which to stimulate and direct its development than others. It is furthermore difficult to trace, in the lives of the great mystics, any operation of the laws of heredity or environment that usually govern human expression. They are philosophers, as Plotinus and St. Denys ; ignorant hermits, as Ruysbröck ; unlettered women, as St. Theresa or St. Catherine. They live in modern Paris or mediæval England, or the story of their lives can be but faintly discerned through the rich web of Eastern tradition ; they are legends of the past, they travel in our railway carriages with us to-day. And yet, in spite of the dissimilarity of their origins, there is a wonderful unanimity in their teaching. I cannot do better than quote an instance of this given by Maeterlink, in his preface to Ruysbröck's "L'Ornement des Noces Spirituelles" : "Ruysbröck distinguishes three kinds of lives : the active, the internal, and the superessential. The Gnostics distinguish between the spirit, the soul, and the material

life, and divide men into three classes: the pneumatic, or spiritual; the psychic, or *animiques*; and the hylic, or material. Plotinus also distinguishes in the soul the intelligence, the reasonable soul, and the animal nature. The Zohar distinguishes between spirit, soul, and life of the senses; and, in both systems, as in Ruysbröck, the relation of the three principles is explained by a *procession* compared to an irradiation followed by the theory of the Divine meeting: God entering us from within outwards, we going to him from without inwards, &c." The words of the mystics never grow old. No religion, as has been said above, has the monopoly of mysticism, for a system of life is only religious in so far as it is mystical. A professed religion which should fall short of mysticism would be at best a system of high ethics of more or less psychological value, according to the accuracy of the observations on which it might be based. When the religious evolution of man was crowned by the Incarnation of the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, mysticism received the countersign of that tremendous Mystery. The law of the human spirit's approach to God was not altered. Cleanness of heart was no new condition for the Blessed Vision. The Christian Church has given us additional motives and sanctions, and, in the central doctrine of Christ's Mediation, a remedy, at once, for sinfulness and moral helplessness, while the sacramental system, culminating in the Mass, supplies a divinely efficacious hygiene of the soul; but the soul's personal ascent to God can follow no other path than that traced for it by its own intimate constitution.

It was the fashion in the last century among superficial critics of religion, and remains so among their descendants to-day, to regard the magnificent debates which agitated the early Christian Church as so many examples of the perverse and futile subtlety of the decadent Greek intellect. A naïve appeal to common sense has always been the beloved disguise of a certain kind of obscurantist. Yet the early heresies were by no means in the first place intellectual theories, they were primarily mystical; their theories being formed to meet their emotional require-

ments, being, in this, inverse instances of the law of theological development, *Lex orandi, lex credendi*. There was comparatively little difference, so far as theoretical statement went, between the religion of Bardesanes of Edessa and Catholicism; yet who does not see that the motive-power of the schismatic Gnostic was pride resulting in a scornful isolation from the multitudes plunged in "hylic" darkness, whereas Catholicism is nothing if not the religion of universal love? The God-idea and not the Self-idea being in the Christian scheme the centre of the soul's mystical periphery (from which it follows that love, not knowledge, is the primary condition of Christian mysticism), heresy may be defined as a centrifugal tendency of the human spirit which in reaction tends to replace the true centre God by the false centre self. The idea under which this tendency is disguised, varies indefinitely from Arius to Luther, but the tendency is always the same; like the evil spirit in the Gospel story its *name* is Legion. More than this, the particular doctrine under which the heretical tendency succeeds at one time in disguising itself, though false at the time in its strained relation to the whole body of truth, may, at a future date, when reduced to its proper relation, be assimilated by Catholic theology, and become a legitimate and guaranteed form of expression of the truth. "Thus Christianity grew in its proportions, gaining aliment and medicine from all that it came near, yet preserving its original type, from its perception and its love of what had been revealed once for all, and was no private imagination" (Newman, "Development of Christian Doctrine," p. 359). The original basis of Christianity was then perception and love, aliment and medicine, in other words dogmatic expansion, and ever increasing clearness and correctness of theoretic statement came largely from its contact with its environment. Not only the Hebrew Scriptures, but the whole religious experience of man forms the subject-matter out of which the Church elaborates in the light of the Incarnation, according to the needs of the ages, her dogmatic system. To it Plato has contributed as well as Moses. The beloved disciple of Jesus wrote his Gospel in



the language of a Platonician, and his Apocalypse in the symbolism of the Kabbala. Yet the eagle of mystical truth was not to be the Vicar of Christ. That high office was reserved for the Apostle who in the moment of trial had denied his Lord with an oath. These things are significant. Our religion, regarded from the point of view of historical development, is the fulfilment and completion of Judaism; but from the point of view of mental development it is seen to be the fulfilment of very much more. The Areopagite did not cease to be a Platonist when he became a Christian; the greater part of the *Divine Names* might have been written by Plotinus. It was partly the very identity of aim, and partly the more immediate devotional needs of the youthful Church requiring dogma for their expression, that kept the Alexandrian Neoplatonists aliens from the Christian organisation. The sacred fire, relighted by Plotinus, Porphyry and Jamblichus, was to pass into the veins of the great rival of Neoplatonism, the inheritor, according to ancient promise, of the ends of the earth. Justin Martyr, the first of the philosophic Fathers, sees in Socrates a manifestation of the Logos, and expounds the doctrines of the fall of man, freedom of the will, and regeneration in Platonist terms; and St. Clement of Alexandria finally baptized the permanent truth contained in the Platonic traditions.

Apart from the interest of the subject for those who themselves would "live the life," apart also from its historical value as a momentous chapter of the book of human experience, the study of mysticism is especially necessary for those who concern themselves with the analysis of human consciousness. The desire for ecstasy is at the very root and heart of our nature. This craving, when bound down by the animal instincts, meets us on every side in those hateful contortions of the social organism called the dram-shop and the brothel. It is needless to point out its connection with art, and even with the most abstract processes of philosophic thought. Human life is informed at every stage by this desire of ecstasy, of self-escape into something higher. Mysticism alone affords to those favoured beings who are

competent in brain and will for its ardours a true and lasting realisation of this desire. Neither the sensual nor the sentimental life can do so, for nature or society constantly throws us by illnesses or laws on the hither or farther side of its perfect realisation. In the Divine Life alone, whether of the metaphysical intellect, or of the love of God, are we sure of ultimate success. There are no organic resistances in the world of the Eternal. The famous words of St. Augustine do but express the elementary law of psychology: "Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our hearts faint until they find Thee." Mysticism, then, places in the clear relief of logical and final expression this important law of our nature. And this is much. But it does more also. Our consciousness replies to the touch of a God, as it does to no other stimulus, sentimental or passional. At the Divine call the soul yields up her dearest secrets.

It is otherwise with the phenomena of sexual love, which seem to have been thought by the naturalists to contain the whole gamut of psychological possibility. And this for two main reasons. Firstly, because the stimulus of desire, the transformation of which into unselfish love is never anything but the transient delusion of the imagination, leaves the depths of our nature unexplored, so that what looks like clarity is often nothing but shallowness; and, secondly, on account of the attitude of ruse and sex-combat utterly confusing the real issues involved, which the inherited laws of our species impose on these phenomena as their vital condition. More can be learnt of the intricacies of our interior life, of the inter-connection and mutual dependence of "psychic states," from St. Theresa or St. Catherine than from Zola or Wundt. It is as though our soul were a parchment which only reveals the tiniest wrinkles and scratches on its surface when stretched and strained to the uttermost by the Divine Hand.

The Dialogue of Saint Catherine of Siena, which is here offered to the English reader for the first time in his own language, was dictated to her secretaries by the Saint in

ecstasy. Apart from the extraordinary circumstances of its production, this work has a special interest.

The composition of the Siennese dyer's daughter, whose will, purified and sublimated by prayer, imposed itself on Popes and Princes, is an almost unique specimen of what may be called "ecclesiastical" mysticism. A word of explanation will render clear the writer's meaning.

Most of the great mystics, such as Tauler, Suso, St. John of the Cross, consider the ecclesiastical dogmata as granted, and concern themselves but little with the *loci theologici* of their doctrine. To their introverted vision the varied rays of theological expression are fused in the white heat of the Godhead directly contemplated. Not indeed that they are in any sense of the word un-Catholic, but that being occupied almost exclusively with the sublime as distinguished from the ordinary processes of the spiritual life, their terminology is as special as the experiences they attempt to relate are abnormal.

Catholic dogma, on the other hand, is the collective form of truth necessary for the salvation of all, and therefore stated in terms intelligible to all, developed in expression through the ages of the Church's existence, proposed on her supreme and ever-present authority, and ratified to us by the perpetual "assistance" of the promised Paraclete.

The last verse of that magnificent hymn which we mis-call the Athanasian Creed contains the proposition (to be received of course with the limitations necessarily belonging to such a composition) that without the Catholic Faith no man can be saved. But a man may very well be saved without understanding a single word of St. John of the Cross.

The special value of St. Catherine's "Dialogo," lies in the fact that from first to last it is nothing more than a mystical exposition of the creeds taught to every child in the Catholic poor-schools. The saint's insight penetrates every turn of the well-worn path that we must all humbly tread until we reach the last point of solid earth whence we can take flight into the Platonic Æther where subject and object are one in the Ineffable Essence. And wonderful that insight

sometimes is ; how subtle the analysis of the state of the "worldly man" who loves God for his own pleasure or profit ! The special snares of the devout are cut through by the keen logic of one who has experienced and triumphed over them. Terrible, again, is the retribution prophesied to the "unworthy ministers of the Blood."

And so every well-known form of Christian life, healthy or parasitic, is treated of, detailed, analysed incisively, remorselessly, and then subsumed under the general conception of God's infinite loving-kindness and mercy.

The great mystics having usually taken as their starting-point what to most is the goal hardly to be reached, their own treatment of the preliminary stages of spirituality is frequently conventional and jejune. Compare, for instance, the first book with the two succeeding ones, of Ruysbröck's "Ornement des Noces Spirituelles," that unique breviary of the Christian Platonician. Another result of their having done so is that, with certain noble exceptions, the literature of this subject has fallen into the hands of a class of writers, or rather purveyors, well intentioned, no doubt, but not endowed with the higher spiritual or mental faculties, whom it is not unfair to describe as the *feuilletonistes* of piety. Such works, brightly bound, are appropriately exposed for sale in the Roman shop windows, among the gaudy *objets de religion* they so much resemble. To keep healthy and raise the tone of devotional literature is surely an eighth spiritual work of mercy. St. Philip Neri's advice in the matter was to prefer those writers whose names were preceded by the title of Saint. In the "Dialogo" we have a great saint, one of the most extraordinary women who ever lived, treating, in a manner so simple and familiar, at times, as to become almost colloquial, of the elements of practical Christianity. Passages occur frequently of lofty eloquence and also of such literary perfection that this book is held by critics to be one of the classics of the age and land which produced Boccaccio and Petrarch. To-day in the streets of Siena the same Tuscan idiom can be heard, hardly altered since the days of St. Catherine.

Of the Saint's public life this is not the place to speak,

and her interior life, in such of its stages as she was permitted to reveal, is amply detailed in the following pages. Readers who are interested in her "legend" will find the matter admirably treated in Augusta Theodosia Drane's "History of St. Catherine of Siena," the only English life of the Saint written with any comprehension of the subject ; but historical knowledge of St. Catherine has little to do with the science to be learnt from her mystical experiences.

One word as to the translation. I have almost always followed the text of Gigli, a learned Siennese ecclesiastic, who edited the complete works of St. Catherine in the last century. His is the latest edition printed of the "Dialogo." Once or twice I have preferred the *cinquecento* Venetian editor. My aim has been to translate as literally as possible, and at the same time to preserve the characteristic rythm of the sentences so suggestive in its way of the sing-song articulation of the Siennese of to-day. St. Catherine has no style as such ; she introduces a metaphor and forgets it ; the sea, a vine, and a plough will often appear in the same sentence, sometimes in the same phrase. In such cases I have occasionally taken the liberty of adhering to the first simile when the confusion of metaphor in the original involves hopeless obscurity of expression.

*April 30, 1895.*

*Feast of St. Catherine of Siena.*



THE  
DIALOGUE OF ST. CATHERINE  
OF SIENA.

CHAPTER I.

A TREATISE OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE

How a soul, elevated by desire of the honour of God, and of the salvation of her neighbours, exercising herself in humble prayer, after she had seen the union of the soul, through love, with God, asked of God four requests.

THE soul, who is lifted by a very great and yearning desire for the honour of God and the salvation of souls, begins by exercising herself, for a certain space of time, in the ordinary virtues, remaining in the cell of self-knowledge, in order to know better the goodness of God towards her. This she does because knowledge must precede love, and only when she has attained love, can she strive to follow and to clothe herself with the truth. But, in no way, does the creature receive such a taste of the truth, or so brilliant a light therefrom, as by means of humble and continuous prayer, founded on knowledge of herself and of God; because prayer, exercising her in the above way, unites with God the soul that follows the footprints of Christ Crucified, and thus, by desire and affection, and union of love, makes her another Himself. Christ would seem to have meant this, when He said: *To him who will love Me and will observe My commandment, will I manifest Myself; and he shall be one thing with Me and I with him.* In several places we find similar words, by which we can see that it is, indeed, through the effect of love, that the soul becomes another Himself. That this may be seen more

clearly, I will mention what I remember having heard from a handmaid of God, namely, that, when she was lifted up in prayer, with great elevation of mind, God was not wont to conceal, from the eye of her intellect, the love which He had for His servants, but rather to manifest it ; and, that among other things, He used to say : “ Open the eye of thy intellect, and gaze into Me, and thou shalt see the beauty of My rational creature. And look at those creatures who, among the beauties which I have given to the soul, creating her in My image and similitude, are clothed with the nuptial garment (that is the garment of love), adorned with many virtues, by which they are united with Me through love. And yet I tell thee, if thou shouldst ask Me, who these are, I should reply” (said the sweet and amorous Word of God) “ they are another Myself, inasmuch as they have lost and denied their own will, and are clothed with Mine, are united to Mine, are conformed to Mine.” It is therefore true, indeed, that the soul unites herself with God by the affection of love.

So, that soul, wishing to know and follow the truth more manfully, and lifting her desires first for herself—for she considered that a soul could not be of use, whether in doctrine, example, or prayer, to her neighbour, if she did not first profit herself, that is, if she did not acquire virtue in herself—addressed four requests to the Supreme and Eternal Father. The first was for herself ; the second for the reformation of the Holy Church ; the third a general prayer for the whole world, and in particular for the peace of Christians who rebel, with much lewdness and persecution, against the Holy Church ; in the fourth and last, she besought the Divine Providence to provide for things in general, and in particular, for a certain case with which she was concerned.



## CHAPTER II

How the desire of this soul grew when God showed her the neediness of the world.

THIS desire was great and continuous, but grew much more, when the First Truth showed her the neediness of the world, and in what a tempest of offence against God it lay. And she had understood this the better from a letter, which she had received from the spiritual Father of her soul, in which he explained to her the penalties and intolerable dolour caused by offences against God, and the loss of souls, and the persecutions of Holy Church.

All this lighted the fire of her holy desire with grief for the offences, and with the joy of the lively hope, with which she waited for God to provide against such great evils. And, since the soul seems, in such communion, sweetly to bind herself fast within herself and with God, and knows better His truth, inasmuch as the soul is then in God, and God in the soul, as the fish is in the sea, and the sea in the fish, she desired the arrival of the morning (for the morrow was a feast of Mary) in order to hear Mass. And, when the morning came, and the hour of the Mass, she sought with anxious desire her accustomed place; and, with a great knowledge of herself, being ashamed of her own imperfection, appearing to herself to be the cause of all the evil that was happening throughout the world, conceiving a hatred and displeasure against herself, and a feeling of holy justice, with which knowledge, hatred, and justice, she purified the stains which seemed to her to cover her guilty soul, she said: "O Eternal Father, I accuse myself before Thee, in order that Thou mayest punish me for my sins in this finite life, and, inasmuch as my sins are the cause of the sufferings which my neighbour must endure, I implore Thee, in Thy kindness, to punish them in my person."

## CHAPTER III.

How finite works are not sufficient for punishment or recompense without the perpetual affection of love.

THEN, the Eternal Truth, seized and drew more strongly to Himself her desire, doing as He did in the Old Testament, for when the sacrifice was offered to God, a fire descended and drew to Him the sacrifice that was acceptable to Him ; so did the sweet Truth to that soul, in sending down the fire of the clemency of the Holy Spirit, seizing the sacrifice of desire that she made of herself, saying : “ Dost thou not know, dear daughter, that all the sufferings, which the soul endures, or can endure, in this life, are insufficient to punish one smallest fault, because the offence, being done to Me, who am the Infinite Good, calls for an infinite satisfaction ? However, I wish that thou shouldest know, that not all the pains that are given to men in this life are given as punishments, but as corrections, in order to chastise a son when he offends ; though it is true that both the guilt and the penalty can be expiated by the desire of the soul, that is, by true contrition, not through the finite pain endured, but through the infinite desire ; because God, Who is infinite, wishes for infinite love and infinite grief. Infinite grief I wish from My creature in two ways : in one way, through her sorrow for her own sins, which she has committed against Me her Creator ; in the other way, through her sorrow for the sins which she sees her neighbours commit against Me. Of such as these, inasmuch as they have infinite desire, that is, are joined to me by an affection of love, and therefore grieve when they offend Me, or see Me offended, their every pain, whether spiritual or corporeal, from wherever it may come, receives infinite merit, and satisfies for a guilt which deserved an infinite penalty, although their works are finite and done in finite time ; but, inasmuch as they possess the virtue of desire, and sustain their suffering with desire, and contrition, and infinite displeasure against their guilt, their pain is held worthy. Paul explained

this when he said : *If I had the tongues of angels, and if I knew the things of the future and gave my body to be burned, and have not love, it would be worth nothing to me.* The glorious Apostle thus shows that finite works are not valid, either as punishment or recompense, without the condiment of the affection of love."

#### CHAPTER IV.

How desire and contrition of heart satisfies, both for the guilt and the penalty in oneself and in others; and how sometimes it satisfies for the guilt only, and not the penalty.

"I HAVE shown thee, dearest daughter, that the guilt is not punished in this finite time by any pain which is sustained purely as such. And I say, that the guilt is punished by the pain which is endured through the desire, love, and contrition of the heart ; not by virtue of the pain, but by virtue of the desire of the soul ; inasmuch as desire and every virtue is of value, and has life in itself, through Christ crucified, My only begotten Son, in so far as the soul has drawn her love from Him, and virtuously follows His virtues, that is His Footprints. In this way, and, in no other, are virtues of value, and in this way, pains satisfy for the fault, by the sweet and intimate love acquired in the knowledge of My goodness, and in the bitterness and contrition of heart acquired by knowledge of one's self and one's own thoughts. And this knowledge generates a hatred and displeasure against sin, and against the soul's own sensuality, through which, she deems herself worthy of pains and unworthy of reward."

The sweet Truth continued : " See how, by contrition of the heart, together with love, with true patience, and with true humility, deeming themselves worthy of pain and unworthy of reward, such souls endure the patient humility in which consists the above-mentioned satisfaction. Thou askest me, then, for pains, so that I may receive satisfaction

for the offences, which are done against Me by My creatures, and thou further askest the will to know and love Me, Who am the Supreme Truth. Wherefore I reply that this is the way, if thou wilt arrive at a perfect knowledge and enjoyment of Me, the Eternal Truth, that thou shouldest never go outside the knowledge of thyself, and, by humbling thyself in the valley of humility, thou wilt know Me and thyself, from which knowledge thou wilt draw all that is necessary. No virtue, my daughter, can have life in itself except through charity and humility, which is the foster-mother and nurse of charity. In self-knowledge, then, thou wilt humble thyself, seeing that, in thyself, thou dost not even exist ; for thy very being, as thou wilt learn, is derived from Me, since I have loved both thee and others before you were in existence ; and that, through the ineffable love which I had for you, wishing to re-create you to Grace, I have washed you, and re-created you in the Blood of My only Begotten Son, spilt with so great a fire of love. This Blood teaches the truth to him, who, by self-knowledge, dissipates the cloud of self-love, and in no other way can he learn. Then the soul will inflame herself in this knowledge of Me with an ineffable love, through which love she continues in constant pain ; not, however, a pain which afflicts or dries up the soul, but one which rather fattens her ; for since she has known My truth, and her own faults, and the ingratitude of men, she endures intolerable suffering, grieving because she loves Me ; for, if she did not love Me, she would not be obliged to do so ; whence it follows immediately, that it is right for thee, and my other servants who have learnt My truth in this way, to sustain, even unto death, many tribulations and injuries and insults in word and deed, for the glory and praise of My Name ; thus wilt thou endure and suffer pains. Do thou, therefore, and My other servants, carry yourselves with true patience, with grief for your sins, and with love of virtue for the glory and praise of My Name. If thou actest thus, I will satisfy for thy sins, and for those of My other servants, inasmuch as the pains which thou wilt endure will be sufficient, through the virtue of love, for satisfaction

and reward, both in thee and in others. In thyself thou wilt receive the fruit of life, when the stains of thy ignorance are effaced, and I shall not remember that thou ever didst offend Me. In others I will satisfy through the love and affection which thou hast to Me, and I will give to them according to the disposition with which they will receive My gifts. In particular, to those who dispose themselves, humbly and with reverence, to receive the doctrine of My servants, will I remit both guilt and penalty, since they will thus come to true knowledge and contrition for their sins. So that, by means of prayer, and their desire of serving Me, they receive the fruit of grace, receiving it humbly in greater or less degree, according to the extent of their exercise of virtue and grace in general. I say then, that, through thy desires, they will receive remission for their sins. See, however, the condition, namely, that their obstinacy should not be so great in their despair as to condemn them through contempt of the Blood, Which, with such sweetness, has restored them.

“What fruit do they receive ?

“The fruit which I destine for them, constrained by the prayers of My servants, is that I give them light, and that I wake up in them the hound of conscience, and make them smell the odour of virtue, and take delight in the conversation of My servants.

“Sometimes I allow the world to show them what it is, so that, feeling its diverse and various passions, they may know how little stability it has, and may come to lift their desire beyond it, and seek their native country, which is the Eternal Life. And so I draw them by these, and by many other ways, for the eye cannot see, nor the tongue relate, nor the heart think, how many are the roads and ways which I use, through love alone, to lead them back to grace, so that My truth may be fulfilled in them. I am constrained to do so by that inestimable love of Mine, by which I created them, and by the love, desire, and grief of My servants, since I am no despiser of their tears, and sweat, and humble prayers ; rather I accept them, inasmuch as I am He who give them this love for the good of souls and

grief for their loss. But I do not, in general, grant to these others, for whom they pray, satisfaction for the penalty due to them, but, only for their guilt, since they are not disposed, on their side, to receive, with perfect love, My love, and that of My servants. They do not receive their grief with bitterness, and perfect contrition for the sins they have committed, but with imperfect love and contrition, wherefore they have not, as others, remission of the penalty, but only of the guilt ; because such complete satisfaction requires proper dispositions on both sides, both in him that gives and him that receives. Wherefore, since they are imperfect, they receive imperfectly the perfection of the desires of those who offer them to Me, for their sakes, with suffering ; and, inasmuch as I told thee that they do receive remission, this is indeed the truth, that, by that way which I have told thee, that is, by the light of conscience, and by other things, satisfaction is made for their guilt ; for, beginning to learn, they vomit forth the corruption of their sins, and so receive the gift of grace.

“ These are they who are in a state of ordinary charity, wherefore, if they have trouble, they receive it in the guise of correction, and do not resist over much the clemency of the Holy Spirit, but, coming out of their sin, they receive the life of grace. But if, like fools, they are ungrateful, and ignore Me and the labours of My servants done for them, that which was given them, through mercy, turns to their own ruin and judgment, not through defect of mercy, nor through defect of him who implored the mercy for the ingrate, but solely through the man’s own wretchedness and hardness, with which, with the hands of his free will, he has covered his heart, as it were, with a diamond, which, if it be not broken by the Blood, can in no way be broken. And yet, I say to thee, that, in spite of his hardness of heart, he can use his free will while he has time, praying for the Blood of My Son, and let him with his own hand apply It to the diamond over his heart and shiver it, and he will receive the imprint of the Blood Which has been paid for him. But, if he delays until the time be past, he has no remedy, because he has not used the dowry

which I gave him, giving him memory so as to remember my benefits, intellect, so as to see and know the truth, affection, so that he should love Me, the Eternal Truth, Whom he would have known through the use of his intellect. This is the dowry which I have given you all, and which ought to render fruit to Me, the Father ; but, if a man barter and sells it to the devil, the devil, if he choose, has a right to seize on everything that he has acquired in this life. And, filling his memory with the delights of sin, and with the recollection of shameful pride, avarice, self-love, hatred, and unkindness to his neighbours (being also a persecutor of My servants), with these miseries, he has obscured his intellect by his disordinate will. Let such as these receive the eternal pains, with their horrible stench, inasmuch as they have not satisfied for their sins with contrition and displeasure of their guilt. Now, therefore, thou hast understood how suffering satisfies for guilt by perfect contrition, not through the finite pain ; and such as have this contrition in perfection satisfy not only for the guilt, but also for the penalty which follows the guilt, as I have already said when speaking in general ; and if they satisfy for the guilt alone, that is, if, having abandoned mortal sin, they receive grace, and have not sufficient contrition and love to satisfy for the penalty also, they go to the pains of Purgatory, passing through the second and last means of satisfaction.

“ So thou seest that satisfaction is made, through the desire of the soul united to Me, Who am the Infinite Good, in greater or less degree, according to the measure of love, obtained by the desire and prayer of the recipient. Wherefore, with that very same measure with which a man measures to Me, does he receive in himself the measure of My goodness. Labour, therefore, to increase the fire of thy desire, and let not a moment pass without crying to Me with humble voice, or without continual prayers before Me for thy neighbours. I say this to thee and to the father of thy soul, whom I have given thee on earth. Bear yourselves with manful courage, and make yourselves dead to all your own sensuality.”

## CHAPTER V.

How very pleasing to God is the willing desire to suffer for Him.

“VERY pleasing to Me, dearest daughter, is the willing desire to bear every pain and fatigue, even unto death, for the salvation of souls, for the more the soul endures, the more she shows that she loves Me; loving Me she comes to know more of My truth, and the more she knows, the more pain and intolerable grief she feels at the offences committed against Me. Thou didst ask Me to sustain thee, and to punish the faults of others in thee, and thou didst not remark that thou wast really asking for love, light, and knowledge of the truth, since I have already told thee that, by the increase of love, grows grief and pain, wherefore he that grows in love grows in grief. Therefore, I say to you all, that you should ask, and it will be given you, for I deny nothing to him who asks of Me in truth. Consider that the love of divine charity is so closely joined in the soul with perfect patience, that neither can leave the soul without the other. For this reason (if the soul elect to love Me) she should elect to endure pains for Me in whatever mode or circumstance I may send them to her. Patience cannot be proved in any other way than by suffering, and patience is united with love as has been said. Therefore bear yourselves with manly courage, for, unless you do so, you will not prove yourselves to be spouses of My Truth, and faithful children, nor of the company of those who relish the taste of My honour, and the salvation of souls.”

## CHAPTER VI.

How every virtue and every defect is obtained by means of our neighbour.

“I WISH also that thou shouldest know that every virtue is obtained by means of thy neighbour, and likewise, every



defect, he, therefore, who stands in hatred of Me, does an injury to his neighbour, and to himself, who is his own chief neighbour, and this injury is both general and particular. It is general because you are obliged to love your neighbour as yourself, and loving him, you ought to help him spiritually, with prayer, counselling him with words, and assisting him both spiritually and temporally, according to the need in which he may be, at least with your goodwill if you have nothing else. A man therefore, who does not love, does not help him, and thereby does himself an injury; for he cuts off from himself grace, and injures his neighbour, by depriving him of the benefit of the prayers and of the sweet desires that he is bound to offer for him to Me. Thus, every act of help that he performs should proceed from the charity which he has through love of Me. And every evil also, is done by means of his neighbour, for, if he do not love Me, he cannot be in charity with his neighbour; and thus, all evils derive from the soul's deprivation of love of Me and her neighbour; whence, inasmuch as such a man does no good, it follows that he must do evil. To whom does he evil? First of all to himself, and then to his neighbour, not against Me, for no evil can touch Me, except in so far as I count done to Me that which he does to himself. To himself he does the injury of sin, which deprives him of grace, and worse than this he cannot do to his neighbour. Him he injures in not paying him the debt, which he owes him, of love, with which he ought to help him by means of prayer and holy desire offered to Me for him. This is an assistance which is owed in general to every rational creature; but its usefulness is more particular when it is done to those who are close at hand, under your eyes, as to whom, I say, you are all obliged to help one another by word and doctrine, and the example of good works, and in every other respect in which your neighbour may be seen to be in need; counselling him exactly as you would yourselves, without any passion of self-love; and he (a man not loving God) does not do this, because he has no love towards his neighbour; and, by not doing it, he does him, as thou seest, a special injury. And he does him evil,

not only by not doing him the good that he might do him, but by doing him a positive injury and a constant evil. In this way sin causes a physical and a mental injury. The mental injury is already done when the sinner has conceived pleasure in the idea of sin, and hatred of virtue, that is, pleasure from sensual self-love, which has deprived him of the affection of love which he ought to have towards Me, and his neighbour, as has been said. And, after he has conceived, he brings forth one sin after another against his neighbour, according to the diverse ways which may please his perverse sensual will. Sometimes it is seen that he brings forth cruelty, and that both in general and in particular.

“His general cruelty is to see himself and other creatures in danger of death and damnation through privation of grace, and so cruel is he that he reminds neither himself nor others of the love of virtue and hatred of vice. Being thus cruel he may wish to extend his cruelty still further, that is, not content with not giving an example of virtue, the villain also usurps the office of the demons, tempting, according to his power, his fellow-creatures to abandon virtue for vice; this is cruelty towards his neighbours, for he makes himself an instrument to destroy life and to give death. Cruelty towards the body has its origin in cupidity, which, not only prevents a man from helping his neighbour, but causes him to seize the goods of others, robbing the poor creatures; sometimes this is done by the arbitrary use of power, and at other times by cheating and fraud, his neighbour being forced to redeem, to his own loss, his own goods, and often indeed his own person.

“Oh, miserable vice of cruelty, which will deprive the man who practises it of all mercy, unless he turn to kindness and benevolence towards his neighbour!

“Sometimes the sinner brings forth insults on which often follows murder; sometimes also impurity against the person of his neighbour, by which he becomes a brute beast full of stench, and in this case he does not poison one only, but whoever approaches him, with love or in conversation, is poisoned.

“Against whom does pride bring forth evils? Against

the neighbour, through love of one's own reputation, whence comes hatred of the neighbour, reputed one's self to be greater than he; and in this way is injury done to him. And if a man be in a position of authority, he produces also injustice and cruelty and becomes a retailer of the flesh of men. Oh, dearest daughter, grieve for the offence against Me, and weep over these corpses, so that, by prayer, the bands of their death may be loosened!

“See now, that, in all places and in all kinds of people, sin is always produced against the neighbour, and through his medium; in no other way could sin ever be committed either secret or open. A secret sin is when you deprive your neighbour of that which you ought to give him; an open sin is where you perform positive acts of sin, as I have related to thee. It is, therefore, indeed the truth that every sin done against Me, is done through the medium of the neighbour.”

## CHAPTER VII.

How virtues are accomplished by means of our neighbour, and how it is that virtues differ to such an extent in creatures. x

“I HAVE told thee how all sins are accomplished by means of thy neighbour, through the principles which I exposed to thee, that is, because men are deprived of the affection of love, which gives light to every virtue. In the same way self-love, which destroys charity and affection towards the neighbour, is the principle and foundation of every evil. All scandals, hatred, cruelty, and every sort of trouble proceed from this perverse root of self-love, which has poisoned the entire world, and weakened the mystical body of the Holy Church, and the universal body of the believers in the Christian religion; and, therefore, I said to thee, that it was in the neighbour, that is to say in the love of him, that all virtues were founded; and, truly indeed did I say to thee, that charity gives life to all the virtues, because no

virtue can be obtained without charity, which is the pure love of Me.

“Wherefore, when the soul knows herself, as we have said above, she finds humility and hatred of her own sensual passion, for, she learns the perverse law, which is bound up in her members, and which ever fights against the spirit. And, therefore, arising with hatred of her own sensuality, crushing it under the heel of reason, with great earnestness, she discovers in herself the bounty of My goodness, through the many benefits which she has received from Me, all of which she considers again in herself. She attributes to Me, through humility, the knowledge which she has obtained of herself, knowing that, by My grace, I have drawn her out of darkness and lifted her up into the light of true knowledge. When she has recognised My goodness, she loves it without any medium, and yet at the same time with a medium, that is to say, without the medium of herself or of any advantage accruing to herself, and with the medium of virtue, which she has conceived through love of Me, because she sees that, in no other way, can she become grateful and acceptable to Me, but by conceiving, hatred of sin and love of virtue; and, when she has thus conceived by the affection of love, she immediately is delivered of fruit for her neighbour, because, in no other way, can she act out the truth she has conceived in herself, but, loving Me in truth, in the same truth she serves her neighbour.

“And it cannot be otherwise, because love of Me and of her neighbour are one and the same thing, and, so far as the soul loves Me, she loves her neighbour, because love towards him issues from Me. This is the means which I have given you, that you may exercise and prove your virtue therewith; because, inasmuch as you can do Me no profit, you should do it to your neighbour. This proves that you possess Me by grace in your soul, producing much fruit for your neighbour and making prayers to Me, seeking with sweet and amorous desire My honour and the salvation of souls. The soul, enamoured of My truth, never ceases to serve the whole world in general, and more or

less in a particular case according to the disposition of the recipient and the ardent desire of the donor, as I have shown above, when I declared to thee that the endurance of suffering alone, without desire, was not sufficient to punish a fault.

“When she has discovered the advantage of this unitive love in Me, by means of which, she truly loves herself, extending her desire for the salvation of the whole world, thus coming to the aid of its neediness, she strives, inasmuch as she has done good to herself by the conception of virtue, from which she has drawn the life of grace, to fix her eye on the needs of her neighbour in particular. Wherefore, when she has discovered, through the affection of love, the state of all rational creatures in general, she helps those who are at hand, according to the various graces which I have entrusted to her to administer; one she helps with doctrine, that is, with words, giving sincere counsel without any respect of persons, another with the example of a good life, and this indeed all give to their neighbour, the edification of a holy and honourable life. These are the virtues, and many others, too many to enumerate, which are brought forth in the love of the neighbour; but, although I have given them in such a different way, that is to say not all to one, but to one, one virtue, and to another, another, it so happens that it is impossible to have one, without having them all, because all the virtues are bound together. Wherefore, learn, that, in many cases I give one virtue, to be as it were the chief of the others, that is to say, to one I will give principally love, to another justice, to another humility, to one a lively faith, to another prudence or temperance, or patience, to another fortitude. These, and many other virtues, I place, indifferently, in the souls of many creatures; it happens, therefore, that the particular one so placed in the soul becomes the principal object of its virtue; the soul disposing herself, for her chief conversation, to this rather than to other virtues, and, by the effect of this virtue, the soul draws to herself all the other virtues, which, as has been said, are all bound together in the affection of love; and so with many gifts and graces of virtue, and not only

in the case of spiritual things but also of temporal. I use the word temporal for the things necessary to the physical life of man; all these I have given indifferently, and I have not placed them all in one soul, in order that man should, perforce, have material for love of his fellow. I could easily have created men possessed of all that they should need both for body and soul, but I wish that one should have need of the other, and that they should be My ministers to administer the graces and the gifts that they have received from Me. Whether man will or no, he cannot help making an act of love. It is true, however, that that act, unless made through love of Me, profits him nothing so far as grace is concerned. See then, that I have made men My ministers, and placed them in diverse stations and various ranks, in order that they may make use of the virtue of love.

“Wherefore, I show you that in My house are many mansions, and that I wish for no other thing than love, for in the love of Me is fulfilled and completed the love of the neighbour, and the law observed. For he, only, can be of use in his state of life, who is bound to Me with this love.”

## CHAPTER VIII.

How virtues are proved and fortified by their contraries.

“UP to the present, I have taught thee how a man may serve his neighbour, and manifest, by that service, the love which he has towards Me.

“Now I wish to tell thee further, that a man proves his patience on his neighbour, when he receives injuries from him.

“Similarly, he proves his humility on a proud man, his faith on an infidel, his true hope on one who despairs, his justice on the unjust, his kindness on the cruel, his gentleness and benignity on the irascible. Good men produce and prove all their virtues on their neighbour, just as perverse men all their vices; thus, if thou con-

sider well, humility is proved on pride in this way. The humble man extinguishes pride, because a proud man can do no harm to a humble one ; neither can the infidelity of a wicked man, who neither loves Me, nor hopes in Me, when brought forth against one who is faithful to Me, do him any harm ; his infidelity does not diminish the faith or the hope of him who has conceived his faith and hope through love of Me, it rather fortifies it, and proves it in the love he feels for his neighbour. For, he sees that the infidel is unfaithful, because he is without hope in Me, and in My servant, because he does not love Me, placing his faith and hope rather in his own sensuality, which is all that he loves. My faithful servant does not leave him because he does not faithfully love Me, or because he does not constantly seek, with hope in Me, for his salvation, inasmuch as he sees clearly the causes of his infidelity and lack of hope. The virtue of faith is proved in these and other ways. Wherefore, to those, who need the proof of it, My servant proves his faith in himself and in his neighbour, and so, justice is not diminished by the wicked man's injustice, but is rather proved, that is to say, the justice of a just man. Similarly, the virtues of patience, benignity, and kindness manifest themselves in a time of wrath by the same sweet patience in My servants, and envy, vexation and hatred demonstrate their love, and hunger and desire for the salvation of souls. I say, also, to thee, that, not only is virtue proved in those who render good for evil, but, that many times a good man gives back fiery coals of love, which dispel the hatred and rancour of heart of the angry, and so from hatred often comes benevolence, and that this is by virtue of the love and perfect patience which is in him, who sustains the anger of the wicked, bearing and supporting his defects. If thou wilt observe the virtues of fortitude and perseverance, these virtues are proved by the long endurance of the injuries and detractions of wicked men, who, whether by injuries or by flattery, constantly endeavour to turn a man aside from following the road and the doctrine of truth. Wherefore, in all these things, the virtue of fortitude conceived within

the soul, perseveres with strength, and, in addition proves itself externally upon the neighbour, as I have said to thee; and, if fortitude were not able to make that good proof of itself, being tested by many contrarities, it would not be a serious virtue founded in truth."

## CHAPTER IX.

### A TREATISE OF DISCRETION

How the affection should not place reliance chiefly on penance, but rather on virtues; and how discretion receives life from humility, and renders to each man his due.

"THESE are the holy and sweet works which I seek from My servants; these are the proved intrinsic virtues of the soul, as I have told thee. They not only consist of those virtues which are done by means of the body, that is, with an exterior act, or with diverse and varied penances, which are the instruments of virtue; works of penance performed alone without the above-mentioned virtues would please Me little; often, indeed, if the soul perform not her penance with discretion, that is to say, if her affection be placed principally in the penance she has undertaken, her perfection will be impeded; she should rather place reliance on the affection of love, with a holy hatred of herself, accompanied by true humility and perfect patience, together with the other intrinsic virtues of the soul, with hunger and desire for My honour and the salvation of souls. For these virtues demonstrate that the will is dead, and continually slays its own sensuality through the affection of love of virtue. With this discretion, then, should the soul perform her penance, that is, she should place her principal affection in virtue rather than in penance. Penance should be but the means to increase virtue according to the needs of the individual, and according to what the soul sees she can do in the measure of her own possibility. Otherwise, if the soul place her foundation on penance she will con-



taminate her own perfection, because her penance will not be done in the light of knowledge of herself and of My goodness, with discretion, and she will not seize hold of My truth ; neither loving that which I love, nor hating that which I hate. This virtue of discretion is no other than a true knowledge which the soul should have of herself and of Me, and in this knowledge is virtue rooted. Discretion is the only child of self-knowledge, and, wedding with charity, has indeed many other descendants, as a tree which has many branches ; but that which gives life to the tree, to its branches, and its root, is the ground of humility, in which it is planted, which humility is the foster-mother and nurse of charity, by whose means this tree remains in the perpetual calm of discretion. Because otherwise the tree would not produce the virtue of discretion, or any fruit of life, if it were not planted in the virtue of humility, because humility proceeds from self-knowledge. And I have already said to thee, that the root of discretion is a real knowledge of self and of My goodness, by which the soul immediately, and discreetly, renders to each one his due. Chiefly to Me in rendering praise and glory to My Name, and in referring to Me the graces and the gifts which she sees and knows she has received from Me ; and rendering to herself that which she sees herself to have merited, knowing that she does not even exist of herself, and attributing to Me, and not to herself, her being, which she knows she has received by grace from Me, and every other grace which she has received besides.

“ And she seems to herself to be ungrateful for so many benefits, and negligent, in that she has not made the most of her time, and the graces she has received, and so seems to herself worthy of suffering ; wherefore she becomes odious and displeasing to herself through her guilt. And this founds the virtue of discretion on knowledge of self, that is on true humility, for, were this humility not in the soul, the soul would be indiscreet, indiscretion being founded on pride, as discretion is on humility.

“ An indiscreet soul robs Me of the honour due to Me, and attributes it to herself, through vain glory, and that which is

really her own she imputes to Me, grieving and murmuring concerning My mysteries, with which I work in her soul and in those of My other creatures ; wherefore everything in Me and in her neighbour is cause of scandal to her. Contrariwise those who possess the virtue of discretion. For, when they have rendered what is due to Me and to themselves, they proceed to render to their neighbour their principal debt of love, and of humble and continuous prayer, which all should pay to each other, and further, the debt of doctrine, and example of a holy and honourable life, counselling and helping others according to their needs for salvation, as I said to thee above. Whatever rank a man be in, whether that of a noble, a prelate, or a servant, if he have this virtue, everything that he does to his neighbour is done discreetly and lovingly, because these virtues are bound and mingled together, and both planted in the ground of humility which proceeds from self-knowledge."

## CHAPTER X.

A parable showing how love, humility, and discretion are united ; and how the soul should conform herself to this parable.

"Dost thou know how these three virtues stand together ? It is, as if a circle were drawn on the surface of the earth, and a tree, with an off-shoot joined to its side, grew in the centre of the circle. The tree is nourished in the earth contained in the diameter of the circle, for if the tree were out of the earth it would die, and give no fruit. Now, consider, in the same way, that the soul is a tree existing by love, and that it can live by nothing else than love ; and, that if this soul have not in very truth the divine love of perfect charity, she cannot produce fruit of life, but only of death. It is necessary then, that the root of this tree, that is the affection of the soul, should grow in, and issue from the circle of true self-knowledge which is contained in Me, Who have neither beginning nor end, like the circum-

ference of the circle, for, turn as thou wilt within a circle, inasmuch as the circumference has neither end nor beginning, thou always remainest within it.

“This knowledge of thyself and of Me is found in the earth of true humility, which is as wide as the diameter of the circle, that is as the knowledge of self and of Me, (for, otherwise, the circle would not be without end and beginning, but would have its beginning in knowledge of self, and its end in confusion, if this knowledge were not contained in Me). Then the tree of love feeds itself on humility, bringing forth from its side the off-shoot of true discretion, in the way that I have already told thee, from the heart of the tree, that is the affection of love which is in the soul, and the patience, which proves that I am in the soul and the soul in Me. This tree then, so sweetly planted, produces fragrant blossoms of virtue, with many scents of great variety, inasmuch as the soul renders fruit of grace and of utility to her neighbour, according to the zeal of those who come to receive fruit from My servants; and to Me she renders the sweet odour of glory and praise to My Name, and so fulfils the object of her creation.

“In this way, therefore, she reaches the term of her being, that is Myself, her God, Who am Eternal Life. And these fruits cannot be taken from her without her will, inasmuch as they are all flavoured with discretion, because they are all united, as has been said above.”

## CHAPTER XI.

How penance and other corporal exercises are to be taken as instruments for arriving at virtue, and not as the principal affection of the soul; and of the light of discretion in various other modes and operations.

“THESE are the fruits and the works which I seek from the soul, the proving, namely, of virtue in the time of need. And yet some time ago, if thou remember, when thou wert desirous of doing great penance for My sake, asking, ‘What

can I do to endure suffering for Thee, oh Lord ?' I replied to thee, speaking in thy mind, 'I take delight in few words and many works.' I wished to show thee that he who merely calls on me with the sound of words, saying: 'Lord Lord, I would do something for Thee,' and he, who desires for My sake to mortify his body with many penances, and not his own will, did not give Me much pleasure ; but that I desired the manifold works of manly endurance with patience, together with the other virtues, which I have mentioned to thee above, intrinsic to the soul, all of which must be in activity in order to obtain fruits worthy of grace. All other works, founded on any other principle than this, I judge to be a mere calling with words, because they are finite works, and I, Who am Infinite, seek infinite works, that is an infinite perfection of love.

"I wish therefore that the works of penance, and of other corporal exercises, should be observed merely as means, and not as the fundamental affection of the soul. For, if the principal affection of the soul were placed in penance, I should receive a finite thing like a word, which, when it has issued from the mouth, is no more, unless it have issued with affection of the soul, which conceives and brings forth virtue in truth ; that is, unless the finite operation, which I have called a word, should be joined with the affection or love, in which case it would be grateful and pleasant to Me. And this is because such a work would not be alone, but accompanied by true discretion, using corporal works as means, and not as the principal foundation ; for it would not be becoming that that principal foundation should be placed in penance only, or in any exterior corporal act, such works being finite, since they are done in finite time, and also because it is often profitable that the creature omit them, and even that she be made to do so.

"Wherefore, when the soul omits them through necessity, being unable through various circumstances to complete an action which she has begun, or, as may frequently happen, through obedience at the order of her director, it is well ; since, if she continued then to do them, she not only would receive no merit, but would offend Me ; thus thou seest

that they are merely finite. She ought, therefore, to adopt them as a means, and not as an end. For, if she takes them as an end she will be obliged, some time or other, to leave them, and will then remain empty. This, My trumpeter, the glorious Paul, taught you when he said in his epistle, that you should mortify the body and destroy self-will, knowing, that is to say, how to keep the rein on the body, macerating the flesh whenever it should wish to combat the spirit, but the will should be dead and annihilated in every thing, and subject to My will, and this slaying of the will is that due which, as I told thee, the virtue of discretion renders to the soul, that is to say, hatred and disgust of her own offences and sensuality, which are acquired by self-knowledge. This is the knife which slays and cuts off all self-love founded in self-will. These then are they who give Me not only words but manifold works, and in these I take delight. And then I said that I desired few words, and many actions; by the use of the word 'many' I assign no particular number to thee, because the affection of the soul, founded in love, which gives life to all the virtues and good works, should increase infinitely, and yet I do not, by this, exclude words, I merely said that I wished few of them, showing thee that every actual operation, as such, was finite, and therefore I called them of little account; but they please Me when they are performed as the instruments of virtue, and not as a principal end in themselves.

“However, no one should judge that he has greater perfection, because he performs great penances, and gives himself in excess to the slaying of his body, than he who does less, inasmuch as neither virtue nor merit consists therein; for otherwise he would be in an evil case, who, from some legitimate reason, was unable to do actual penance. Merit consists in the virtue of love alone, flavoured with the light of true discretion, without which the soul is worth nothing. And this love should be directed to Me endlessly, boundlessly, since I am the Supreme and Eternal Truth. The soul can therefore place neither laws nor limits to her love for Me; but her love for her neighbour, on the contrary, is ordered in certain conditions. The light of discretion

(which proceeds from love, as I have told thee) gives to the neighbour a conditioned love, one that, being ordered aright, does not cause the injury of sin to self in order to be useful to others, for, if one single sin were committed to save the whole world from Hell, or to obtain one great virtue, the motive would not be a rightly ordered or discreet love, but rather indiscreet, for it is not lawful to perform even one act of great virtue and profit to others, by means of the guilt of sin. Holy discretion ordains that the soul should direct all her powers to My service with a manly zeal, and, that she should love her neighbour with such devotion that she would lay down a thousand times, if it were possible, the life of her body for the salvation of souls, enduring pains and torments so that her neighbour may have the life of grace, and giving her temporal substance for the profit and relief of his body.

“ This is the supreme office of discretion which proceeds from charity. So thou seest how discreetly every soul, who wishes for grace, should pay her debts, that is, should love Me with an infinite love and without measure, but her neighbour with measure, with a restricted love, as I have said, not doing herself the injury of sin in order to be useful to others. This is St. Paul’s counsel to thee when he says that charity ought to be concerned first with self, otherwise it will never be of perfect utility to others. Because, when perfection is not in the soul, everything which the soul does for itself and for others is imperfect. It would not, therefore, be just that creatures, who are finite and created by Me, should be saved through offence done to Me, Who am the Infinite Good. The more serious the fault is in such a case, the less fruit will the action produce ; therefore, in no way, shouldest thou ever incur the guilt of sin.

“ And this true love knows well, because she carries with herself the light of holy discretion, that light which dissipates all darkness, takes away ignorance, and is the condiment of every instrument of virtue. Holy discretion is a prudence which cannot be cheated, a fortitude which cannot be beaten, a perseverance from end to end, stretching from Heaven to earth, that is, from knowledge of Me to knowledge of self,

and from love of Me to love of others. And the soul escapes dangers by her true humility, and, by her prudence, flies all the nets of the world and, its creatures, and, with unarmed hands, that is through much endurance, discomfits the devil and the flesh with this sweet and glorious light; knowing, by it, her own fragility, she renders to her weakness its due of hatred.

“Wherefore she has trampled on the world, and placed it under the feet of her affection, despising it, and holding it vile, and thus becoming lord of it, holding it as folly. And the men of the world cannot take her virtues from such a soul, but all their persecutions increase her virtues and prove them, which virtues have been at first conceived by the virtue of love, as has been said, and then are proved on her neighbour, and bring forth their fruit on him. Thus have I shown thee, that, if virtue were not visible and did not shine in the time of trial, it would not have been truly conceived; for, I have already told thee, that perfect virtue cannot exist and give fruit except by means of the neighbour, even as a woman, who has conceived a child, if she do not bring it forth, so that it may appear before the eyes of men, deprives her husband of his fame of paternity. It is the same with Me, Who am the Spouse of the soul, if she do not produce the child of virtue, in the love of her neighbour, showing her child to him who is in need, both in general and in particular, as I have said to thee before, so I declare now that, in truth, she has not conceived virtue at all; and this is also true of the vices, all of which are committed by means of the neighbour.”

## CHAPTER XII.

A repetition of several things already said, and how God promises refreshments to His servants, and the reformation of the Holy Church, together with the means of much endurance.

“Now thou seest that I, the Truth, have spoken truth to thee, and have given thee the doctrine by which thou mayest

attain and preserve great perfection; and I have also declared to thee, in what way satisfaction is made, both for the guilt and the penalty, in thyself and in thy neighbour, saying to thee that the sufferings sustained by the creature, while in the mortal body, are not, of themselves, a sufficient expiation for the fault and the pain due to it, unless they are combined with the affection of love, and true contrition and displeasure of sin; for, when suffering is combined with love it satisfies, not by virtue of the actual suffering endured, but by virtue of the love and the grief for sin committed, which love is obtained by the light of the intellect, with a pure and generous heart gazing at Me, as its object, Who am Love itself. All this I have shown thee because thou didst ask Me if thou couldst suffer for My glory. And I have shown this to thee, in order that thou and My other servants may know how you should sacrifice yourselves to me. In your sacrifice, I say, both act and thought should be united; as a vessel which is presented to the Lord, is united with the water it contains, for the water could not be presented without the vessel, and the vessel would not be pleasing to Him if it did not contain the water. So I say to you, that you ought to offer to Me the vessel of many fatiguing actions, in whatever way I send them to you, choosing, after your own fashion, neither place, nor time, nor actions. Therefore the vessel should be full, that is, you should endure all those fatigues, with affection of love and true patience, supporting the defects of your neighbour, with hatred and displeasure of sin. If you do so, these labours which I have given you become a grateful vessel, full of the water of My grace which gives life to the soul, and then I receive this gift from My sweet spouses, that is from every soul who serves Me well. I receive her anxieties, her desires, her tears, her humble sighs, and her continual prayers; all which things are a means, by which, through love, I appease My wrath against My enemies, the men of iniquity who so greatly offend Me. So, endure manfully, even unto death, and this will be a sign to Me that you love Me; and you should not turn your faces away and look askance at the plough, through fear of any



creature or of any tribulation, rather, in such tribulations should you rejoice. The world rejoices in doing you many injuries, and you are saddened on account of the injuries done in the world, and the offences which you see done against yourselves, which offend both you and Me, because I have become one thing with you. Thou seest truly, that I, having originally given you My image and similitude, and you, having lost My grace through sin, in order to restore to you that life of grace, I united My nature to you, covering it with the veil of your humanity, and thus, while you, by creation, possessed My image, I took your image in taking the human form. I am therefore one thing with you, if indeed the soul do not leave Me through the guilt of mortal sin; but he, who loves Me, remains in Me, and I in him, and yet the world persecutes him, because the world has no conformity with Me, and, in the same way, persecuted My only begotten Son, even to the shameful death of the Cross. It does the same to you, it persecutes, and will persecute you, even unto death, because it loves Me not, for if, the world had loved Me, it would also have loved you; but rejoice, because your joy will be great in Heaven. I also say to thee that, as the mystical body of the Church abounds now in tribulation, so shall it one day abound all the more in sweetness, and consolation, and this shall be its sweetness—the reformation produced by holy and good pastors, who are flowers of glory; for they render glory and praise to My Name, rendering to Me the sweet odours of virtues founded on truth. The reformation concerns those odoriferous flowers, My ministers and pastors, not the fruit of My spouse, which never needs to be reformed, because it neither diminishes nor is hurt by the defects of My ministers.

“So do thou rejoice, and the spiritual father of thy soul, and My other servants, in the bitterness of your sorrow, because, in My Eternal Truth, I have promised to give you refreshment, and after your sorrow I will give you most sustaining consolation, with much substance in the reformation of the Holy Church.”

## CHAPTER XIII.

How this soul grew by means of the divine response, and how her sorrows grew less, and how she prayed to God for the Holy Church, and for her own people.

“THEN that soul, thirsting and burning with the very great desire that she had conceived on learning the ineffable love of God, shewn in His great goodness, and, seeing the breadth of His charity, that, with such sweetness, He had deigned to reply to her request and to satisfy it, giving hope to the sorrow which she had conceived, on account of offences against God, and the damage of the Holy church, and through His own mercy, which she saw through self-knowledge, diminished, and yet, at the same time, increased her sorrow.

“For, the Supreme and Eternal Father, in manifesting the way of perfection, showed her anew her own guilt, and the loss of souls, as has been said more fully above. Also because in the knowledge which the soul obtains of herself, she knows more of God, and knowing the goodness of God in herself, the sweet mirror of God, she knows her own dignity and indignity. Her dignity is that of her creation, seeing that she is the image of God, and this has been given her by grace, and not as her due. In that same mirror of the goodness of God, the soul knows her own indignity, which is the consequence of her own fault. Wherefore, as a man more readily sees spots on his face when he looks in a mirror, so, the soul who, with true knowledge of self, rises with desire, and gazes with the eye of the intellect at herself in the sweet mirror of God, knows better the stains of her own face, by the purity which she sees in Him.

“Wherefore, because light and knowledge increased in that soul in the aforesaid way, a sweet sorrow grew in her, and at the same time, her sorrow was diminished by the hope which the Supreme Truth gave her, and, as fire grows when it is fed with wood, so grew the fire in that soul to such an extent that it was no longer possible for the body to endure

it without the departure of the soul ; so that, had she not been surrounded by the strength of Him who is the Supreme Strength, it would not have been possible for her to have lived any longer. This soul then, being purified by the fire of divine love, which she found in the knowledge of herself and of God, and her hunger for the salvation of the whole world, and for the reformation of the Holy Church, having grown with her hope of obtaining the same, rose with confidence before the Supreme Father, showing Him the leprosy of the Holy Church, and the misery of the world, saying, as if with the words of Moses. " My Lord, turn the eyes of Thy mercy upon Thy people, and upon the mystical body of the Holy Church, for Thou wilt be the more glorified if Thou pardonest so many creatures, and givest to them the light of knowledge, since all will render Thee praise when they see themselves escape through Thy infinite goodness from the clouds of mortal sin, and from eternal damnation ; and then Thou wilt not only be praised by my wretched self, who have so much offended Thee, and who am the cause and the instrument of all this evil, for which reason I pray Thy divine and eternal love to take Thy revenge on me, and to do mercy to Thy people, and never will I depart from before Thy presence until I see that thou grantest them mercy. For what is it to me if I have life, and Thy people death, and the clouds of darkness cover Thy spouse, when it is my own sins, and not those of Thy other creatures, that are the principal cause of this ? I desire, then, and beg of Thee, by Thy grace, that Thou have mercy on Thy people, and I adjure Thee that Thou do this by Thy uncreated love which moved Thee Thyself to create man in Thy image and similitude, saying, ' Let us make man in our own image,' and this Thou didst, oh eternal Trinity, that man might participate in everything belonging to Thee, the most high and eternal Trinity."

" Wherefore Thou gavest him memory in order to receive Thy benefits, by which he participates in the power of the Eternal Father ; and intellect that he might know, seeing Thy goodness, and so might participate in the wisdom of Thine only-begotten Son ; and will, that he might love that

which his intellect has seen and known of Thy truth, thus participating in the clemency of Thy Holy Spirit. What reason hadst Thou for creating man in such dignity? The inestimable love with which Thou sawest Thy creature in Thyself, and didst become enamoured of him, for Thou didst create him through love, and didst destine him to be such that he might taste and enjoy Thy Eternal Good. I see therefore that through his sin he lost this dignity in which Thou didst originally place him, and by his rebellion against Thee, fell into a state of war with Thy kindness, that is to say, we all became Thy enemies.

“Therefore, Thou, moved by that same fire of love with which Thou didst create him, didst willingly give man a means of reconciliation, so that after the great rebellion into which he had fallen, there should come a great peace; and so Thou didst give him the only-begotten Word, Thy Son to be the Mediator between us and Thee. He was our Justice, for He took on Himself all our offences and injustices, and performed Thy obedience, Eternal Father, which Thou didst impose on Him, when Thou didst clothe Him with our humanity, our human nature and likeness. Oh, abyss of love! What heart can help breaking when it sees such dignity as Thine descend to such lowliness as our humanity? We are Thy image, and Thou hast become ours, by this union which Thou hast accomplished with man, veiling the Eternal Deity with the cloud of woe, and the corrupted clay of Adam. For what reason?—Love. Wherefore, Thou, O God, hast become man, and man has become God. By this ineffable love of Thine, therefore, I constrain Thee, and implore Thee that Thou do mercy to Thy creatures.”

## CHAPTER XIV.

How God grieves over the Christian people, and particularly over His ministers ; and touches on the subject of the Sacrament of Christ's Body, and the benefit of the Incarnation.

THEN God, turning the eye of His mercy towards her, allowing Himself to be constrained by her tears, and bound by the chain of her holy desire, replied with lamentation—  
“My sweetest daughter, thy tears constrain Me, because they are joined with My love, and fall for love of Me, and thy painful desires force Me to answer thee ; but marvel, and see how My spouse has defiled her face, and become leprous, on account of her filthiness and self-love, and swollen with the pride and avarice of those who feed on their own sin.

“What I say of the universal body and the mystical body of the Holy Church (that is to say the Christian religion) I also say of My ministers, who stand and feed at the breasts of Holy Church ; and, not only should they feed themselves, but it is also their duty to feed and hold to those breasts the universal body of Christian people, and also any other people who should wish to leave the darkness of their infidelity, and bind themselves as members to My Church. See then with what ignorance and darkness, and ingratitude, are administered, and with what filthy hands are handled this glorious milk and blood of My spouse, and with what presumption and irreverence they are received. Wherefore, that which really gives life, often gives, through the defects of those who receive it, death ; that is to say, the precious Blood of My only-begotten Son, which destroyed death and darkness, and gave life and truth, and confounded falsehood. For I give this Blood and use It for salvation and perfection in the case of that man who disposes himself properly to receive it, for It gives life and adorns the soul with every grace, in proportion to the disposition and affection of him who receives It ; similarly It gives death to him who receives It unworthily, living in iniquity and in the

darkness of mortal sin ; to him, I say, It gives death and not life ; not through defect of the Blood, nor through defect of the minister, though there might be great evil in him, because his evil would not spoil nor defile the Blood nor diminish Its grace and virtue, nor does an evil minister do harm to him to whom he gives the Blood, but to himself he does the harm of guilt, which will be followed by punishment, unless he correct himself with contrition and repentance. I say then that the Blood does harm to him who receives it unworthily, not through defect of the Blood, nor of the minister, but through his own evil disposition and defect inasmuch as he has befouled his mind and body with such impurity and misery, and has been so cruel to himself and his neighbour. He has used cruelty to himself, depriving himself of grace, trampling under the feet of his affection the fruit of the Blood which he had received in Holy Baptism, when the stain of original sin was taken from him by virtue of the Blood, which stain he drew from his origin, when he was generated by his father and mother.

“Wherefore I gave My Word, My only-begotten Son, because the whole stuff of human generation was corrupted through the sin of the first man Adam. Wherefore, all of you, vessels made of this stuff, were corrupted and not disposed to the possession of eternal life—so I, with My dignity, joined Myself to the baseness of your human generation, in order to restore it to grace which you had lost by sin ; for I was incapable of suffering, and yet, on account of guilt, My divine justice demanded suffering. But man was not sufficient to satisfy it, for, even if he had satisfied to a certain extent, he could only have satisfied for himself, and not for other rational creatures, besides which, neither for himself, nor for others, could man satisfy, his sin having been committed against Me, who am the Infinite Good. Wishing, however, to restore man, who was enfeebled, and could not satisfy for the above reason, I sent My Word, My own Son, clothed in your own very nature, the corrupted clay of Adam, in order that He might endure suffering in that self-same nature in which man had offended,

suffering in His body even to the opprobrious death of the Cross, and so He satisfied My justice and My divine mercy. For My mercy willed to make satisfaction for the sin of man and to dispose him to that good for which I had created him. This human nature, joined with the divine nature, was sufficient to satisfy for the whole human race, not only on account of the pain which it sustained in its finite nature, that is in the flesh of Adam, but by virtue of the Eternal Deity, the divine and infinite nature joined to it. The two natures being thus joined together, I received and accepted the sacrifice of My only-begotten Son, kneaded into one dough with the divine nature, by the fire of divine love which was the fetter which held him fastened and nailed to the Cross in this way. Thus human nature was sufficient to satisfy for guilt, but only by virtue of the divine nature. And in this way was destroyed the stain of Adam's sin, only the mark of it remaining behind, that is an inclination to sin, and to every sort of corporeal defect, like the cicatrice which remains when a man is healed of a wound. In this way the original fault of Adam was able still to cause a fatal stain ; wherefore the coming of the great Physician, that is to say, of My only-begotten Son, cured this invalid, He drinking this bitter medicine, which man could not drink on account of his great weakness, like a foster-mother who takes medicine instead of her suckling, because she is grown up and strong, and the child is not fit to endure its bitterness. He was man's foster-mother, enduring, with the greatness and strength of the Deity united with your nature, the bitter medicine of the painful death of the Cross, to give life to you little ones debilitated by guilt. I say therefore that the mark alone of original sin remains, which sin you take from your father and your mother when you are generated by them. But this mark is removed from the soul, though not altogether, by Holy Baptism, which has the virtue of communicating the life of grace by means of that glorious and precious Blood. Wherefore, at the moment that the soul receives Holy Baptism, original sin is taken away from her, and grace is infused into her, and that inclination to sin, which remains from

the original corruption, as has been said, is indeed a source of weakness, but the soul can keep the bridle on it if she choose. Then the vessel of the soul is disposed to receive and increase in herself grace, more or less, according as it pleases her to dispose herself willingly with affection, and desire of loving and serving Me ; and, in the same way, she can dispose herself to evil as to good, in spite of her having received grace in Holy Baptism. Wherefore when the time of discretion is come, the soul can, by her free will, make choice either of good or evil, according as it pleases her will ; and so great is this liberty that man has, and so strong has this liberty been made by virtue of this glorious Blood, that no demon or creature can constrain him to one smallest fault without his free consent. He has been redeemed from slavery, and made free in order that he might govern his own sensuality, and obtain the end for which he was created. Oh, miserable man, who delights to remain in the mud like a brute, and does not learn this great benefit which he has received from Me ! A benefit so great, that the poor wretched creature full of such ignorance could receive no greater."

## CHAPTER XV.

How sin is more gravely punished after the Passion of Christ than before ; and how God promises to do mercy to the world, and to the Holy Church, by means of the prayers and sufferings of His servants.

"AND I wish thee to know, My daughter, that, although I have re-created and restored to the life of grace, the human race, through the Blood of My only-begotten Son, as I have said, men are not grateful, but, going from bad to worse, and from guilt to guilt, even persecuting Me with many injuries, taking so little account of the graces which I have given them, and continue to give them, that, not only do they not attribute what they have received to grace, but seem to themselves on occasion to receive injuries from Me, as if I desired anything else than their sanctification.



“I say to thee that they will be more hard-hearted, and worthy of more punishment, and will, indeed, be punished more severely, now that they have received redemption in the Blood of My Son, than they would have been before that redemption took place—that is, before the stain of Adam’s sin had been taken away. It is right that he who receives more should render more, and should be under greater obligations to Him from whom he receives more.

“Man, then, was closely bound to Me through his being which I had given him, creating him in My own image and similitude; for which reason, he was bound to render Me glory, but he deprived Me of it, and wished to give it to himself. Thus he came to transgress My obedience imposed on him, and became My enemy. And I, with My humility, destroyed his pride, humiliating the divine nature, and taking your humanity, and, freeing you from the service of the devil, I made you free. And, not only did I give you liberty, but, if you examine, you will see that man has become God, and God has become man, through the union of the divine with the human nature. This is the debt which they have incurred—that is to say, the treasure of the Blood, by which they have been procreated to grace. See, therefore, how much more they owe after the redemption than before. For they are now obliged to render Me glory and praise by following in the steps of My Incarnate Word, My only-begotten Son, for then they repay Me the debt of love both of Myself and of their neighbour, with true and genuine virtue, as I have said to thee above, and if they do not do it, the greater their debt, the greater will be the offence they fall into, and therefore, by divine justice, the greater their suffering in eternal damnation.

“A false Christian is punished more than a pagan, and the deathless fire of divine justice consumes him more, that is, afflicts him more, and, in his affliction, he feels himself being consumed by the worm of conscience, though, in truth, he is not consumed, because the damned do not lose their being through any torment which they receive. Wherefore I say to thee, that they ask for death and cannot have it, for they

cannot lose their being ; the existence of grace they lose, through their fault, but not their natural existence. Therefore guilt is more gravely punished after the Redemption of the Blood than before, because man received more ; but sinners neither seem to perceive this, nor to pay any attention to their own sins, and so become My enemies, though I have reconciled them, by means of the Blood of My Son. But there is a remedy with which I appease My wrath—that is to say, by means of My servants, if they are jealous to constrain Me by their desire. Thou seest, therefore, that thou hast bound Me with this bond which I have given thee, because I wished to do mercy to the world.

X “Therefore I give My servants hunger and desire for My honour, and the salvation of souls, so that, constrained by their tears, I may mitigate the fury of My divine justice. Take, therefore, thy tears and thy sweat, drawn from the fountain of My divine love, and, with them, wash the face of My spouse.

“I promise thee, that, by this means, her beauty will be restored to her, not by the knife nor by cruelty, but peacefully, by humble and continued prayer, by the sweat and the tears shed by the fiery desire of My servants, and thus will I fulfil thy desire if thou, on thy part, endure much, casting the light of thy patience into the darkness of perverse man, not fearing the world’s persecutions, for I will protect thee, and My Providence shall never fail thee in the slightest need.”

## CHAPTER XVI.

How this soul, knowing the Divine Goodness, did not remain content to pray only for Christians, but prayed in general for the whole world.

THEN that soul (rising on the wings of greater knowledge, and standing before the Divine Majesty with very great joy and comfort, both through the hope which she had received of the Divine Mercy, and the ineffable love which she had

tasted, seeing that God, on account of His love and desire to do mercy to men, in spite of their being His enemies, had given the means and the way to His servants to constrain His own goodness, and appease His anger), rejoiced, losing all fear of the persecutions of the world, seeing that God was on her side, and the fire of her holy desire grew greatly, so that she could not remain content, but, with holy confidence, begged for mercy for the whole world. And although in this, her second prayer, she asked for the good and profit of Christians and of the faithful, that is to say for the reformation of Holy Church, nevertheless, in her hunger, she spread her prayer over the whole world, as if the world itself caused her to pray, crying—"Oh, Eternal God! Give mercy to Thy lambs, like the Good Shepherd that Thou art. Do not delay Thy mercy to the world, because it seems to be hardly able to exist any longer without it, but to be entirely deprived of the union of love with Thee, the Eternal Truth, and men seem equally deprived of love towards each other, for they do not love each other with a love founded in Thee."

## CHAPTER XVII.

How God laments over His rational creatures, principally on account of the self-love which reigns in them; strengthening the above mentioned soul for greater efforts of prayer and tears.

THEN God, all inflamed with love for our salvation, took means to light up a greater love and a greater grief in that soul, showing, in the following way, with what love He had created man, of which something has been said above.

And He said: "Dost thou not see how every man persecutes Me, and yet I have created him with such a fire of love, and given him grace and mercy, infinite gifts, through My free grace and not of his own due. See then, My daughter, with how many and diverse sins they persecute Me, and especially with their miserable self-love, from which

proceeds every evil. With this self-love, they have poisoned the whole world, for, just as the love of Me contains in itself every virtue brought forth upon their neighbour, as I have shown thee, so sensual self-love, since it proceeds from pride (and love of Me proceeds from charity), contains in itself every evil; and these evils they perform by means of creatures, being separated and divided from love of their neighbour, since, not loving Me, they do not love him either; for these two loves are joined together, and therefore I said to thee above, that all good and all evil was done by means of the neighbour. I have therefore much to grieve over in man, who from Me has received nothing but good, and yet renders Me hatred, working every sort of iniquity. This I have said to thee, in order that, through the tears of My servants, I might mitigate My wrath. Therefore do you, My servants, prepare yourselves before Me with many prayers and anxious desires, and with grief for the sin which is done against Me and for the damnation of souls. And so will you mitigate the wrath of Divine Justice."

## CHAPTER XVIII.

How no man can escape from the hands of God, for God visits him either in Mercy or in Justice.

"AND know, My dearest daughter, that no one can escape from My hands, for I Am Who Am, and you are not in yourselves, but only in so far as you act through Me, Who am the Creator of all things which share the gift of being, except sin which is nothing, and therefore not made by Me, and, inasmuch as it is not found in Me, it is not worthy of being loved. For this reason the creature sins and offends, because she loves that which she ought not to love, namely sin, and hates Me, whom she is obliged and bound to love, because I am the Supreme Good, and have given her being with such fire of love. Outside of Me souls cannot go, because they are either in Me through justice for their

sins, or through mercy. Open thou the eye of thine intellect to gaze into My hand, and thou wilt see that the truth is as I have said to thee."

Then she, lifting her eyes, in obedience to the Supreme Father, saw, clenched in the hollow of His hand, the whole universe, and God said to her: "My daughter, see now and learn that no one can be taken from Me; for all who are here, are here through justice, or through mercy, as I have said, for they are Mine, and created by Me, and I love them ineffably; and yet, in spite of their iniquity, I will do them mercy, by means of My servants, and will grant the petition which, with such grief and love, thou hast asked of Me."

## CHAPTER XIX.

How this soul, growing in amorous heat, yearned to sweat blood; and, accusing herself, made a particular prayer for the spiritual father of her soul.

THEN that soul, as if dumb and beside herself through the increasing fire of her holy desire, remained both blessed and sorrowful.

She was blessed through the union which she had with God, tasting joy and goodness, being wholly immersed in His mercy. And she was sorrowful, seeing such goodness offended; and she rendered thanks to the Divine Majesty, knowing that God had manifested to her the defects of His creatures, in order that she should be constrained to exert herself with greater desire and anxiety for their salvation, and this feeling for souls was so renewed in her, and this holy and amorous fire grew to such a pitch, that she desired that the sweat of water, cast out of her, by the violence done to her body by her soul, should be a sweat of blood. She thus sweated, through the force and heat of love, because the union which her soul had with God was more perfect than the union of her soul with her body; but she despised it through the great desire which she had to see a

sweat of blood issue from her body, saying to herself: "Oh, my soul! thou hast lost all the time of thy life, and yet so many evils and troubles have come upon the world, and the Holy Church, both in general and in particular; and I will, therefore, that thou bear remedy to these evils with a sweat of blood."

In truth this soul had well taken to heart the doctrine which the Truth had taught her, namely, ever to know herself and the goodness of God in her, and the remedy with which she should try and heal the whole world, and appease the wrath of God and His divine justice, that is, humble, continuous and holy prayer.

Then, this soul, cast prone by holy desire, arose, opening far wider the eye of the intellect, gazing on herself in the divine love, when she saw and tasted how we are bound by love to seek the glory and the praise of God in the salvation of souls.

And she saw the servants of God to be called to this, and that the Eternal Truth particularly called and elected the spiritual father of her soul. This spiritual father she carried before the Divine Goodness, praying that It would shed on him a ray of grace, so that he might truly follow the Truth Itself.

## CHAPTER XX.

How, without enduring tribulations with patience, it is impossible to please God; and how God comforts her and her spiritual father to endure with true patience.

THEN God, replying to her third petition (namely, the prayer of her hunger for the salvation of the spiritual father of her soul), said:

"Daughter, this is what I wish him to seek, namely, to please Me, the Truth, in the hunger which he has for the salvation of souls with all solicitude. But this he could not have, neither he, nor thou, nor any one else, without many troubles, as I said to thee above, according to the

measure in which I give them you. Wherefore, if thou desire to see My honour, in the Holy Church, thou oughtest so to love as to wish to endure with true patience; and, by this, I shall see that he and thou and My other servants seek My honour in truth. Then he will become My dearest son, and will repose himself and others upon the breast of My only-begotten Son, whom I have made the Bridge by which you may all arrive at your end, and receive the fruit of all your labours which you have endured for the love of Me. Bear yourselves then manfully."

## CHAPTER XXI.

How the road to Heaven being broken through the disobedience of Adam, God made of his Son a Bridge by which man could pass.

"WHEREFORE I have told thee that I have made a Bridge of My Word, of My only-begotten Son, and this is the truth. I wish that you, My children, should know that the road was broken by the sin and disobedience of Adam, in such a way, that no one could arrive at Eternal Life. Wherefore men did not render Me glory in the way in which they ought to have, as they did not participate in that Good for which I had created them, and My truth was not fulfilled. This truth is that I have created man to My own image and similitude, in order that he might have Eternal Life, and might partake of Me, and taste My supreme and eternal sweetness and goodness. But, after sin had closed Heaven and bolted the doors of mercy, the soul of man produced thorns and prickly brambles, and My creature found in himself rebellion against himself.

"And the flesh immediately began to war against the Spirit, and, losing the state of innocency, became a foul animal, and all created things rebelled against man, whereas they would have been obedient to him, had he remained in the state in which I had placed him. He, not remaining therein, transgressed My obedience, and merited eternal

death in soul and body. And, as soon as he had sinned, a tempestuous flood arose, which ever buffets him with its waves, bringing him weariness and trouble from himself, the devil, and the world. Every one was drowned in the flood, because no one, with his own justice alone, could arrive at Eternal Life. And so, wishing to remedy your great evils, I have given you the Bridge of My Son, in order that, passing across the flood, you may not be drowned, which flood is the tempestuous sea of this dark life. See, therefore, under what obligations the creature is to Me, and how ignorant he is, not to take the remedy which I have offered, but to be willing to drown."

## CHAPTER XXII.

How God induces the soul to look at the greatness of this Bridge, inasmuch as it reaches from earth to Heaven.

"OPEN, my daughter, the eye of thy intellect, and thou wilt see the accepted and the ignorant, the imperfect, and also the perfect who follow Me in truth, so that thou mayest grieve over the damnation of the ignorant, and rejoice over the perfection of My beloved servants.

"Thou wilt see further how those bear themselves who walk in the light, and those who walk in the darkness. I also wish thee to look at the Bridge of My only begotten Son, and see the greatness thereof, for it reaches from Heaven to earth, that is, that the earth of your humanity is joined to the greatness of the Deity thereby. I say then that this Bridge reaches from Heaven to earth, and constitutes the union which I have made with man.

This was necessary, in order to reform the road which was broken, as I said to thee, in order that man should pass through the bitterness of the world, and arrive at life; but the Bridge could not be made of earth sufficiently large to span the flood and give you Eternal Life, because the earth of human nature was not sufficient to satisfy for guilt,



to remove the stain of Adam's sin. Which stain corrupted the whole human race and gave out a stench, as I have said to thee above. It was, therefore, necessary to join human nature with the height of My nature, the Eternal Deity, so that it might be sufficient to satisfy for the whole human race, so that human nature should sustain the punishment, and that the Divine nature, united with the human, should make acceptable the sacrifice of My only Son, offered to Me to take death from you and to give you life.

“So the height of the Divinity, humbled to the earth, and joined with your humanity, made the Bridge and reformed the road. Why was this done? In order that man might come to his true happiness with the angels. And observe, that it is not enough, in order that you should have life, that My Son should have made you this Bridge, unless you walk thereon.”

### CHAPTER XXIII.

How we are all labourers of God in the vineyard of the Holy Church; and how each man has his own vine; and how we all must be united in the Son of God, the True Vine.

AT this point the Eternal Truth proceeded to show her that, though He had created us without ourselves, He would not save us without ourselves. Wherefore He wishes us to use our free will by our own unfettered choice, passing our time in the exercise of true virtues, and so continuing from point to point. The Eternal Truth added, “You must all walk across this Bridge, seeking the glory and praise of My Name in the salvation of souls, enduring with patient suffering your many fatigues, following the footsteps of this sweet and amorous Word; for in no other way can you arrive at Me, and you are My labourers, set to work in the vineyard of the Holy Church. You labour in the universal body of the Christian religion, placed there by My Grace, having received from Me the light of Holy Baptism, which

has incorporated you into the mystical body of Holy Church, at the hands of My ministers, whom I have placed to labour at your side. You are placed in the universal body of the Church, and they are placed in her mystical body to feed your souls, ministering to you the Blood in the Sacraments which you receive from the Church, their task being to extract the thorns of mortal sin, and to plant in you the seed of grace. They are my labourers in the vine of your soul, grafted upon the vine of the Holy Church. And every rational creature has her own vine, that is the vine of her soul; she labours this vine by means of her will and free choice in time, that is to say, while she lives, but when the time is past she can do no more work, neither good nor evil, but only while she lives can she till the vine in which I have placed her.

“And she has received such strength for this labour of her soul that neither the devil nor any other creature can take it from her without her consent; for she was strengthened in the reception of Holy Baptism, and there was given her then a pruning-knife with the blades of love of virtue and hatred of sin, through which very same love, and hatred of sin, My only-begotten Son died, giving you His Blood by which you have life in Holy Baptism. So you have the knife which you should use, by your own free choice, while you have the time, to cut out the thorns of mortal sins and plant the virtues, because in no other way could you receive the fruit of the Blood from the ministers labouring at My orders in the Holy Church, of whom I say that they remove mortal sin from the vine of the soul and give her grace, showing forth the Blood in the Sacraments which are ordained in the Church. It is necessary, therefore, that you should first wash yourselves with true contrition of heart, and hatred of sin, and love of virtue; then, indeed, you will receive the fruit of the Blood, but in no other way will you be able to receive it, unless you dispose yourselves for your part, as good branches united to the vine of My only-begotten Son Who said: *“I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman, and you are the branches.”* And this, indeed, is the truth, that I am the Husbandman, for

everything that has being has proceeded and proceeds from Me. My power is inestimable, for by it, I govern the whole universe, and nothing was ever made or governed without Me. I am the Husbandman who planted the true Vine of My only-begotten Son in the earth of your humanity, so that you, being branches joined to the Vine, may bring forth fruit. But he who does not bring forth the fruit of holy actions will be cut off from the Vine, and will wither away. For, being separated from the Vine, he loses the life of grace and is cast into eternal fire, even as the branch which brings forth no fruit is cut off from the Vine and burnt, being good for nothing else. Such as these, who are cut off for their offences, and die in the guilt of mortal sin, the Divine Justice casts into the eternal fire, since they are good for nothing else. These have not laboured their own vine, but, on the contrary, have destroyed it, and not only their own but that of their neighbour; and yet it seems to them that they have planted a good strong plant of virtue, but it has not sprung from the seed of grace, which they received with the light of Holy Baptism, sharing the Blood of My Son which was the wine produced by this true Vine. But they have taken that seed and have cast it as food to beasts, that is to divers and many sinners, and so they have trampled it under the feet of their own disordinate lust, and have ruined themselves and their neighbours; but My servants do not so, and you should imitate them, that is, you should remain calmly united to the true Vine, and then you will bring forth much fruit, because you will participate in the sap thereof. And, remaining thus in My Word, you will remain in Me, because He and I are together one thing. Remaining in Him, you will follow His teaching, and following His teaching, you will participate in the very substance of His Divine Word, that is, you will participate in My Eternal Deity, joined to your humanity, leading you on by a Divine love which intoxicates the soul, and therefore I said that you share the substance of the Vine.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

How God farms and prunes His vine ; and how each man's vine is so closely united with his neighbour's, that he cannot either cultivate or ruin the one without the other.

“ Dost thou know how I act in order that My servants may be united in following the doctrine of My sweet and amorous Word ? I prune them in order that they may bring forth much fruit, and that their fruit may be fit for My table, and may not remain wild. In the same way a husbandman prunes and sets in order a good branch of a vine so that it may make better and more wine ; and the branch that brings forth no fruit, he cuts away and casts into the fire. So I, the true Husbandman, prune My servants who remain in Me, with many tribulations, so that they may bring forth more and better fruit, and that their virtue may be proved ; and those that do not bring forth fruit are cut off and cast into the fire. These, then, are true labourers who cultivate well their soul, rooting out all self-love, and turning over the earth of their affection on Me. They nourish and increase the seed of grace which they received in Holy Baptism, and labouring their own vine, labour their neighbour's, for they cannot labour one without the other. Thou rememberest that all good and all evil were accomplished by means of the neighbour. Thus, then, do you become My husbandmen, proceeding from Me, the Superior and Eternal Husbandman Who have joined you together, grafting you on the true Vine by the union which I have made with you. Remember, then, that all rational creatures have their own vine indeed, but it is joined directly to their neighbour's vine, so closely that no one can do good or harm to his neighbour without doing it to himself, and all of you together make up the universal vine which is the whole congregation of Christians who are united in the vine of the mystical body of Holy Church, from which you draw your life. In which vineyard is planted the Vine of My only-begotten Son, on Which you should be grafted ; for, if you are not

grafted on Him, you become rebels to the Holy Church, and, as limbs, cut from the body, which immediately corrupt.

“It is true that, while you have time, you can free yourselves from the stench of sin by true repentance, turning to My ministers, the husbandmen, who hold the key of the Wine, that is, of the Blood that issued from His Vine. Which Blood is so perfectly made that, through no defect of the minister, can its effect be hindered. The branches are bound up with the bonds of love, and he who binds them must do so with true humility, acquired by a true knowledge of himself and Me. See, then, that I have placed you all as husbandmen, and now again, I invite you to your labour, because the world is reaching an evil pass; and the thorns are so multiplied in the vineyard that they have crushed out the seed, so that My vines will bring forth no fruit of grace. I wish you, then, to be true husbandmen, and with great zeal to cultivate souls in the mystical body of the Holy Church, and this, I say, because I wish to do mercy to the world, for which thou prayest to Me so ardently.”

## CHAPTER XXV.

How this soul prays God to show her those who cross by the aforesaid Bridge, and those who do not.

THEN this soul exclaimed with ardent love,—“Oh, inestimable Charity, sweet above all sweetness! Who would not be inflamed by such great love? What heart can help breaking at such tenderness? It seems, oh, Abyss of Charity, as if thou wert mad with love of Thy creature, as if Thou couldest not live without him, and yet Thou art our God who hast no need of us, Thy greatness does not increase through our good, for Thou art unchangeable, and our evil causes Thee no harm, for Thou art the Supreme and Eternal Goodness. What moves Thee to do us such mercy through pure love, and on account of no debt that Thou owedst us, or need that Thou hadst of us? We

are rather Thy guilty and malignant debtors. Wherefore, if I understand aright, Oh, Supreme and Eternal Truth, I am the thief and Thou hast been punished for me. For I see Thy Word, Thy Son, fastened and nailed to the Cross, of which thou hast made me a Bridge, as Thou hast shown me, Thy miserable servant, for which reason, my heart is bursting, and yet cannot burst, through the hunger and the desire which it has conceived towards Thee. I remember, my Lord, that Thou wast willing to show me who are those who go by the Bridge and those who do not ; should it please Thy goodness to manifest this to me, willingly would I see and hear it."

## CHAPTER XXVI.

How this Bridge has three steps, which signify the three states of the soul ; and how, being lifted on high, yet it is not separated from the earth ; and how these words are to be understood : "*If I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all things unto Me.*"

THEN the Eternal God, to enamour and excite that soul still more for the salvation of souls, replied to her, and said : "First, as I have shown thee that for which thou didst wish, and ask Me, I will now explain to thee the nature of this Bridge. I have told thee, My daughter, that the Bridge reaches from Heaven to earth ; this is through the union which I have made with man, whom I formed of the clay of the earth. Now learn that this Bridge, My only-begotten Son, has three steps, of which two were made with the wood of the most Holy Cross, and the third still retains the great bitterness He tasted, when He was given gall and vinegar to drink. In these three steps you will recognise three states of the soul, which I will explain to thee below. The feet of the soul, signifying her affection, are the first step, for the feet carry the body as the affection carries the soul. Wherefore these pierced Feet are steps by which thou canst arrive at His Side, Which manifests to thee the secret of His Heart, because the soul, rising on the steps of

her affection, commences to taste the love of His Heart, gazing into that open Heart of My Son, with the eye of the intellect, and finds It consumed with ineffable love. I say consumed, because He does not love you for His own profit, because you can be of no profit to Him, He being one and the same thing with Me. Then the soul is filled with love, seeing herself so much loved. Having passed the second step, the soul reaches out to the third—that is—to the Mouth, where she finds peace from the terrible war she has been waging with her sin. On the first step, then, lifting her feet from the affections of the earth, the soul strips herself of vice; on the second she fills herself with love and virtue; and on the third she tastes peace. So the Bridge has three steps, in order that, climbing past the first and the second, you may reach the last, which is lifted on high, so that the water, running beneath, may not touch it; for, in My Son, was no venom of sin. This Bridge is lifted on high, and yet, at the same time, joined to the earth. Dost thou know when it was lifted on high? When My Son was lifted up on the wood of the most Holy Cross, the Divine nature remaining joined to the lowliness of the earth of your humanity.

“For this reason I said to thee that, being lifted on high, He was not lifted out of the earth, for the Divine nature is united and kneaded into one thing with it. And there was no one who could go on the Bridge until It had been lifted on high, wherefore He said,—‘*Si exaltatus fuero a terra omnia traham ad me ipsum,*’ that is, ‘*If I am lifted on high I will draw all things to Me.*’ My Goodness, seeing that in no other way could you be drawn to Me, I sent Him in order that He should be lifted on high on the wood of the Cross, making of it an anvil on which My Son, born of human generation, should be re-made, in order to free you from death, and to restore you to the life of grace; wherefore He drew everything to Himself by this means, namely, by showing the ineffable love, with which I love you, the heart of man being always attracted by love. Greater love, then, I could not show you, than to lay down My life for you; perforce, then, My Son was treated in this way by love, in order that

ignorant man should be unable to resist being drawn to Me.

“In very truth, then, My Son said, that, being lifted on high, He would draw all things to Him. And this is to be understood in two ways. Firstly, that, when the heart of man is drawn by the affection of love, as I have said, it is drawn together with all the powers of his soul, that is, with the Memory, the Intellect, and the Will; now, when these three powers are harmoniously joined together in My Name, all the other operations which the man performs, whether in deed or thought, are pleasing, and joined together by the effect of love, because love is lifted on high, following the Sorrowful Crucified One; so My Truth said well, ‘*If I am lifted on high,*’ etc., meaning, that if the heart and the powers of the soul are drawn to Him, all the actions are also drawn to Him. Secondly, everything has been created for the service of man, to serve the necessities of rational creatures, and the rational creature has not been made for them, but for Me, in order to serve Me with all his heart, and with all his affection. See, then, that man being drawn, everything else is drawn with him, because everything else has been made for him. It was therefore necessary that the Bridge should be lifted on high, and have steps, in order that it might be climbed with greater facility.”

## CHAPTER XXVII.

How this Bridge is built of stones which signify virtues; and how on the Bridge is a hostelry where food is given to the travellers; and how he who goes over the Bridge goes to life, while he who goes under It goes to perdition and death.

THIS Bridge is built of stones, so that, if the rain come, it may not impede the traveller. Dost thou know what these stones are? They are the stones of true and sincere virtues. These stones were not built into the walls before the Passion of My Son, and therefore even those who attempted to walk



by the road of virtue were prevented from arriving at their journey's end, because Heaven was not yet unlocked with the key of the Blood, and the rain of Justice did not let them pass ; but, after the stones were made, and built up on the Body of My sweet Son, My Word, of Whom I have spoken to thee, He, Who was Himself the Bridge, moistened the mortar for its building with His Blood. That is, His Blood was united with the mortar of divinity, and with the fortitude, and the fire of love ; and, by My power, these stones of the virtues were built into a wall, upon Him as the foundation, for there is no virtue which has not been proved in Him, and from Him all virtues have their life. Wherefore no one can have the virtue given by a life of grace, but from Him, that is, without following the footsteps of His doctrine. He has built a wall of the virtues, planting them as living stones, and cementing them with His Blood, so that every believer may walk speedily, and without any servile fear of the rain of Divine justice, for he is sheltered by the mercy which descended from Heaven in the Incarnation of this My Son. How was Heaven opened ? With the key of His Blood ; so thou seest that the Bridge is walled and roofed with Mercy. His also is the Hostelry in the Garden of the Holy Church, which keeps and ministers the Bread of Life, and gives to drink of the Blood, so that My creatures, journeying on their pilgrimage, may not, through weariness, faint by the way ; and for this reason My love has ordained that the Blood and the Body of My only begotten Son, wholly God and wholly man, may be ministered to you. The pilgrim, having passed the Bridge, arrives at the door which is part of the Bridge, at which all must enter, wherefore He says—*'I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life, he who follows Me does not walk in darkness, but in light.* And in another place My Truth says, *'That no man can come to Me if not by Him,'* and so indeed it is. Therefore He says of Himself that He is the Road, and this is the truth, and I have already shewn thee that He is a Road in the form of the Bridge. And He says that He is the Truth, and so He is, because He is united with Me Who am the Truth, and he who follows

Him, walks in the Truth, and in Life, because he who follows this Truth receives the life of grace, and cannot faint from hunger, because the Truth has become your food, nor fall in the darkness, because He is light without any falsehood. And, with that Truth, He confounded and destroyed the lie that the Devil told to Eve, with which he broke up the road to Heaven, and the Truth brought the pieces together again, and cemented them with His Blood. Wherefore, those who follow this road are the sons of the Truth, because they follow the Truth, and pass through the door of Truth and find themselves united to Me, Who am the Door and the Road and at the same time Infinite Peace.

But he, who walks not on this road, goes under the Bridge, in the river where there are no stones, only water, and since there are no supports in the water, no one can travel that way without drowning; thus have come to pass the sins, and the condition of the world. Wherefore, if the affection is not placed on the stones, but is placed, with disordinate love, on creatures, loving them, and being kept by them far from Me, the soul drowns, for creatures are like water that continually runs past, and man also passes continually like the river, although it seems to him that he stands still and the creatures that he loves pass by, and yet he is passing himself continually to the end of his journey—death! And he would fain retain himself, (that is his life, and the things that he loves,) but he does not succeed, either, through death, by which he has to leave them, or, through my disposition, by which these created things are taken from the sight of My creatures. Such as these follow a lie, walking on the road of falsehood, and are sons of the Devil, who is the Father of Lies; and, because they pass by the door of falsehood, they receive eternal damnation. So then thou seest, that I have shown thee both Truth and Falsehood, that is, My road which is Truth, and the Devil's which is Falsehood."

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

How travelling on both of these roads, that is the Bridge and the River, is fatiguing; and of the delight which the soul feels in travelling by the Bridge.

“THESE are the two roads, and both are hard to travel. Wonder, then, at the ignorance and blindness of man, who, having a Road made for him, which causes such delight to those who use It, that every bitterness becomes sweet, and every burden light, yet prefers to walk over the water. For those who cross by the Bridge, being still in the darkness of the body, find light, and, being mortal, find immortal life, tasting, through love, the light of Eternal Truth Which promises refreshment to him who wears himself for Me, Who am grateful and just, and render to every man according as he deserves. Wherefore every good deed is rewarded, and every fault is punished. The tongue would not be sufficient to relate the delight felt by him who goes on this road, for, even in this life, he tastes and participates in that good which has been prepared for him in eternal life. He, therefore, is a fool indeed, who despises so great a good, and chooses rather to receive in this life, the earnest money of Hell, walking by the lower road with great toil, and without any refreshment or advantage. Wherefore, through their sins, they are deprived of Me, Who am the Supreme and Eternal Good. Truly then hast thou reason for grief, and I will that thou and My other servants remain in continual bitterness of soul at the offence done to Me, and in compassion for the ignorant, and the loss of those who, in their ignorance, thus offend Me. Now thou hast seen and heard about this Bridge, how it is, and this I have told thee in order to explain My words, that My only-begotten Son was a Bridge. And thus, thou seest that He is the Truth, made in the way that I have shown thee, that is—by the union of height and lowliness.”

## CHAPTER XXIX.

How this Bridge, having reached to Heaven on the day of the Ascension, did not for that reason leave the earth.

“WHEN My only-begotten Son returned to Me, forty days after the resurrection, this Bridge, namely Himself, arose from the earth, that is, from among the conversation of men, and ascended into Heaven by virtue of the Divine Nature and sat at the right hand of Me, the Eternal Father, as the angels said, on the day of the Ascension, to the disciples, standing like dead men, their hearts lifted on high, and ascended into Heaven with the wisdom of My Son— ‘Do not stand here any longer, for He is seated at the right hand of the Father!’ When He, then, had thus ascended on high, and returned to Me the Father, I sent the Master, that is the Holy Spirit, Who came to you with My power and the wisdom of My Son, and with His own clemency, which is the essence of the Holy Spirit. He is one thing with Me, the Father, and with My Son. And He built up the road of the doctrine which My Truth had left in the world. Thus, though the bodily presence of My Son left you, His doctrine remained, and the virtue of the stones founded upon this doctrine, which is the way made for you by this Bridge. For first, He practised this doctrine and made the road by His actions, giving you His doctrine by example rather than by words; for He practised, first Himself, what He afterwards taught you, then the clemency of the Holy Spirit made you certain of the doctrine, fortifying the minds of the disciples to confess the truth, and to announce this road, that is, the doctrine of Christ crucified, reproof, by this means, the world of its injustice and false judgment, of which injustice and false judgment, I will in time discourse to you at greater length.

“This much I have said to thee in order that there might be no cloud of darkness in the mind of your hearers, that is, that they may know that of this Body of Christ I made

a Bridge by the union of the divine with the human nature, for this is the truth.

“This Bridge, taking its point of departure in you, rose into Heaven, and was the one road which was taught you by the example and life of the Truth. What has now remained of all this, and where is the road to be found? I will tell thee, that is, I will rather tell those who might fall into ignorance on this point. I tell thee that this way of His doctrine, of which I have spoken to thee, confirmed by the Apostles, declared by the blood of the martyrs, illuminated by the light of doctors, confessed by the confessors, narrated in all its love by the Evangelists, all of whom stand as witnesses to confess the Truth, is found in the mystical body of the Holy Church. These witnesses are like the light placed on a candlestick, to show forth the way of the Truth which leads to life with a perfect light, as I have said to thee, and, as they themselves say to thee, with proof, since they have proved in their own cases, that every person may, if he will, be illuminated to know the Truth, unless he choose to deprive his reason of light by his inordinate self-love. It is, indeed, the truth that His doctrine is true, and has remained like a lifeboat to draw the soul out of the tempestuous sea and to conduct her to the port of salvation.

“Wherefore, first I gave you the Bridge of My Son living and conversing in very deed amongst men, and when He, the living Bridge, left you, there remained the Bridge and the road of His doctrine, as has been said, His doctrine being joined with My power and with His wisdom, and with the clemency of the Holy Spirit. This power of Mine gives the virtue of fortitude to whoever follows this road, wisdom gives him light, so that, in this road, he may recognise the truth, and the Holy Spirit gives him love, which consumes and takes away all sensitive love out of the soul, leaving there only the love of virtue. Thus, in both ways, both actually and through His doctrine, He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life; that is, the Bridge which leads you to the height of Heaven. This is what He meant when He said, *‘I came from the Father, and I return to the Father,*

*and shall return to you;* that is to say, 'My Father sent Me to you, and made Me your Bridge, so that you might be saved from the river and attain to life.' Then He says, '*I will return to you, I will not leave you orphans, but will send you the Paraclete*'—as if My Truth should say, 'I will go to the Father and return; that is, that when the Holy Spirit shall come, who is called the Paraclete, He will show you more clearly, and will confirm you in the way of truth, that I have given you.' He said that He would return, and He did return, because the Holy Spirit came not alone, but with the power of the Father, and the wisdom of the Son, and the clemency of His own Essence.

"See then how He returns, not in actual flesh and blood, but, as I have said, building the road of His doctrine, with His power, which road cannot be destroyed or taken away from him who wishes to follow it, because it is firm and stable, and proceeds from Me, Who am immoveable.

"Manfully, then, should you follow this road, without any cloud of doubt, but with the light of faith which has been given you as a principle in Holy Baptism.

"Now I have fully shown to you the Bridge as it actually is, and the doctrine, which is one and the same thing with it. And I have shown it to the ignorant, in order that they may see where this road of Truth is, and where stand those who teach it; and I have explained that they are the Apostles, Martyrs, Confessors, Evangelists, and Holy Doctors, placed like lanterns in the Holy Church.

"And I have shown how My Son, returning to Me, none the less, returned to you, not in His bodily presence, but by His power, when the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples, as I have said. For in his bodily presence He will not return until the last Day of Judgment, when He will come again with My Majesty and Divine Power to judge the world, to render good to the virtuous, and reward them for their labours, both in body and soul, and to dispense the evil of eternal death to those who have lived wickedly in the world.

"And now I wish to tell thee that which I, the Truth, promised thee, that is, to show thee the perfect, the imperfect, and the supremely perfect; and the wicked, who, through their iniquities, drown in the river, attaining to

punishment and torment; wherefore I say to you, My dearest sons, walk over the Bridge, and not underneath it, because underneath is not the way of truth, but the way of falsehood, by which walk the wicked, of whom I will presently speak to you. These are those sinners for whom I beg you to pray to Me, and for whom I ask in addition your tears and sweat, in order that they may receive mercy from Me."

✓ CHAPTER XXX. ✓ p. 5, 135

How this soul wondering at the mercy of God, relates many gifts and graces given to the human race.

THEN this soul, as it were, like one intoxicated, could not contain herself, but, standing before the face of God, exclaimed, "How great is the Eternal Mercy with which thou coverest the sins of Thy creatures! I do not wonder that Thou sayest of those who abandon mortal sin and return to Thee, '*I do not remember that you have ever offended Me.*' Oh, ineffable Mercy! I do not wonder that Thou sayest this to those who are converted, when Thou sayest of those who persecute Thee, 'I wish you to pray for such, in order that I may do them mercy.' Oh, Mercy, who proceedest from thy Eternal Father, the Divinity Who governest with thy power the whole world, by Thee were we created, in Thee were we re-created in the Blood of Thy Son. Thy Mercy preserves us, Thy Mercy caused Thy Son to do battle for us, hanging by His arms on the wood of the Cross, life and death battling together; then life confounded the death of our sin, and the death of our sin destroyed the bodily life of the Immaculate Lamb. Which was finally conquered? Death! By what means? Mercy! Thy Mercy gives light and life, by which Thy clemency is known in all Thy creatures, both the just and the unjust. In the height of Heaven Thy Mercy, shines that is, in Thy saints. If I turn to the earth, it abounds with Thy Mercy. In the darkness of Hell Thy Mercy shines, for the damned do not receive the pains they deserve; with Thy Mercy Thou temperest Justice. By

x
 Mercy Thou hast washed us in the Blood, and by Mercy Thou wishest to converse with Thy creatures. Oh, Loving Madman! Was it not enough for Thee to become Incarnate, that Thou must also die? Was not death enough, that Thou must also descend into Limbo, taking thence the holy fathers to fulfil Thy Mercy and Thy Truth in them? Because Thy goodness promises a reward to them that serve Thee in truth, didst Thou descend to Limbo, to withdraw from their pain Thy servants, and give them the fruit of their labours. Thy Mercy constrains Thee to give even more to man, namely, to leave Thyself to him in food, so that we, weak ones, should have comfort, and the ignorant commemorating Thee, should not lose the memory of Thy benefits. Wherefore every day Thou givest Thyself to man, representing Thyself in the Sacrament of the Altar, in the body of Thy Holy Church. What has done this? Thy Mercy. Oh, Divine Mercy! My heart suffocates in thinking of thee, for on every side to which I turn my thought, I find nothing but mercy. Oh, Eternal Father! Forgive my ignorance, that I presume thus to chatter to Thee, but the love of Thy Mercy will be my excuse before the Face of Thy loving-kindness."

### CHAPTER XXXI.

Of the baseness of those who pass by the river under the Bridge; and how the soul, that passes underneath, is called by God the tree of death, whose roots are held in four vices.

AFTER this soul had refreshed a little her heart in the mercy of God, by these words, she humbly waited for the fulfilment of the promise made to her, and God continuing His discourse said: "Dearest daughter, thou hast spoken before Me of My mercy, because I gave it thee to taste and to see in the word which I spoke to thee when I said: 'these are those for whom I pray you to intercede with Me,' but know, that My mercy is without any comparison, far more than thou canst see, because thy sight is imperfect,



and My mercy perfect and infinite, so that there can be no comparison between the two, except what may be between a finite and an infinite thing. But I have wished that thou shouldst taste this mercy, and also the dignity of man, which I have shown thee above, so that thou mightest know better the cruelty of those wicked men who travel below the Bridge. Open the eye of thy intellect, and wonder at those who voluntarily drown themselves, and at the baseness to which they are fallen by their fault, from which cause, they have first become weak, and this was when they conceived mortal sin in their minds, for they then bring it forth, and lose the life of grace. And, as a corpse which can have no feeling or movement of itself, but only when it is moved and lifted by others, so those, who are drowned in the stream of disordinate love of the world, are dead to grace. Wherefore because they are dead their memory takes no heed of My mercy. The eye of their intellect sees not and knows not My Truth, because their feeling is dead, that is, their intellect has no object before it but themselves, with the dead love of their own sensuality, and so their will is dead to My will because it loves nothing but dead things. These three powers then being dead, all the soul's operations both in deed and thought are dead as far as grace is concerned. For the soul cannot defend herself against her enemies, nor help herself through her own power, but only so far as she is helped by Me. It is true indeed, that every time that this corpse, in whom only free-will has remained, (which remains as long as the mortal body lives,) asks My help, he can have it, but never can he help himself; he has become insupportable to himself, and, wishing to govern the world, is governed by that which is not, that is by sin, for sin in itself is nothing, and such men have become the servants and slaves of sin. I had made them trees of love with the life of grace which they received in Holy Baptism; and they have become trees of death, because they are dead, as I have already said to thee. Dost thou know how this tree finds such roots? In the height of pride, which is nourished by their own sensitive self-love. Its branch is

their own impatience, and its off-shoot indiscretion : these are the four principal vices which destroy the soul of him who is a tree of death, because he has not drawn life from grace. Inside the tree is nourished the worm of conscience, which, while man lives in mortal sin, is blinded by self-love, and therefore felt but little ; the fruits of this tree are mortal, for they have drawn their nourishment, which should have been humility, from the roots of pride, and the miserable soul is full of ingratitude, whence proceeds every evil. But if she were grateful for the benefits she has received, she would know Me, and knowing Me would know herself, and so would remain in My love : but she, as if blind, goes groping down the river, and she does not see that the water does not support her."

## CHAPTER XXXII.

How the fruits of this tree are as diverse as are the sins ; and first, of the sin of sensuality.

"THE fruits of this death-giving tree, are as diverse as sins are diverse. See that some of these fruits are the food of beasts who live impurely, using their body and their mind like a swine who wallows in mud, for in the same way they wallow in the mire of sensuality. Oh, ugly soul, where hast thou left thy dignity ? Thou wast made sister to the angels, and now thou art become a brute beast. To such misery come sinners, notwithstanding that they are sustained by Me, who am Supreme Purity, notwithstanding that the very devils, whose friends and servants they have become, cannot endure the sight of such filthy actions. Neither does any sin, abominable as it may be, take away the light of the intellect from man, so much as does this one. This the philosophers knew, not by the light of grace, because they had it not, but because nature gave them the light to know that this sin obscured the intellect, and for that reason they preserved themselves in continence the

better to study. Thus also they flung away their riches in order that the thought of them should not occupy their heart. Not so does the ignorant and false Christian, who has lost grace by sin."

### CHAPTER XXXIII.

How the fruit of others is avarice; and of the evils that proceed from it.

"A FRUIT of the earth belongs to some others, who are covetous misers, acting like the mole, who always feeds on earth till death, and when they arrive at death they find no remedy. Such as these, with their meanness, despise My generosity, selling time to their neighbour. They are cruel usurers, and robbers of their neighbour; because in their memory they have not the remembrance of My mercy, for if they had it they would not be cruel to themselves or to their neighbour; on the contrary, they would be compassionate and merciful to themselves, practising the virtues on their neighbour and succouring him charitably. Oh, how many are the evils that come of this cursed sin of avarice, how many homicides and thefts, and how much pillage with unlawful gain, and cruelty of heart and injustice! It kills the soul and makes her the slave of riches, so that she cares not to observe My commandments.

"A miser loves no one except for his own profit. Avarice proceeds from and feeds pride, the one follows from the other, because the miser always carries with him the thought of his own reputation, and thus avarice, which is immediately combined with pride, full of its own opinions, goes on from bad to worse. It is a fire which always germinates the smoke of vainglory and vanity of heart, and boasting in that which does not belong to it. It is a root which has many branches, and the principal one is that which makes a man care for his own reputation, from whence proceeds his desire

to be greater than his neighbour. It also brings forth the deceitful heart that is neither pure nor liberal, but is double, making a man show one thing with his tongue, while he has another in his heart, and making him conceal the truth and tell lies for his own profit. And it produces envy, which is a worm that is always gnawing, and does not let the miser have any happiness out of his own or others' good. How will these wicked ones in so wretched a state give of their substance to the poor, when they rob others? How will they draw their foul soul out of the mire, when they themselves put it there? Sometimes even do they become so brutish, that they do not consider their children and relations, and cause them to fall with them into great misery. And, nevertheless, in My mercy I sustain them, I do not command the earth to swallow them up, that they may repent of their sins. Would they then give their life for the salvation of souls, when they will not give their substance? Would they give their affections when they are gnawed with envy? Oh, miserable vices that destroy the heaven of the soul. Heaven I call her (the soul) because so I made her, living in her at first by grace, and hiding Myself within her, and making of her a mansion through affection of love. Now she has separated herself from Me, like an adulteress, loving herself, and creatures more than Me, and has made a god of herself, persecuting Me with many and diverse sins. And this she does because she does not consider the benefit of the Blood that was shed with so great Fire of Love."

#### CHAPTER XXXIV.

How some others hold positions of authority, and bring forth fruits of injustice.

"THERE are others who hold their heads high by their position of authority, and who bear the banner of injustice—using injustice against Me, God, and against their neigh-

bour, and against themselves—to themselves by not paying the debt of virtue, and towards Me by not paying the debt of honour in glorifying and praising My Name, which debt they are bound to pay. But they, like thieves, steal what is Mine, and give it to the service of their own sensuality. So that they commit injustice towards Me and towards themselves, like blind and ignorant men who do not recognise Me in themselves on account of self-love, like the Jews and the ministers of the Law who, with envy and self-love, blinded themselves so that they did not recognise the Truth, My only-begotten Son, and rendered not His due to the Eternal Truth, who was amongst them, as said My Truth: ‘*The Kingdom of God is among you.*’ But they knew it not, because, in the aforesaid way, they had lost the light of reason, and so they did not pay their debt of honour and glory to Me, and to Him, who was one thing with Me, and like blind ones committed injustice, persecuting Him with much ignominy, even to the death of the Cross.

“Thus are such as these unjust to themselves, to Me, and to their neighbour, unjustly selling the flesh of their dependants, and of any person who falls into their hands.”

## CHAPTER XXXV.

How through these and through other defects, one falls into false judgment; and of the indignity to which one comes.

“By these and by other sins men fall into false judgment, as I will explain to you below. They are continually being scandalised by My works, which are all just, and all performed in truth through love and mercy. With this false judgment, and with the poison of envy and pride, the works of My Son were slandered and unjustly judged, and with lies did His enemies say: ‘*This man works by virtue of Beelzebub.*’ Thus wicked men, standing in self-love, impurity, pride, and avarice, and founded in envy, and in

perverse rashness with impatience, are for ever scandalised at Me and at My servants, whom they judge to be feignedly practising the virtues, because their heart is rotten, and, having spoilt their taste, good things seem evil to them, and bad things, that is to say disorderly living, seem good to them. Oh, how blind is the human generation in that it considers not its own dignity! From being great thou hast become small, from a ruler thou hast become a slave, and that in the vilest service that can be had, because thou art the servant and slave of sin, and art become like unto that which thou dost serve.

X "Sin is nothing. Thou, then, hast become nothing; it has deprived thee of life, and given thee death. This life and power were given you by the Word, My only-begotten Son, the glorious Bridge, He drawing you from out of your servitude when you were servants of the devil, Himself becoming as a servant to take you out of servitude, imposing on Himself obedience to do away the disobedience of Adam, and humbling Himself to the shameful death of the Cross to confound pride. By His death He destroyed every vice, so that no one could say that any vice remained that was not punished and beaten out with pains, as I said to thee above, when I said that of His Body He had made an anvil. All the remedies are ready to save men from eternal death, and they despise the Blood, and have trampled It under the feet of their disordinate affection; and it is for this injustice and false judgment that the world is reprovèd, and will be reprovèd on the Last Day of Judgment.

"This was meant by My Truth when He said: '*I will send the Paraclete, who will reprove the world for injustice and false judgment.*' And it was reprovèd when I sent the Holy Spirit on the Apostles."

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

Of the words that Christ said : "*I will send the Holy Spirit, who will reprove the world of injustice and of false judgment*"; and how one of these reproofs is continuous.

"THERE are three reproofs. One was given when the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples, who, as it is said, being fortified by My power, and illuminated by the wisdom of My beloved Son, received all in the plenitude of the Holy Spirit. Then the Holy Spirit, who is one thing with Me and with My Son, reprovèd the world by the mouth of the Apostles, with the doctrine of My Truth. They and all others, who are descended from them, following the truth which they understand through the same means, reprove the world.

"This is that continuous reproof that I make to the world by means of the Holy Scriptures, and My servants, putting the Holy Spirit on their tongues to announce My truth, even as the Devil puts himself on the tongues of his servants, that is to say, of those who pass through the river in iniquity. This is that sweet reproof that I have fixed for ever, in the aforesaid way, out of My most great affection of love for the salvation of souls. And they cannot say 'I had no one who reprovèd me,' because the truth is revealed to them showing them vice and virtue. And I have made them see the fruit of virtue, and the hurtfulness of vice, to give them love and holy fear with hatred of vice and love of virtue, and this truth has not been shown them by an angel, so that they cannot say, 'the angel is a blessed spirit who cannot offend, and feels not the vexations of the flesh as we do, neither the heaviness of our body,' because the Incarnate Word of My Truth has been given to them with your mortal flesh.

"Who were the others who followed this Word? Mortal creatures, susceptible of pain like you, having the same opposition of the flesh to the Spirit, as had the glorious Paul, My standard bearer, and many other saints who, by

one thing or another, have been tormented. Which torments I permitted for the increase of grace and virtue in their souls. Thus, they were born in sin like you, and nourished with a like food, and I am God now as then. My power is not weakened and cannot become weak. So that I can and will succour him who wishes to be succoured by Me. Man wants My succour when he comes out of the river, and walks by the Bridge, following the doctrine of My Truth. Thus no one has any excuse, because both reproof and truth are constantly given to them. Wherefore, if they do not amend while they have time, they will be condemned by the second condemnation which will take place at the extremity of death, when My Justice will cry to them, 'Rise, ye dead and come to judgment!' That is to say, 'Thou, who art dead to grace, and hast reached the moment of thy corporal death, arise and come before the Supreme Judge with thy injustice and false judgment, and with the extinguished light of faith which thou didst receive burning in Holy Baptism (and which thou hast blown out with the wind of pride), and with the vanity of thy heart, with which thou didst set thy sails to winds which were contrary to thy salvation, for with the wind of self-esteem, didst thou fill the sail of self-love.' Thus didst thou hasten down the stream of the delights and dignities of the world at thy own will, following thy fragile flesh and the temptations of the devil, who, with the sail of thy own will set, has led thee along the underway which is a running stream, and so has brought thee with himself to eternal damnation."

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

Of the second reproof of injustice, and of false judgment, in general and in particular.

"THIS second reproof, dearest daughter, is indeed a condemnation, for the soul has arrived at the end, where there can be no remedy, for she is at the extremity of death,



where is the worm of conscience, which I told thee was blinded self-love. Now at the time of death, since she cannot get out of My hands, she begins to see, and therefore is gnawed with remorse, seeing that her own sin has brought her into so great evil. But if the soul have light to know and grieve for her fault, not on account of the pain of Hell that follows upon it, but on account of pain at her offence against Me, Who am Supreme and Eternal Good, still she can find mercy. But if she pass the Bridge of death without light, and alone, with the worm of conscience, without the hope of the Blood, and bewailing herself more on account of her first condemnation than on account of My displeasure, she arrives at eternal damnation. And then she is reprov'd cruelly by My Justice of injustice and of false judgment, and not so much of general injustice and false judgment which she has practis'd generally in all her works, but much more on account of the particular injustice and false judgment which she practises at the end, in judging her misery greater than My mercy. This is that sin which is neither pardon'd here nor there, because the soul would not be pardon'd, depreciating My mercy. Therefore is this last sin graver to Me than all the other sins that the soul has committed. Wherefore the despair of Judas displeas'd Me more, and was more grave to My Son than was his betrayal of Him. So that they are reprov'd of this false judgment, which is to have held their sin to be greater than My mercy, and, on that account, are they punish'd with the devils, and eternally tortured with them. And they are reprov'd of injustice because they grieve more over their condemnation than over My displeasure, and do not render to Me that which is Mine, and to themselves that which is theirs. For to Me, they ought to render love and to themselves, bitterness, with contrition of heart, and offer it to Me, for the offence they have done Me. And they do the contrary because they give to themselves love, pitying themselves, and grieving on account of the pain they expect for their sin ; so thou seest that they are guilty of injustice and false judgment, and are punish'd for the one and the other together. Wherefore, they, having depre-

ciated My mercy, I with justice send them, with their cruel servant, sensuality, and the cruel tyrant the Devil, whose servants they made themselves through their own sensuality, so that, together, they are punished and tormented, as together they have offended Me. Tormented, I say, by My ministering devils whom My judgment has appointed to torment those who have done evil."

### CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Of the four principal torments of the damned, from which follow all the others; and particularly of the foulness of the Devil.

"My daughter, the tongue is not sufficient to narrate the pain of these poor souls. As there are three principal vices, namely: self-love, whence proceeds the second, that is love of reputation, whence proceeds the third, that is pride, with injustice and cruelty, and with other filthiness and iniquitous sins, that follow upon these. So I say to thee, that in Hell, the souls have four principal torments, out of which proceed all the other torments. The first is, that they see themselves deprived of the vision of Me, which is such pain to them, that, were it possible, they would rather choose the fire, and the tortures and torments, and to see Me, than to be without the torments and not to see Me.

"This first pain revives in them, then, the second, the worm of Conscience, which gnaws unceasingly, seeing that the soul is deprived of Me, and of the conversation of the angels, through her sin, made worthy of the conversation and sight of the devils, which vision of the Devil is the third pain and redoubles to them their every toil. As the saints exult in the sight of Me, refreshing themselves with joyousness in the fruit of their toils borne for Me with such abundance of love, and displeasure of themselves, so does the sight of the Devil revive these wretched ones to torments, because in seeing him they know themselves more,

that is to say, they know that, by their own sin, they have made themselves worthy of him. And so the worm of Conscience gnaws more and more, and the fire of this Conscience never ceases to burn. And the sight is more painful to them, because they see him in his own form, which is so horrible that the heart of man could not imagine it. And if thou remember well, thou knowest that I showed him to thee in his own form for a little space of time, hardly a moment, and thou didst choose (after thou hadst returned to thyself) rather to walk on a road of fire, even until the Day of Judgment, than to see him again. With all this that thou hast seen, even thou dost not know well how horrible he is, because, by Divine justice, he appears more horrible to the soul that is deprived of Me, and more or less according to the gravity of her sin. The fourth torment that they have is the fire. This fire burns and does not consume, for the being of the soul cannot be consumed, because it is not a material thing that fire can consume. But I, by Divine justice, have permitted the fire to burn them with torments, so that it torments them, without consuming them, with the greatest pains in diverse ways according to the diversity of their sins, to some more, and to some less, according to the gravity of their fault. Out of these four torments issue all others, such as cold and heat and gnashing of the teeth and many others. Now because they did not amend themselves after the first reproof that they had of injustice and false judgment, neither in the second, which was that, in death, they would not hope in Me, nor grieve for the offence done to Me, but only for their own pain, have they thus so miserably received Eternal Punishment."

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

Of the third reproof which is made on the Day of Judgment.

"Now it remains to tell of the third reproof which is on the Last Day of Judgment. Already I have told thee

of two, and now, so that thou mayest see how greatly man deceives himself, I will tell thee of the third—of the General Judgment, when the pain of the miserable soul is renewed and increased by the union that the soul will make with the body, with an intolerable reproof, which will generate in it confusion and shame. Know that, in the Last Day of Judgment, when will come the Word—My Son, with My Divine Majesty to reprove the world with Divine Power, He will not come like a poor one, as when He was born, coming in the womb of the Virgin, and being born in a stable amongst the animals, and then dying between two thieves. Then I concealed My power in Him, letting Him suffer pain and torment like man, not that My divine nature was therefore separated from human nature, but I let him suffer like man to satisfy for your guilt. He will not come thus in that last moment, but He will come, with power, to reprove in His Own Person, and will render to every one his due, and there will be no one in that Day who will not tremble. To the miserable ones who are damned, His aspect will cause such torment and terror that the tongue cannot describe it. To the just it will cause the fear of reverence with great joy ; not that His face changes, because He is unchangeable, being one thing with Me according to the divine nature, and, according to the human nature, His face was unchangeable, after it took the glory of the Resurrection. But, to the eye of the damned, it will appear such, on account of their terrible and darkened vision, that, as the sun which is so bright, appears all darkness to the infirm eye, but to the healthy eye light, (and it is not the defect of the light that makes it appear other to the blind than to the illuminated one, but the defect of the eye which is infirm), so will the condemned ones see His countenance in darkness, in confusion and in hatred, not through defect of My Divine Majesty, with which He will come to judge the world, but through their own defect.”

## CHAPTER XL.

How the damned cannot desire any good.

“AND their hatred is so great that they cannot will or desire any good, but they continually blaspheme Me. And dost thou know why they cannot desire good? Because the life of man ended, free-will is bound. Wherefore they cannot merit, having lost, as they have, the time to do so. If they finish their life, dying in hatred with the guilt of mortal sin, their souls, by divine justice, remain for ever bound with the bonds of hatred, and for ever obstinate in that evil, in which, therefore, being gnawed by themselves, their pains always increase, especially the pains of those who have been the cause of damnation to others, as that rich man, who was damned, demonstrated to you when he begged the favour that Lazarus might go to his brothers, who were in the world, to tell them of his pains. This, certainly, he did not do out of love or compassion for his brothers, for he was deprived of love and could not desire good, either for My honour or their salvation, because, as I have already told thee, the damned souls cannot do any good to their neighbour, and they blaspheme Me, because their life ended in hatred of Me and of virtue. But why then did he do it? He did it because he was the eldest, and had nourished them up in the same miseries in which he had lived, so that he was the cause of their damnation, and he saw pain increased to himself, on account of their damnation when they should arrive in torment together with him, to be gnawed for ever by hatred, because in hatred they finished their lives.”

## CHAPTER XLI.

Of the glory of the Blessed.

“SIMILARLY, the just soul, for whom life finishes in the affection of charity and the bonds of love, cannot increase in virtue,

time having come to nought, but she can always love with that affection with which she comes to Me, and that measure that is measured to her. She always desires Me, and loves Me, and her desire is not in vain—being hungry, she is satisfied, and being satisfied, she has hunger, but the tediousness of satiety and the pain of hunger are far from her. In love, the Blessed rejoice in My eternal vision, participating in that good that I have in Myself, every one according to his measure, that is that, with that measure of love, with which they have come to Me, is it measured to them. Because they have lived in love of Me and of the neighbour, united together with the general love, and the particular, which, moreover both proceed from the same love. And they rejoice and exult, participating in each other's good with the affection of love, besides the universal good that they enjoy altogether. And they rejoice and exult with the angels with whom they are placed, according to their diverse and various virtues in the world, being all bound in the bonds of love. And they have a special participation with those whom they closely loved with particular affection in the world, with which affection they grew in grace, increasing virtue, and the one was the occasion to the other of manifesting the glory and praise of My name, in themselves and in their neighbour ; and, in the life everlasting, they have not lost their love, but have it still, participating closely, with more abundance, the one with the other, their love being added to the universal good, and I would not that thou shouldest think that they have this particular good, of which I have told thee, for themselves alone, for it is not so, but it is shared by all the proved citizens, My beloved sons, and all the angels—for, when the soul arrives at eternal life, all participate in the good of that soul, and the soul in their good. Not that her vessel or theirs can increase, nor that there be need to fill it, because it is full, but they have an exultation, a mirthfulness, a jubilee, a joyousness in themselves, which is refreshed by the knowledge that they have found in that soul. They see that, by My mercy, she is raised from the earth with the plenitude of grace, and therefore they exult in Me in

the good of that soul, which good she has received through My goodness.

“ And that soul rejoices in Me, and in the souls, and in the blessed spirits, seeing and tasting in them the beauty and the sweetness of My love. And their desires for ever cry out to Me, for the salvation of the whole world. And because their life ended in the love of the neighbour, they have not left it behind, but, with it, they will pass through the Door, My only-begotten Son in the way that I will relate to thee. So thou seest that in those bonds of love in which they finished their life, they go on and remain eternally. They are conformed so entirely to My will, that they cannot desire except what I desire, because their free-will is bound in the bond of love, in such a way that, time failing them, and, dying in a state of grace, they cannot sin any more. And their will is so united with Mine, that a father or a mother seeing their son, or a son seeing his father or his mother in Hell, do not trouble themselves, and even are contented to see them punished as My enemies. Wherefore in nothing do they disagree with Me, and their desires are all satisfied. The desire of the blessed is to see My honour in you wayfarers, who are pilgrims, for ever running on towards the term of death. In their desire for My honour, they desire your salvation, and always pray to Me for you, which desire is fulfilled by Me, when you ignorant ones do not resist My mercy. They have a desire too, to regain the gifts of their body, but this desire does not afflict them, as they do not actually feel it, but they rejoice in tasting the desire, from the certainty they feel of having it fulfilled. Their desire does not afflict them, because, though they have it not yet fulfilled, no bliss is thereby lacking to them. Wherefore they feel not the pain of desire. And think not, that the bliss of the body after the resurrection gives more bliss to the soul, for, if this were so, it would follow that, until they had the body, they had imperfect bliss, which cannot be, because no perfection is lacking to them. So it is not the body that gives bliss to the soul, but the soul will give bliss to the body, because the soul will give of her abundance, and will re-clothe her-

self on the Last Day of Judgment, in the garments of her own flesh which she had quitted. For, as the soul is made immortal, stayed and stablished in Me, so the body in that union becomes immortal, and, having lost heaviness, is made fine and light. Wherefore, know that the glorified body can pass through a wall, and that neither water nor fire can injure it, not by virtue of itself, but by virtue of the soul, which virtue is of Me, given to her by grace, and by the ineffable love with which I created her in My image and likeness. The eye of thy intellect is not sufficient to see, nor thy ear to hear, nor thy tongue to tell of the good of the Blessed. Oh, how much delight they have in seeing Me, Who am every good! Oh, how much delight they will have in being with the glorified body, though, not having that delight from now to the general Judgment, they have not, on that account, pain, because no bliss is lacking to them, the soul being satisfied in herself, and, as I have told thee, the body will participate in this bliss.

“ I told thee of the happiness which the glorified body would take in the glorified humanity of My only-begotten Son, which gives you assurance of your resurrection. There, they exult in His wounds, which have remained fresh, and the Scars in His Body are preserved, and continually cry for mercy for you, to Me, the Supreme and Eternal Father. And they are all conformed with Him, in joyousness and mirth, and you will all be conformed with Him, eye with eye, and hand with hand, and with the whole Body of the sweet Word My Son, and, dwelling in Me, you will dwell in Him, because He is one thing with Me. But their bodily eye, as I told thee, will delight itself in the glorified humanity of the Word, My only-begotten Son. Why so? Because their life finished in the affection of My love, and therefore will this delight endure for them eternally. Not that they can work any good, but they rejoice and delight in that good which they have brought with them, that is, they cannot do any meritorious act, by which they could merit anything, because in this life alone can they merit and sin, according as they please, with free-will.

“ These then do not await, with fear, the Divine judgment,



but with joy, and the Face of My Son will not seem to them terrible, or full of hatred, because they finished their lives in love and affection for Me, and good-will towards their neighbour. So thou seest then, that the transformation is not in His Face, when He comes to judge with My Divine Majesty, but in the vision of those who will be judged by Him. To the damned He will appear with hatred and with justice. And to the saved with love and mercy."

## CHAPTER XLII.

How, after the General Judgment, the pain of the damned will increase.

" I HAVE told thee of the dignity of the Righteous, so that thou mayest the better know the misery of the damned. For this is another of their pains, namely, the vision of the bliss of the righteous, which is to them an increase of pain, as, to the righteous, the damnation of the damned is an increase of exultation in My goodness. As light is seen better near darkness, and darkness near light, so the sight of the Blessed increases their pain. With pain they await the Last Day of Judgment, because they see, following it, an increase of pain to themselves. And so will it be, because when that terrible voice shall say to them, ' Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment,' the soul will return with the body, in the just to be glorified, and in the damned to be tortured eternally. And the aspect of My Truth, and of all the blessed ones will reproach them greatly, and make them ashamed, and the worm of conscience will gnaw the pith of the tree, that is the soul, and also the bark outside, which is the body. They will be reproached by the Blood that was shed for them, and by the works of mercy, spiritual and temporal, which I did for them by means of My Son, and which they should have done for their neighbour, as is contained in the Holy Gospel. They will be reproved for their cruelty towards their neighbour, for their pride and self-love, for their filthiness and avarice; and

when they see the mercy that they have received from Me, their reproof will seem to be intensified in harshness. At the time of death, the soul only is reproved, but, at the General Judgment, the soul is reproved together with the body, because the body has been the companion and instrument of the soul—to do good and evil according as the free-will pleased. Every work, good or bad, is done by means of the body. And, therefore, justly, My daughter, glory and infinite good are rendered to My elect ones with their glorified body, rewarding them for the toils they bore for Me, together with the soul. And to the perverse ones will be rendered eternal pains by means of their body, because their body was the instrument of evil. Wherefore, being their body, restored, their pains will revive and increase at the aspect of My Son, their miserable sensuality with its filthiness, in the vision of their nature, (that is, the humanity of Christ) united with the purity of My Deity, and of this mass of their Adam nature raised above all the choirs of Angels, and themselves, by their own fault, sunk into the depths of Hell. And they will see generosity and mercy shining in the blessed ones, who receive the fruit of the Blood of the Lamb, the pains that they have borne remaining as ornaments on their bodies, like the dye upon the cloth, not by virtue of the body but only out of the fulness of the soul, representing in the body the fruit of its labour, because it was the companion of the soul in the working of virtue. As in the mirror is represented the face of the man, so in the body is represented the fruit of bodily toils, in the way that I have told thee.

“The pain and confusion of the darkened ones, on seeing so great a dignity (of which they are deprived), will increase, and in their bodies will appear the sign of the wickedness they have committed, with pain and torture. And when they hear that terrible speech, ‘*Go, cursed ones, to the Eternal Fire,*’ the soul and the body will go to be with the Devil without any remedy or hope—each one being wrapped up in diverse filth of earth, according to his evil works. The miser with the filth of avarice, wrapping himself up with

the worldly substance which he loved disordinately, and burning in the fire ; the cruel one with cruelty ; the foul man with foulness and miserable concupiscence ; the unjust with his injustice ; the envious with envy ; and the hater of his neighbour with hatred. And inordinate self-love, whence were born all their ills, will be burnt with intolerable pain, as the head and principle of every evil, in company with pride. So that body and soul together will be punished in diverse ways. Thus miserably do they arrive at their end who go by the lower way, that is, by the river, not turning back to see their sins and My Mercy. And they arrive at the Gate of the Lie, because they follow the doctrine of the Devil, who is the Father of Lies ; and this Devil is their Door, through which they go to Eternal Damnation, as has been said, as the elect and My sons, keeping by the way above, that is by the Bridge, follow the Way of Truth, and this Truth is the Door, and therefore said My Truth, '*No one can go to the Father but by Me.*' He is the Door and the Way through Which they pass to enter the Sea Pacific. It is the contrary for those who have kept the Way of the Lie, which leads them to the water of death. And it is to this that the Devil calls them, and they are as blind and mad, and do not perceive it, because they have lost the light of faith. The Devil says, as it were, to them : ' Whosoever thirsts for the water of death, let him come and I will give it to him.' "

### CHAPTER XLIII.

Of the use of temptations, and how every soul in her extremity sees her final place either of pain or of glory, before she is separated from the body.

" THE Devil, dearest daughter, is the instrument of My Justice to torment the souls who have miserably offended Me. And I have set him in this life to tempt and molest My creatures, not for My creatures to be conquered, but

that they may conquer, proving their virtue, and receive from Me the glory of victory. And no one should fear any battle or temptation of the Devil that may come to him, because I have made My creatures strong, and have given them strength of will, fortified in the Blood of my Son, which will, neither Devil nor creature can move, because it is yours, given by Me. You therefore, with free arbitration, can hold it or leave it, according as you please. It is an arm, which, if you place it in the hands of the Devil, straightway becomes a knife, with which he strikes you and slays you. But if man do not give this knife of his will into the hands of the Devil, that is, if he do not consent to his temptations and molestations, he will never be injured by the guilt of sin in any temptation, but will even be fortified by it, when the eye of his intellect is opened to see My love which allowed him to be tempted, so as to arrive at virtue, by being proved. For one does not arrive at virtue except through knowledge of self, and knowledge of Me, which knowledge is more perfectly acquired in the time of temptation, because then man knows himself to be nothing, being unable to lift off himself the pains and vexations which he would flee; and he knows Me in his will, which is fortified by My goodness, so that it does not yield to these thoughts. And he has seen that My love permits these temptations, for the devil is weak, and by himself can do nothing, unless I allow him. And I let him tempt, through love, and not through hatred, that you may conquer, and not that you may be conquered, and that you may come to a perfect knowledge of yourself, and of Me, and that virtue may be proved, for it is not proved except by its contrary. Thou seest, then, that he is My minister to torture the damned in Hell, and in this life, to exercise and prove virtue in the soul. Not that it is the intention of the Devil to prove virtue in you (for he has not love), but rather to deprive you of it, and this he cannot do, if you do not wish it. Now thou seest, then, how great is the foolishness of men in making themselves feeble, when I have made them strong, and in putting themselves into the hands of the Devil. Wherefore, know, that at the moment

of death, they, having passed their life under the lordship of the Devil (not that they were forced to do so, for as I told you they cannot be forced, but they voluntarily put themselves into his hands), and, arriving at the extremity of their death under this perverse lordship, they await no other judgment than that of their own conscience, and desperately, despairingly, come to eternal damnation. Wherefore Hell, through their hate, surges up to them in the extremity of death, and before they get there, they take hold of it, by means of their lord the Devil. As the righteous, who have lived in charity and died in love, if they have lived perfectly in virtue, illuminated with the light of faith, with perfect hope in the Blood of the Lamb, when the extremity of death comes, see the good which I have prepared for them, and embrace it with the arms of love, holding fast with pressure of love to Me, the Supreme and Eternal Good. And so they taste eternal life before they have left the mortal body, that is, before the soul be separated from the body. Others who have passed their lives, and have arrived at the last extremity of death with an ordinary charity, (not in that great perfection), embrace My mercy with the same light of faith and hope that had those perfect ones, but, in them, it is imperfect, for, because they were imperfect, they constrained My mercy, counting My mercy greater than their sins. The wicked sinners do the contrary, for, seeing, with desperation, their destination, they embrace it with hatred, as I told thee. So that neither the one nor the other waits for judgment, but, in departing this life, they receive every one their place, as I have told thee, and they taste it and possess it before they depart from the body, at the extremity of death—the damned with hatred and with despair, and the perfect ones with love and the light of faith and with the hope of the Blood. And the imperfect arrive at the place of Purgatory, with mercy and the same faith."

## CHAPTER XLIV.

How the Devil gets hold of souls, under pretence of some good : and, how those are deceived who keep by the river, and not by the aforesaid Bridge, for, wishing to fly pains, they fall into them ; and of the vision of a tree, that this soul once had.

“ I HAVE told thee that the Devil invites men to the water of death, that is, to that which he has, and, blinding them with the pleasures and conditions of the world, he catches them with the hook of pleasure, under the pretence of good, because in no other way could he catch them, for they would not allow themselves to be caught if they saw that no good or pleasure to themselves were to be obtained thereby. For the soul, from her nature, always relishes good, though it is true that the soul, blinded by self-love, does not know and discern what is true good, and of profit to the soul and to the body. And, therefore, the Devil, seeing them blinded by self-love, iniquitously places before them diverse and various delights, coloured so as to have the appearance of some benefit or good ; and he gives to every one according to his condition and those principal vices to which he sees him to be most disposed—of one kind to the secular, of another to the religious, and others to prelates and noblemen, according to their different conditions. I have told thee this, because I now speak to thee of those who drown themselves in the river, and who care for nothing but themselves, to love themselves to My injury, and I will relate to thee their end.

“ Now I want to show thee how they deceive themselves, and how, wishing to flee troubles, they fall into them. For, because it seems to them that following Me, that is, walking by the way of the Bridge, the Word, My Son, is great toil, they draw back, fearing the thorn. This is because they are blinded and do not know or see the Truth, as, thou knowest, I showed thee in the beginning of thy life, when thou didst pray Me to have mercy on the world, and draw it out of the darkness of mortal sin. Thou knowest that I then showed thee Myself under the figure of a Tree, of

which thou sawest neither the beginning nor the end, so that thou didst not see that the roots were united with the earth of your humanity. At the foot of the Tree, if thou rememberest well, there was a certain thorn, from which thorn all those who love their own sensuality kept away, and ran to a mountain of Lolla, in which thou didst figure to thyself all the delights of the world. That Lolla seemed to be of corn and was not, and, therefore, as thou didst see, many souls thereon died of hunger, and many, recognising the deceits of the world, returned to the Tree and passed the thorn, which is the deliberation of the will. Which deliberation, before it is made, is a thorn which appears to man to stand in the way of following the Truth. And conscience always fights on one side, and sensuality on the other ; but as soon as he, with hatred and displeasure of himself, manfully makes up his mind, saying, ' I wish to follow Christ crucified,' he breaks at once the thorn, and finds inestimable sweetness, as I showed thee then, some finding more and some less, according to their disposition and desire. And thou knowest that then I said to thee, ' I am your God, unmoving and unchangeable,' and I do not draw away from any creature who wants to come to Me. I have shown them the Truth, making Myself visible to them, and I have shown them what it is to love anything without Me. But they, as if blinded by the fog of disordinate love, know neither Me nor themselves. Thou seest how deceived they are, choosing rather to die of hunger than to pass a little thorn. And they cannot escape enduring pain, for no one can pass through this life without a cross, far less those who travel by the lower way. Not that My servants pass without pain, but their pain is alleviated. And because—by sin, as I said to thee above—the world germinates thorns and tribulations, and because this river flows with tempestuous waters, I gave you the Bridge, so that you might not be drowned.

“ I have shown thee how they are deceived by a disordinate fear, and how I am your God, immovable, Who am not an Acceptor of persons but of holy desire. And this I have shown thee under the figure of the Tree, as I told thee.”

## CHAPTER XLV.

How, the world having germinated thorns, who those are whom they do not harm ; although no one passes this life without pain.

“ Now I want to show thee to whom the thorns and tribulations, that the world germinated through sin, do harm, and to whom they do not. And as, so far, I have shown thee the damnation of sinners, together with My goodness, and have told thee how they are deceived by their own sensuality, now I wish to tell thee how it is only they themselves who are injured by the thorns. No one born passes this life without pain, bodily or mental. Bodily pain My servants bear, but their minds are free, that is, they do not feel the weariness of the pain ; for their will is accorded with Mine, and it is the will that gives trouble to man. Pain of mind and of body have those, of whom I have narrated to thee, who, in this life, taste the earnest money of hell, as My servants taste the earnest money of eternal life. Knowest thou what is the special good of the blessed ones ? It is having their desire filled with what they desire ; wherefore desiring Me, they have Me, and taste Me without any revolt, for they have left the burden of the body, which was a law that opposed the spirit, and came between it and the perfect knowledge of the Truth, preventing it from seeing Me face to face. But after the soul has left the weight of the body, her desire is full, for, desiring to see Me, she sees Me, in which vision is her bliss ; and seeing she knows, and knowing she loves, and loving she tastes Me, Supreme and Eternal Good, and, in tasting Me, she is satisfied, and her desire is fulfilled, that is, the desire she had to see and know Me ; wherefore desiring she has, and having she desires. And as I told thee pain is far from the desire, and weariness from the satisfaction of it. So thou seest that My servants are blessed principally in seeing and in knowing Me, in which vision and knowledge their will is fulfilled, for they have that which they desired to have, and



so are they satisfied. Wherefore I told thee that the tasting of eternal life consisted especially in having that which the will desires, and thus being satisfied ; but know that the will is satisfied in seeing and knowing Me, as I have told thee. In this life then, they taste the earnest money of eternal life, tasting the above, with which I have told thee they will be satisfied.

“ But how have they the earnest money in this present life ? I reply to thee, they have it in seeing My goodness in themselves, and in the knowledge of My Truth, which knowledge, the intellect (which is the eye of the soul) illuminated in Me, possesses. This eye has the pupil of the most holy faith, which light of faith enables the soul to discern, to know, and to follow the way and the doctrine of My Truth—the Word Incarnate ; and without this pupil of faith she would not see, except as a man who has the form of the eye, but who has covered the pupil (which causes the eye to see) with a cloth. So the pupil of the intellect is faith, and if the soul has covered it with the cloth of infidelity, drawn over it by self-love, she does not see, but only has the form of the eye without the light, because she has hidden it. Thus thou seest, that in seeing they know, and in knowing they love, and in loving they deny and lose their self-will. Their own will lost, they clothe themselves in Mine, and I will nothing but your sanctification. At once they set to, turning their back to the way below, and begin to ascend by the Bridge, and pass over the thorns, which do not hurt them, their feet being shod with the affection of My love. For I told thee that My servants suffered corporally but not mentally, because the sensitive will, which gives pain and afflicts the mind of the creature, is dead. Wherefore, the will not being there, neither is there any pain. They bear everything with reverence, deeming themselves favoured in having tribulation for My sake, and they desire nothing but what I desire. If I allow the Devil to trouble them, permitting temptations to prove them in virtue, as I told thee above, they resist with their will fortified in Me, humiliating themselves, and deeming themselves unworthy of peace and quiet of mind and

deserving of pain, and so they proceed with cheerfulness and self-knowledge, without painful affliction. And if tribulations on man's account, or infirmity, or poverty, or change of worldly condition, or loss of children, or of other much loved creatures (all of which are thorns that the earth produced after sin) come upon them, they endure them all with the light of reason and holy faith, looking to Me, Who am the Supreme Good, and Who cannot desire other than good, for which I permit these tribulations through love, and not through hatred. And they that love Me recognise this, and, examining themselves, they see their sins, and understand by the light of faith, that good must be rewarded and evil punished. And they see that every little sin merits infinite pain, because it is against Me, Who am Infinite Good, wherefore they deem themselves favoured because I wish to punish them in this life, and in this finite time ; they drive away sin with contrition of heart, and with perfect patience do they merit, and their labours are rewarded with infinite good. Hereafter they know that all labour in this life is small, on account of the shortness of time. Time is as the point of a needle and no more ; and, when time has passed labour is ended, therefore thou seest that the labour is small. They endure with patience, and the thorns they pass through do not touch their heart, because their heart is drawn out of them and united to Me by the affection of love. It is a good truth then that these do taste eternal life, receiving the earnest money of it in this life, and that, though they walk on thorns, they are not pricked, because as I told thee, they have known My Supreme Goodness, and sought for it where it was to be found, that is in the Word, My only begotten Son."

## CHAPTER XLVI.

Of the evils which proceed from the blindness of the intellect ; and how good works not done in a state of grace are not profitable for eternal life.

“ I HAVE told thee this, so that thou shouldest know well how these, of whose delusion I have been speaking to thee, taste the earnest money of Hell. Now I will tell thee whence proceeds their delusion, and how they receive that earnest money. They are deluded in that they have blinded the eye of their intellect with infidelity, arising from self-love, because, as every truth is acquired by the light of Faith, so by infidelity is acquired every kind of lying deceit. I speak of the infidelity of those who have received holy baptism, through which the pupil of Faith was placed in the eye of their intellect, and as the result of which, on arriving at the age of discretion, if they have exercised themselves rightly in virtue, they have preserved the light of Faith. Wherefore they give birth to living virtues, bringing forth fruit by means of their neighbour, like a woman, who, bringing forth a child alive, brings it living to her husband ; so should they bring their virtues living to Me, Who am the Husband of the soul. But these wretches do the contrary, for when they have arrived at the age of discretion, at which time they should, by the exercise of the light of Faith, bring their virtues living to the birth of grace, they bring them forth still-born. Their virtues are dead because all their works are dead, having been performed in mortal sin, and without the light of Faith.

“ Such as these have indeed the form of holy baptism, but not the light thereof, of which they have deprived themselves, through the cloud of sins they have committed, through self-love which has covered the pupil of their eye. To such as these is it said, *Those who have faith without works are dead*. Wherefore as the dead do not see, neither can such a man see, because the pupil of his eye has been darkened, as I have told thee, nor does he know that he remains in the sins which he has committed. He does not

recognise in himself My goodness, whence he has received being and every other grace that he possesses. Wherefore, not recognising Me in himself, he does not hate his own sensuality, but rather loves it, seeking to satisfy his appetite, and so brings forth the dead offspring of many mortal sins. He does not love Me, and not loving Me, does not love what I love, that is to say, his neighbour, and does not delight in doing what pleases Me, wherein consists true and real virtue, which it pleases Me to see in him, not because such virtue profits me, for nothing can profit Me, I being He without whom nothing is done except sin (which is nothing, inasmuch as it deprives the soul of grace and of Me, Who am Every Good.) It is rather on account of their own profit that the virtues of men please Me, for I have the wherewithal to reward them in everlasting life. Thou seest, then, that the faith of these wretches is dead, because it is without works, those which they perform not meriting for them eternal life, because they are deprived of the life of grace. Nevertheless, a man should not leave off doing good, either with or without grace, for, just as every sin is punished, so is all good rewarded. The good which is done in a state of grace merits eternal life, and the good done out of grace is rewarded in various ways, as I told thee above; for sometimes I lend them time for repentance, or put into the hearts of My servants to continue intercessions for them, by means of which they often escape from their sins and miseries. Sometimes, through the disposition of My grace, they receive neither prayers nor time, but are rewarded with temporal things, being treated like animals that are fatted for the slaughter. Therefore such as these, who, having always kicked against My goodness, nevertheless do some good, not in a state of grace, but in sin, and have not profited in their works either by time, or by prayers, or any of the other ways in which I have called them, being reprov'd by Me for their sins, (My goodness wishing nevertheless to reward their works, that is, that little service which they have done), they are rewarded by Me with temporal things on which they fatten, and, not correcting themselves, they arrive at

eternal punishment. So thou seest they are deceived. Who has deceived them? They themselves, because they have deprived themselves of the light of living Faith, and walk like blind men groping, and attach themselves to that which they touch. But, because they do not see, except with a blind eye, they place their affections on transitory things, therefore are they deceived and act like madmen, who look only at the glitter of the gold, and not at the hidden poison. Wherefore know, that the things of the world and all its delights and pleasures they have seized and possessed, without Me, but with disordinate love of self, and these things are like the scorpion which I shewed thee in the beginning, after the figure of the tree, telling thee that it carries gold in front and venom behind, and that the venom was not without the gold, nor the gold without the venom, but that the gold was seen first, and that no one preserved himself from the venom, except those who were illuminated by the light of faith."

## CHAPTER XLVII.

How the commandments cannot be observed by those who do not observe the counsels; and how every state, which a man may choose, if he have a good and holy will, is pleasing to God.

"I HAVE told thee of those, who, with the knife of two blades (that is hatred of vice and love of virtue), for love of Me, cut out the venom of their own sensuality, and, with the light of reason, held and possessed and acquired the gold contained in those mundane things that they desired to keep. But, he who desires to practise great perfection, despises them in deed as well as in thought. These are they, as I told thee, who observe the counsel actually, which was given to them and left by My Truth. And those who retain possession of the things of the world, are those who observe the commandments in action, but the counsels in thought only, and not in deed. For, inasmuch as the counsels are bound up in the commandments, no one can

observe the latter who does not observe the former, at least in thought, that is to say, that they possess the riches of the world humbly and without pride, as lent to them and not their own ; for they are only given to you for your use through My goodness, since you only possess what I give you, and can only retain what I allow you to retain. I give you as much of them as I see to be profitable for your salvation, and in this way should you use them, for a man, so using them, observes the commandment, loving Me above everything, and his neighbour as himself ; for he lives with a pure divested heart, casting riches away from himself in desire and love, and only possessing them in accordance with My will. Such a man therefore, though he possess his riches in deed, observes the counsel in thought, having cut out of his heart the poison of disordinate love and affection. Such as these are in common charity. But those who observe the commandments and counsels in deed as well as in thought are in perfect charity.

“ With true simplicity they observe the counsel which My Truth, the Word Incarnate, gave to that young man who asked, saying : *What must I do, Master, to inherit Eternal life ?* to whom He replied : *Observe the commandments of the Law,* and the young man answering, said : *I have observed them.* Jesus then said : *It is well ; now, if thou wilt be perfect, go, sell all that thou hast and give to the poor.* And the young man was sad, because he still held his riches with too much love.

“ But these perfect ones observe that counsel, abandoning the world with its pleasures, macerating the body with penance and with watching, with humility and continual prayers. The others, dwelling in common charity, who do not raise themselves above their worldly possessions in deed, do not on that account lose eternal life, inasmuch as they are not fettered by them. But, if they wish to possess the things of the world, they should do so in the way that I have told thee, and they do not offend in so possessing them, because everything is good and perfect, and created by Me, Who am the Supreme Good, for the service of My rational creatures ; not that My rational creatures may

become the slaves and servants of the delights of the world, but that, if it pleases them to hold worldly possessions (not desiring to go on to the great perfection), they may hold them not as their servants but as their lords. And they should give their love and desire to Me, possessing every other thing, not as their own, but as lent to them, as I told thee. For I am no Acceptor of creatures, or of conditions, but rather of holy desires ; wherefore, in whatever condition a man may choose to be, he may have a good and holy will and be pleasing to Me. But who will possess in this way ? Those who have destroyed the venom, with hatred of their own sensuality and love of virtue. Having destroyed the venom of disordinate desire, and ruled it with love and fear of Me, a man can choose and hold the condition he prefers, and, in either, he will be capable of receiving eternal life, although the greater perfection and the more pleasing to Me, be to raise himself in deed as well as in thought from everything of the world. But he who does not wish to rise to this perfection, his fragility not allowing him to do so, can remain in the ordinary state, according to his vocation, and this My goodness has ordered so that no one may have excuse for sinning, whatever his condition may be. And truly they have no excuse, because I have condescended to their passions and weaknesses in such a way that they, wishing to remain in the world, can do so, possessing riches, retaining their dignities, living in the state of matrimony, bringing up their children, and striving for them, and remaining in whatever condition they may choose, provided that they truly cut out the venom of their own sensuality, which gives eternal death. And rightly is their own sensuality called venom, because, as a sting gives pain to the body, and finally causes its death unless it is cast out, or some medicine taken, so does the scorpion of worldly delight to the soul ; not that temporal things, in themselves, contain any venom, for they are good and made by Me, Who am Supreme Good, and therefore can be used as man pleases with holy fear and true love, but I am speaking of the sting of the perverse will of man. I say, then, that it envenoms the soul and gives it death, unless

it is drawn out of the heart and the affection, and vomited by holy confession, for confession is a medicine which cures this sting, though it seems bitter to sensual self-love. Thou seest then how deluded are they who can possess and have Me, fleeing sadness and obtaining cheerfulness and consolation, and who, nevertheless, desire evil under colour of good, and give themselves up to the acquiring of gold with disordinate love. But, because they are blinded with much infidelity, feeling themselves envenomed, yet not perceiving how they are stung, they take not the remedy, and bear the cross of the Devil, tasting the earnest money of Hell."

#### CHAPTER XLVIII.

How worldly men cannot be satisfied with their possessions ; and of the suffering their perverse will causes them even in this life.

" I TOLD thee, above, that the will alone is the cause of man's pain, and because My servants are deprived of their own will, and clothed with Mine, they do not feel afflicting pain, but are satisfied, feeling Me by grace in their souls, and if they possessed the whole world without Me they could not be satisfied, because the things created are less than man—for they are made for man, and not man for them—and therefore can he not be satisfied by them, but by Me alone. Wherefore these miserable ones in great blindness are always striving and are never satisfied, desiring that which they cannot have, because they do not ask of Me, Who alone can satisfy. Wilt thou that I tell thee what their pain is ? Thou knowest that love always gives pain, when that thing to which the soul has become conformed is lost. These have become conformed to the earth, through love, in diverse ways, wherefore earth they have become ; some are conformed to riches, some to worldly rank, some to their children, some lose Me by serving creatures, some make of their body a brute beast through their great filthiness, and so, in various ways, they desire and feed themselves on earth,



and they would that things were lasting, but they are not, but pass like the wind ; for either they fail them at the moment of death, or else they are deprived of what they love by My dispensation. And, being deprived, they suffer intolerable pain, and their loss causes them as much grief as they had disordinate love when they possessed them. Had they held them as things lent to them, and not as their own, they would leave them without pain. They have pain then, because they have not what they desire. Because, as I told thee, the world cannot satisfy them, and, being unsatisfied, they suffer. How great is the pain of the prick of conscience ! How great is his pain who thirsts for revenge, which pain continually gnaws him and causes him to die, before he has killed his enemy with the knife of hatred ! How much pain the miser endures, who through avarice cuts down his needs ! How much torment the envious man endures, for envy always gnaws his heart, and does not allow him to take delight in the well-being of his neighbour ! From everything, which a man loves sensually, he draws pain with many disordinate fears. Wherefore, such as these have taken the cross of the Devil, tasting the earnest money of Hell, on which they live in this life, with many and diverse sicknesses, and if they do not correct themselves they will afterwards receive eternal death.

“ These are injured by the thorns of many tribulations, torturing themselves with their own disordinate will, who carry the cross in heart and in body, that is, with pain and torment, the soul and the body pass their time without any merit, because they bear not their labours with patience, but rather with impatience. And, because they have possessed and acquired the gold of the delights of the world with disordinate love, being deprived of the life of grace, and of the affection of charity, they have become trees of death. And, therefore, all their works are dead, and with pain they go through the river, being drowned, and arrive at the water of death, passing with hatred through the gate of the Devil, and receive eternal damnation. Now thou hast seen how they deceive themselves, and with how much pain they go to Hell, making themselves martyrs of the Devil. And thou

hast seen what it is that blinds them, namely the cloud of self-love, hiding the pupil of the light of faith. And thou hast seen how the tribulations of the world, from whatever side they come, injure My servants corporally, but not mentally, because they, being conformed to My will, are contented to suffer pain for Me. But the servants of the world are hurt within and without, and particularly within, by fear, that is, fear of losing that which they possess, and by love, that is, the desire for that which they cannot have. All the other suffering which proceeds from these two principal causes, thy tongue is not sufficient to relate.

“Thou seest, then, that, even in this life, the righteous have a better bargain than the sinners, and thou hast fully seen how they walk and what is their end.”

## CHAPTER XLIX.

How servile fear is not sufficient to give eternal life; and how, by the exercise of this fear, one arrives at the love of virtue.

“Now I say to thee that there are some few who, feeling themselves spurred by the tribulations of the world (which I give in order that the soul may know that her end is not in this life, and that things are imperfect and transitory, and that she may desire Me Who am her End), begin to lift the cloud off themselves, on account of the suffering that sin causes them, and, which they see, must follow sin. With this servile fear they begin to come out of the river, vomiting the poison which was flung to them by the scorpion under the appearance of gold, and which they took without moderation, receiving thereby poison, and, arising, take the direction of the bank to attach themselves to the Bridge.

“But it does not suffice to go with servile fear alone, for to sweep out the house of mortal sin, without filling it with virtue, founded in love and not in fear, will not give eternal life. Man must put both feet on the first step of the Bridge, that is, affection and desire, which are the feet that

carry the soul into the love of My Truth, of Whom I have made for you a Bridge. This servile fear is the first step, which I told thee would have to be ascended, when I told thee how He had made a staircase of His Body, and it is indeed true, that it is almost always the first step that the servants of the world take, arising, first, through the fear of pain. The world begins to displease them, sometimes on account of its tribulations, and sometimes because they become tedious to themselves. If they exercise this fear with the light of faith, they will pass on to the love of virtue.

“But, there are some who proceed with such half-heartedness that oftentimes they turn in again, because, having arrived at the bank, and, contrary winds arising, they are struck by the waves of the tempestuous sea of this dark life. And if the wind of prosperity arrives, a man, not having, through negligence, mounted, with affection, and the love of virtue, the first great step, turns his head back to the pleasures of the world with disordinate delight. If the wind of adversity blows, he turns back through impatience, because he has not hated his sin on account of the injury it has done to Me, but on account of the fear of pain it causes to him, with which fear alone he had arisen from the vomit. All practice of virtue requires perseverance, and if a man does not persevere he will not attain his desire, which is to arrive at the end for which he began. Wherefore to fulfil his desire he needs perseverance.

“I have told thee that they turn back on account of the diverse contrary winds that arise against them, or the warring of their own sensuality against the Spirit, or because they turn to creatures, loving them with disordinate love apart from Me, or on account of impatience of injury, or the Devil makes them turn back through many and diverse battles, and sometimes through contempt, bringing them to confusion, saying :

“‘This good which thou hast begun to practise is not worth so much to thee as thy sins and faults,’ which he says to make them turn back and abandon the little practice of virtue which they had begun. And sometimes

he makes them turn back through love of pleasure, telling them to hope in My Mercy, saying: 'Why harass thyself? Enjoy this life, and, in the extremity of death, recognising thy sins, thou shalt receive mercy.' And so, in this way, the Devil causes them to lose the fear with which they had begun. For these, and many other things, they turn back and are not constant or persevering, and all this befalls them because the roots of self-love are by no means ploughed up in them, and they take hold of the hope of My Mercy, not as they ought, but with great presumption, seizing that which they continually offend. I have not given, and do not give, My mercy in order that men may offend in the hope of it, but in order that they may defend themselves, with it, from the malice of the Devil, and from disordinate confusion of mind. But they who offend with the arm of mercy do quite the contrary, and it is because they have not persevered in the first change they made, arising, through the fear of pain and the pricks of the thorns of many tribulations, from the misery of mortal sin. Wherefore, not having made the first change, they do not attain to the love of virtue, and therefore do they not persevere.

"The soul that does not change her course does not proceed, and, if she proceeds not, she turns back, so that such as these, of whom I have been speaking to thee, not proceeding with virtue, nor arising from the imperfections of fear and attaining to love, must needs turn back."

## CHAPTER L.

How this soul was in great bitterness, on account of the blindness of those who are drowned below in the river.

"THEN that soul, tormented by desire, considering her own imperfections and those of others, was saddened to hear of and to see the great blindness of creatures, notwithstanding the great goodness of God, in having placed nothing in this

life, no matter in what condition, that could be an impediment to the salvation of creatures, but rather arranged for the exercising and proving of virtue in them. And, notwithstanding all this, she saw them, through self-love and disordinate affection, go under by the river and arrive at eternal damnation, and many who were in the river and had begun to come out, turn back again, scandalised at her, because they had heard of the sweet goodness of GOD, Who had deigned to manifest Himself to her. And, for this, she was in bitterness, and fixing the eye of her intellect on the Eternal Father, she said: "Oh, Inestimable Love, great is the delusion of Thy creatures. I would that, when it is pleasing to Thy Goodness, Thou wouldst more clearly explain to me the three steps figured in the Body of Thy only Son, and what method should be used so as to come entirely out of the depths and to keep the way of Thy Truth, and who are those who ascend the staircase."

## CHAPTER LI.

How the three steps figured in the Bridge, that is, in the Son of GOD, signify the three powers of the soul.

THEN the Divine Goodness, regarding with the eye of His mercy, the hunger and desire of that soul, said: "Oh, My most delightful daughter, I am not a Despiser, but the Fulfiller of holy desire, and therefore I will show and declare to thee that which thou askest Me. Thou askest Me to explain to thee the figure of the three steps, and to tell thee what method they, who want to come out of the river must use, to be able to ascend the Bridge. And, although above, in relating to thee the delusion and blindness of men, tasting in this life the earnest-money of Hell, and, as martyrs of the Devil, receiving damnation, I showed thee the methods they should use; nevertheless, now I will declare it to thee more fully, satisfying thy desire. Thou knowest that every evil is founded in self-love, and that

self-love is a cloud that takes away the light of reason, which reason holds in itself the light of faith, and one is not lost without the other. The soul I created in My image and similitude, giving her memory, intellect, and will. The intellect is the most noble part of the soul, and is moved by the affection, and nourishes it, and the hand of love—that is, the affection—fills the memory with the remembrance of Me and of the benefits received, which it does with care and gratitude, and so one power spurs on another, and the soul is nourished in the life of grace.

“The soul cannot live without love, but always wants to love something, because she is made of love, and, by love, I created her. And therefore I told thee that the affection moved the intellect, saying, as it were, ‘*I will love, because the food on which I feed is love.*’ Then the intellect, feeling itself awakened by the affection, says, as it were, ‘If thou wilt love, I will give thee that which thou canst love.’ And at once it arises, considering carefully the dignity of the soul, and the indignity into which she has fallen through sin. In the dignity of her being it tastes My inestimable goodness, and the increate charity with which I created her, and, in contemplating her misery, it discovers and tastes My mercy, and sees how, through mercy, I have lent her time and drawn her out of darkness. Then the affection nourishes itself in love, opening the mouth of holy desire, with which it eats hatred and displeasure of its own sensuality, united with true humility and perfect patience, which it drew from holy hatred. The virtues conceived, they give birth to themselves perfectly and imperfectly, according as the soul exercises perfection in herself, as I will tell thee below. So, on the contrary, if the sensual affection wants to love sensual things, the eye of the intellect sets before itself for its sole object transitory things, with self-love, displeasure of virtue, and love of vice, whence she draws pride and impatience, and the memory is filled with nothing but that which the affection presents to it. This love so dazzles the eye of the intellect that it can discern and see nothing but such glittering objects. It is the very brightness of the things that causes

the intellect to perceive them and the affection to love them; for had worldly things no such brightness there would be no sin, for man, by his nature, cannot desire anything but good, and vice, appearing to him thus, under colour of the soul's good, causes him to sin. But, because the eye, on account of its blindness, does not discern, and knows not the truth, it errs, seeking good and delights there where they are not.

“I have already told thee that the delights of the world, without Me, are venomous thorns, and, that the vision of the intellect is deluded by them, and the affection of the will is deluded into loving them, and the memory into retaining remembrance of them. The unity of these powers of the soul is so great that I cannot be offended by one without all the others offending Me at the same time, because the one presents to the other, as I told thee, good or evil, according to the pleasure of the free will. This free will is bound to the affection, and it moves as it pleases, either with the light of reason or without it. Your reason is attached to Me when your will does not, by disordinate love, cut it off from Me; you have also in you the law of perversity, that continually fights against the Spirit. You have, then, two parts in you—sensuality and reason. Sensuality is appointed to be the servant, so that, with the instrument of the body, you may prove and exercise the virtues. The soul is free, liberated from sin by the Blood of My Son, and she cannot be dominated unless she consent with her will, which is controlled by her free choice, and when this free choice agrees with the will, it becomes one thing with it. And I tell thee truly, that, when the soul undertakes to gather together, with the hand of free choice, her powers in My Name, then are assembled all the actions, both spiritual and temporal, that the creature can do, and free choice gets rid of sensuality and binds itself with reason. I, then, by grace, rest in the midst of them; and this is what My Truth, the Word Incarnate, meant, when He said: *‘When there are two or three or more gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them.’* And this is the truth. I have already told thee that no

one could come to Me except by Him, and therefore did I make of Him a Bridge with three steps. And those three steps figure, as I will narrate to thee below, the three states of the soul."

## CHAPTER LII.

How if the three aforesaid powers are not united, there cannot be perseverance, without which no man arrives at his end.

"I HAVE explained to thee the figure of the three steps, in general, as the three powers of the soul, and no one who wishes to pass by the Bridge and doctrine of My Truth can mount one without the other, and the soul cannot persevere except by the union of her three powers. Of which I told thee above, when thou askedst Me, how the voyagers could come out of the river. There are two goals, and, for the attainment of either, perseverance is needful—they are vice and virtue. If thou desire to arrive at life, thou must persevere in virtue, and if thou would have eternal death, thou must persevere in vice. Thus it is with perseverance that they who want life arrive at Me Who am Life, and with perseverance that they who taste the water of death arrive at the Devil."

## CHAPTER LIII.

An exposition on Christ's words : "*Whosoever thirsteth, let him come to Me and drink.*"

"You were all invited, generally and in particular, by My Truth, when He cried in the Temple, saying : '*Whosoever thirsteth, let him come to Me and drink, for I am the Fountain of the Water of Life.*' He did not say '*Go to the Father and drink,*' but He said '*Come to Me.*' He spoke thus, because in Me, the Father, there can be no pain, but



in My Son there can be pain. And you, while you are pilgrims and wayfarers in this mortal life, cannot be without pain, because the earth, through sin, brought forth thorns. And why did He say '*Let him come to Me and drink*'? Because whoever follows His doctrine, whether in the most perfect way or by dwelling in the life of common charity, finds to drink, tasting the fruit of the Blood, through the union of the Divine nature with the human nature. And you, finding yourselves in Him, find yourselves also in Me, Who am the Sea Pacific, because I am one thing with Him, and He with Me. So that you are invited to the Fountain of Living Water of Grace, and it is right for you, with perseverance, to keep by Him Who is made for you a Bridge, not being turned back by any contrary wind that may arise, either of prosperity or adversity, and to persevere till you find Me, who am the Giver of the Water of Life, by means of this sweet and amorous Word, My Only-Begotten Son. And why did He say: '*I am the Fountain of Living Water*'? Because He was the Fountain which contained Me, the Giver of the Living Water, by means of the union of the Divine with the human nature. Why did He say '*Come to Me and drink*'? Because you cannot pass this mortal life without pain, and in Me, the Father, there can be no pain, but in Him there can be pain, and therefore of Him did I make for you a Bridge. No one can come to Me except by Him, as He told you in the words: '*No one can come to the Father except by Me.*'

"Now thou hast seen to what way thou shouldest keep, and how, namely with perseverance, otherwise thou shalt not drink, for perseverance receives the crown of glory and victory in the life everlasting."

## CHAPTER LIV.

The general method by which every rational creature can come out of the sea of the world, and go by the aforesaid holy Bridge.

“I WILL now return to the three steps, which you must climb in order to issue from the river without drowning, and attain to the Living Water, to which you are invited, and to desire My Presence in the midst of you. For in this way, in which you should follow, I am in your midst, reposing, by grace, in your souls. In order to have desire to mount the steps, you must have thirst, because only those who thirst are invited: ‘*Whosoever thirsteth, let him come to Me and drink.*’ He who has no thirst will not persevere, for either fatigue causes him to stop, or pleasure, and he does not care to carry the vessel with which he may get the water, and neither does he care for the company, and alone he cannot go, and he turns back at the smallest prick of persecution, for he loves it not. He is afraid because he is alone; were he accompanied he would not fear, and had he ascended the three steps he would not have been alone, and would, therefore, have been secure. You must then have thirst and gather yourselves together, as it is said, ‘*two or three or more.*’

“Why is it said ‘*two or three or more*’? Because there are not two without three, nor three without two, neither three nor two without more. The number one is excluded, for, unless a man has a companion, I cannot be in the midst; this is no indifferent trifle, for he who is wrapped up in self-love is solitary.

“Why is he solitary? Because he is separated from My grace and the love of his neighbour, and being, by sin, deprived of Me, he turns to that which is nought, because I am He that is. So that he who is solitary, that is, who is alone in self-love, is not mentioned by My Truth and is not acceptable to Me. He says then: ‘*If there be two or three or more gathered together in My name, I will be in the midst of them.*’ I said to thee that two were not without three,

nor three without two, and so it is. Thou knowest that the commandments of the Law are completely contained in two, and if these two are not observed the Law is not observed. The two commandments are to love Me above everything, and thy neighbour as thyself, which two are the beginning, the middle and the end of the Law. These two cannot be gathered together in My Name, without three, that is without the congregation of the powers of the soul, the memory, the intellect and the will; the memory to retain the remembrance of My benefits and My goodness, the intellect to gaze into the ineffable love, which I have shown thee by means of My only-begotten Son, Whom I have placed as the object of the vision of your intellect, so that, in Him, you behold the fire of My charity, and the will to love and desire Me, Who am your End. When these virtues and powers of the soul are congregated together in My Name, I am in the midst of them by grace, and a man, who is full of My love and that of his neighbour, suddenly finds himself the companion of many and royal virtues. Then the appetite of the soul is disposed to thirst. Thirst, I say, for virtue, and the honour of My Name and salvation of souls, and his every other thirst is spent and dead, and he then proceeds securely without any servile fear, having ascended the first step of the affection, for the affection, stripped of self-love, mounts above itself and above transitory things, or, if he will still hold them, he does so according to My will—that is, with a holy and true fear, and love of virtue. He then finds that he has attained to the second step—that is, to the light of the intellect, which is, through Christ crucified, mirrored in cordial love of Me, for through Him have I shown My love to man. He finds peace and quiet, because the memory is filled with My love. Thou knowest that an empty thing, when touched, resounds, but not so when it is full. So memory, being filled with the light of the intellect, and the affection with love, on being moved by the tribulations or delights of the world, will not resound with disordinate merriment or with impatience, because they are full of Me, Who am every good.

Having climbed the three steps, he finds that the three powers of the soul have been gathered together by his reason in My Name. And his soul, having gathered together the two commandments, that is love of Me and of the neighbour, finds herself accompanied by Me, Who am her strength and security, and walks safely because I am in the midst of her. Wherefore then he follows on with anxious desire, thirsting after the way of Truth, in which way he finds the Fountain of the Water of Life, through his thirst for My honour and his own salvation and that of his neighbour, without which thirst he would not be able to arrive at the Fountain. He walks on, carrying the vessel of the heart, emptied of every affection and disordinate love of the world, but filled immediately it is emptied with other things, for nothing can remain empty, and, being without disordinate love for transitory things, it is filled with love of celestial things, and sweet Divine love, with which he arrives at the Fountain of the Water of Life, and passes through the Door of Christ crucified, and tastes the Water of Life, finding himself in Me, the Sea Pacific.

## CHAPTER LV.

A brief repetition of some things already said.

“ I HAVE now shown thee the general method that every rational creature should follow, in order to come out of the sea of the world, without being drowned, and escape eternal damnation. I have also shown thee the three general steps, that is the three powers of the soul, and how one cannot ascend one without ascending them all. And I have spoken to thee of those words of My Truth : ‘ *Where two or three or more are gathered together in My name,*’ telling thee that this means the gathering together of the three steps, that is of the three powers of the soul, which three powers, being united, have with them the two principal commandments of the Law, that is, love of Me and of the neighbour.

Then, the staircase being mounted, that is, gathered together in My Name, as I have said, man immediately thirsts for the Living Water, and sets off and passes over the Bridge, following the doctrine of My Truth, Who is this Bridge, and runs, in reply to His Voice, which called you, as I told thee, above, in the Temple inviting you all, saying: *Whosoever thirsteth, let him come to Me and drink, for I am the Fountain of the Water of Life.* I have explained to thee what He meant, and how these words are to be understood, in order that thou mayest the better see the abundance of My love, and the confusion of those, who, deceived by what appears to be pleasure, run the way of the Devil, who invites them to the water of death.

“Now thou hast seen and heard what thou askedst of Me, and I have told thee what method should be held, so as not to drown in the river, namely to mount by the Bridge, carrying the heart and the affection like a vessel to Me, Who will give to drink to him who asks of Me, and to keep the way of Christ crucified, with perseverance, until death. This is that method which every man should follow, no matter what be his condition. No man can draw back, saying: ‘I have such and such a position, or children, or other worldly reasons, for which I draw back from following this way,’ for I have already told thee that every condition is pleasing and acceptable to Me, provided it be held with a holy and good will, for everything is good and perfect and made by Me, Who am Supreme Good, and I did not create nor give anything by which man could be brought to death, but everything was made to lead him to life. I ask an easy thing of you, for nothing is so easy and delightful as love, and what I require of you is none other than love of Me and of the neighbour. This you can fulfil in every time and in every place and in every condition, provided it be held to the praise and glory of My Name. Thou knowest that I told thee, that it was through their delusion, and walking without the Light, being clothed in self-love, and possessing and loving things and creatures without Me, that some pass through this life in torture, being insupportable to themselves, and, unless they rise

above themselves, in the aforesaid way, they will arrive at eternal damnation.

“Now I have told thee what general method every man should hold to come out of the river.”

## CHAPTER LVI.

How GOD, wishing to show to this devoted soul that the three steps of the holy Bridge, signify in particular the three states of the soul, tells her that she should rise above herself, to consider this truth.

“As I have told thee above, how they ought to walk, who live in common charity, that is, observing the commandments and counsels in thought, now I wish to tell thee of those who have begun to mount the staircase, and want to follow the perfect way, that is, to observe the commandments and counsels in act, in three states, which states I will show thee now, explaining them in particular. There are three degrees and states of the soul—as there are three steps, which steps I explained to thee in general as the powers of the soul—of which one state is imperfect, one more perfect, and the other most perfect. The first state is to Me as that of a mercenary servant, the second as of a faithful servant, and the other as of a son who loves Me, without any consideration. These are the three states of the soul, which can and do belong to many creatures, and sometimes all to one creature. They can and do belong to one creature when, with perfect solicitude, he runs by the aforesaid way, using his time in such a way that, from the servile state he arrives at the free state, and, from the free state, at the filial. Arise above thyself and open the eye of thy intellect and behold these travelling pilgrims as they pass, some imperfectly and others perfectly, on the way of the commandments, and some most perfectly keeping the way of the counsels. Thou wilt see, then, whence comes imperfection, and whence comes perfection, and how greatly the soul who

has not rooted out of herself the roots of self-love, is deceived. For in every state in which man may be, it is necessary to destroy this self-love."

## CHAPTER LVII.

How this devoted soul looking in the Divine mirror saw the creatures going in diverse ways.

THEN that soul, tormented with intense desire, gazing into the sweet Divine mirror, saw creatures setting out to attain their end in diverse ways and with diverse considerations. She saw that many began to mount, feeling themselves pricked by servile fear, that is, fearing their own personal pain, and she saw others, practising this first state, arriving at the second state, but few she saw who arrived at the greatest perfection.

## CHAPTER LVIII.

How servile fear is not sufficient, without the love of virtue, to give eternal life; and how the law of fear and that of love are united.

THEN the goodness of God, wishing to satisfy the desire of that soul, said, 'Dost thou see those? They have arisen with servile fear from the vomit of mortal sin, but, if they do not arise with love of virtue, servile fear alone is not sufficient to give eternal life. But love with holy fear is sufficient, because the law is founded in love and holy fear. The old law was the law of fear, that was given by Me to Moses, by which law they who committed sin suffered the penalty of it. The new law is the law of love, given by the Word of My only-begotten Son, and is founded in love alone. The new law does not break the old law, but rather fulfils it, as said My Truth, "*I come not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it.*" And He united the law of fear with that of

love. Through love was taken away the imperfection of the fear of the penalty, and the perfection of holy fear remained, that is, the fear of offending, not on account of one's own damnation, but of offending Me, Who am Supreme Good. So that the imperfect law was made perfect with the law of love. Wherefore, after the car of the fire of My only-begotten Son came and brought the fire of My charity into your humanity with abundance of mercy, the penalty of the sins committed by humanity was taken away, that is, he who offended was no longer punished suddenly, as was of old given and ordained in the law of Moses.

"There is, therefore, no need for servile fear; and this does not mean that sin is not punished, but that the punishment is reserved, unless, that is to say, the person punish himself in this life with perfect contrition. For, in the other life, the soul is separated from the body, wherefore while man lives is his time for mercy, but when he is dead comes the time of justice. He ought, then, to arise from servile fear, and arrive at love and holy fear of Me, otherwise there is no remedy against his falling back again into the river, and reaching the waters of tribulation, and seeking the thorns of consolation, for all consolations are thorns that pierce the soul who loves them disordinately."

## CHAPTER LIX.

How, by exercising oneself in servile fear, which is the state of imperfection, by which is meant the first step of the holy Bridge, one arrives at the second step, which is the state of perfection.

"I TOLD thee that no one could go by the Bridge or come out of the river without climbing the three steps, which is the truth. There are some who climb imperfectly, and some perfectly, and some climb with the greatest perfection. The first are those who are moved by servile fear, and have climbed so far being imperfectly gathered together; that is to say, the soul, having seen the punishment which follows



her sin, climbs ; and gathers together her memory to recollect her vice, her intellect to see the punishment which she expects to receive for her fault, and her will to move her to hate that fault. And let us consider this to be the first step and the first gathering together of the powers of the soul, which should be exercised by the light of the intellect with the pupil of the eye of holy faith, which looks, not only at the punishment of sin, but at the fruit of virtue, and the love which I bear to the soul, so that she may climb with love and affection, and stripped of servile fear. And doing so, such souls will become faithful and not unfaithful servants, serving Me through love and not through fear, and if, with hatred of sin, they employ their minds to dig out the root of their self-love with prudence, constancy, and perseverance they will succeed in doing so. But there are many who begin their course climbing so slowly, and, render their debt to Me by such small degrees, and with such negligence and ignorance, that they suddenly faint, and every little breeze catches their sails, and turns their prow backwards. Wherefore, because they imperfectly climb to the first Step of the Bridge of Christ crucified, they do not arrive at the second step of His Heart."

## CHAPTER LX.

Of the imperfection of those who love GOD for their own profit, delight and consolation.

" SOME there are who have become faithful servants, serving Me with fidelity without servile fear of punishment, but rather with love. This very love, however, if they serve Me with a view to their own profit, or the delight and pleasure which they find in Me, is imperfect. Dost thou know what proves the imperfection of this love? The withdrawal of the consolations which they found in Me, and the insufficiency and short duration of their love for their neighbour, which grows weak by degrees, and oftentimes

disappears. Towards Me their love grows weak when, on occasion, in order to exercise them in virtue and raise them above their imperfection, I withdraw from their minds My consolation and allow them to fall into battles and perplexities. This I do so that, coming to perfect self-knowledge, they may know that of themselves they are nothing and have no grace, and, accordingly in time of battle fly to Me, as their Benefactor, seeking Me alone, with true humility, for which purpose I treat them thus, withdrawing from them consolation indeed, but not grace. At such a time these weak ones, of whom I speak, relax their energy, impatiently turning backwards, and sometimes abandon, under colour of virtue, many of their exercises, saying to themselves, *This labour does not profit me*. All this they do, because they feel themselves deprived of mental consolation. Such a soul acts imperfectly, for she has not yet unwound the bandage of spiritual self-love, for, had she unwound it she would see that, in truth, everything proceeds from Me, that no leaf of a tree falls to the ground without My providence, and that what I give and promise to My creatures, I give and promise to them for their sanctification, which is the good and the end for which I created them. My creatures should see and know that I wish nothing but their good, through the Blood of My only-begotten Son, in Which they are washed from their iniquities. By this Blood they are enabled to know My Truth, how, in order to give them eternal life, I created them in My image and likeness and re-created them to grace with the Blood of My Son, making them sons of adoption. But, since they are imperfect, they make use of Me only for their own profit, relaxing their love for their neighbour. Thus, those in the first state come to nought through the fear of enduring pain, and those in the second, because they slacken their pace, ceasing to render service to their neighbour, and withdrawing their charity if they see their own profit or consolation withdrawn from them: this happens because their love was originally impure, for they gave to their neighbour the same imperfect love which they gave to Me, that is to say, a love based only on desire of their

own advantage. If, through a desire for perfection, they do not recognise this imperfection of theirs, it is impossible that they should not turn back. For those who desire Eternal Life, a pure love, prescinding from themselves, is necessary, for it is not enough for eternal life to fly sin from fear of punishment, or to embrace virtue from the motive of one's own advantage. Sin should be abandoned because it is displeasing to Me, and virtue should be loved for My sake. It is true that, generally speaking, every person is first called in this way, but this is because the soul herself is at first imperfect, from which imperfection she must advance to perfection, either while she lives, by a generous love to Me with a pure and virtuous heart that takes no thought for herself, or, at least, in the moment of death, recognising her own imperfection, with the purpose, had she but time, of serving Me, irrespectively of herself. It was with this imperfect love that S. Peter loved the sweet and good Jesus, My only-begotten Son, enjoying most pleasantly His sweet conversation, but, when the time of trouble came, he failed, and so disgraceful was his fall, that, not only could he not bear any pain himself, but his terror of the very approach of pain caused him to fall, and deny the Lord, with the words, '*I have never known Him.*' The soul who has climbed this step with servile fear and mercenary love alone, falls into many troubles. Such souls should arise and become sons, and serve Me, irrespectively of themselves, for I, Who am the Rewarder of every labour, render to each man according to his state and his labour; wherefore, if these souls do not abandon the exercise of holy prayer and their other good works, but go on, with perseverance, to increase their virtues, they will arrive at the state of filial love, because I respond to them with the same love, with which they love Me, so that, if they love Me, as a servant does his master, I pay them their wages according to their deserts, but I do not reveal Myself to them, because secrets are revealed to a friend, who has become one thing with his friend, and not to a servant. Yet it is true, that a servant may so advance by the virtuous love, which he bears to his master, as to

become a very dear friend, and so do some of these of whom I have spoken, but while they remain in the state of mercenary love, I do not manifest Myself to them. If they, through displeasure at their imperfection, and love of virtue, dig up, with hatred, the root of spiritual self-love, and mount to the throne of conscience, reasoning with themselves, so as to quell the motions of servile fear in their heart, and to correct mercenary love by the light of the holy faith, they will be so pleasing to Me, that they will attain to the love of the friend. And I will manifest myself to them, as My Truth said in these words: *'He who loves Me shall be one thing with Me and I with him, and I will manifest Myself to him and we will dwell together.'* This is the state of two dear friends, for though they are two in body, yet they are one in soul through the affection of love, because love transforms the lover into the object loved, and where, two friends have one soul, there can be no secret between them, wherefore My Truth said: *'I will come and we will dwell together,'* and this is the truth."

## CHAPTER LXI.

Of the way in which GOD manifests Himself to the soul who loves Him.

"KNOWEST thou how I manifest Myself to the soul who loves Me in truth, and follows the doctrine of My sweet and amorous Word? In many is My virtue manifested in the soul in proportion to her desire, but I make three special manifestations. The first manifestation of My virtue, that is to say of My love and charity in the soul, is made through the Word of My Son, and shown in the Blood, which He spilled with such fire of love. Now this charity is manifested in two ways; first, in general, to ordinary people, that is to those who live in the ordinary grace of God. It is manifested to them by the many and diverse benefits which they receive from Me. The second mode of manifestation, which is developed from the first, is

peculiar to those who have become My friends in the way mentioned above, and is known through a sentiment of the soul, by which they taste, know, prove and feel it. This second manifestation, however, is in men themselves; they manifest Me, through the affection of their love. For though I am no Acceptor of creatures, I am an Acceptor of holy desires, and Myself in the soul in that precise degree of perfection which she seeks in Me. Sometimes I manifest Myself (and this is also a part of the second manifestation) by endowing men with the spirit of prophecy, showing them the things of the future. This I do in many and diverse ways, according as I see need in the soul herself and in other creatures. At other times the third manifestation takes place. I then form in the mind the presence of the Truth, My only-begotten Son, in many ways, according to the will and the desire of the soul. Sometimes she seeks Me in prayer, wishing to know My power, and I satisfy her by causing her to taste and see My virtue. Sometimes she seeks Me in the wisdom of My Son, and I satisfy her by placing His wisdom before the eye of her intellect, sometimes in the clemency of the Holy Spirit and then My Goodness causes her to taste the fire of Divine charity, and to conceive the true and royal virtues, which are founded on the pure love of her neighbour."

## CHAPTER LXII.

Why Christ did not say *I will manifest My Father*, but *I will manifest Myself*.

"THOU seest now how truly My Word spoke, when He said: '*He who loves Me shall be one thing with Me.*' Because, by following His doctrine with the affection of love, you are united with Him, and, being united with Him, you are united with Me, because We are one thing together. And so it is that I manifest Myself to you, because We are one and the same thing together.

Wherefore if My Truth said, '*I will manifest Myself to you,*' He said the truth, because, in manifesting Himself, He manifested Me, and, in manifesting Me, He manifested Himself. But why did He not say, '*I will manifest My Father to you*'? For three reasons in particular. First, because He wished to show that He and I are not separate from each other, on which account He also made the following reply to S. Philip, when he said to Him, '*Show us the Father, and it is enough for us.*' My Word said, '*Who sees Me sees the Father, and who sees the Father sees Me.*' This He said because He was one thing with Me, and that which He had, He had from Me, I having nothing from Him; wherefore, again, He said to Judas, '*My doctrine is not Mine, but My Father's who sent Me,*' because My Son proceeds from Me, not I from Him, though I with Him and He with Me are but one thing. For this reason He did not say '*I will manifest the Father,*' but '*I will manifest Myself,*' being one thing with the Father. The second reason was because, in manifesting Himself to you, He did not present to you anything He had not received from Me, the Father. These words, then, mean, the Father has manifested Himself to Me, because I am one thing with Him, and I will manifest to you, by means of Myself, Me and Him. The third reason was, because I, being invisible, could not be seen by you, until you should be separated from your bodies. Then, indeed, will you see Me, your GOD, and My Son, the Word, face to face. From now until after the general Resurrection, when your humanity will be conformed with the humanity of the Eternal Word, according to what I told thee in the treatise of the Resurrection, you can see Me, with the eye of the intellect alone, for, as I am, you cannot see Me now. Wherefore I veiled the Divine nature with your humanity, so that you might see Me through that medium. I, the Invisible, made Myself, as it were, visible by sending you the Word, My Son, veiled in the flesh of your humanity. He manifested Me to you. Therefore it was that He did not say '*I will manifest the Father to you,*' but rather, '*I will manifest myself to you,*' as if He should say, '*According as My Father manifests Himself*

*to Me, will I manifest Myself to you, for, in this manifestation of Himself, He manifests Me.* Now therefore thou understandest why He did not say *'I will manifest the Father to you.'* Both, because such a vision is impossible for you, while yet in the mortal body, and because He is one thing with Me."

## CHAPTER LXIII.

How the soul, after having mounted the first step of the Bridge, should proceed to mount the second.

"THOU hast now seen how excellent is the state of him who has attained to the love of a friend; climbing with the foot of affection, he has reached the secret of the Heart, which is the second of the three steps figured in the Body of My Son. I have told thee what was meant by the three powers of the soul, and now I will show thee how they signify the three states, through which the soul passes. Before treating of the third state, I wish to show thee how a man becomes a friend and how, from a friend, he grows into a son, attaining to filial love, and how a man may know if he has become a friend. And first of how a man arrives at being a friend. In the beginning, a man serves Me imperfectly through servile fear, but, by exercise and perseverance, he arrives at the love of delight, finding his own delight and profit in Me. This is a necessary stage, by which he must pass, who would attain to perfect love, to the love that is of friend and son. I call filial love perfect, because thereby, a man receives his inheritance from Me, the Eternal Father, and because a son's love includes that of a friend, which is why I told thee that a friend grows into a son. What means does he take to arrive thereat? I will tell thee. Every perfection and every virtue proceeds from charity, and charity is nourished by humility, which results from the knowledge and holy hatred of self, that is, sensuality. To arrive thereat, a man must persevere, and remain in the cellar of self-knowledge in which

he will learn My mercy, in the Blood of My only-begotten Son, drawing to Himself, with this love, My divine charity, exercising himself in the extirpation of his perverse self-will, both spiritual and temporal, hiding himself in his own house, as did Peter, who, after the sin of denying My Son, began to weep. Yet his lamentations were imperfect and remained so, until after the forty days, that is until after the Ascension. But when My Truth returned to Me, in His humanity, Peter and the others concealed themselves in the house, awaiting the coming of the Holy Spirit, which My Truth had promised them. They remained barred in from fear, because the soul always fears until she arrives at true love. But when they had persevered in fasting and in humble and continual prayer, until they had received the abundance of the Holy Spirit, they lost their fear, and followed and preached Christ crucified. So also the soul, who wishes to arrive at this perfection, after she has risen from the guilt of mortal sin, recognising it for what it is, begins to weep from fear of the penalty, whence she rises to the consideration of My mercy, in which contemplation, she finds her own pleasure and profit. This is an imperfect state, and I, in order to develop perfection in the soul, after the forty days, that is after these two states, withdraw Myself from time to time, not in grace but in feeling. My Truth showed you this when He said to the disciples '*I will go and will return to you.*'

“ Everything that He said, was said primarily, and in particular, to the disciples, but referred in general to the whole present and future, to those, that is to say, who should come after. He said '*I will go and will return to you,*' and so it was, for, when the Holy Spirit returned upon the disciples, He also returned, as I told you above, for the Holy Spirit did not return alone, but came with My power, and the wisdom of the Son, Who is one thing with Me, and with His own clemency, which proceeds from Me the Father, and from the Son. Now, as I told thee, in order to raise the soul from imperfection, I withdraw Myself from her sentiment, depriving her of former consolations. When she was in the guilt of mortal sin, she had separated herself



from Me, and I deprived her of grace through her own guilt, because that guilt had barred the door of her desires. Wherefore the sun of grace did not shine, not through its own defect, but through the defect of the creature, who bars the door of desire. When she knows herself and her darkness, she opens the window and vomits her filth, by holy confession. Then I, having returned to the soul by grace, withdraw Myself from her by sentiment, which I do in order to humiliate her, and cause her to seek Me in truth, and to prove her in the light of faith, so that she come to prudence. Then, if she love Me without thought of self, and with lively faith and with hatred of her own sensuality, she rejoices in the time of trouble, deeming herself unworthy of peace and quietness of mind. Now comes the second of the three things of which I told thee, that is to say: how the soul arrives at perfection, and what she does when she is perfect. This is what she does. Though she perceives that I have withdrawn Myself, she does not, on that account, look back, but perseveres with humility in her exercises, remaining barred in the house of self-knowledge, and, continuing to dwell therein, awaits, with lively faith, the coming of the Holy Spirit, that is of Me, Who am the fire of charity. How does she await me? Not in idleness, but in watching and continued prayer, and not only with physical, but also with intellectual watching, that is, with the eye of her mind alert, and, watching with the light of faith, she extirpates, with hatred, the wandering thoughts of her heart, looking for the affection of My charity, and knowing that I desire nothing but her sanctification, which is certified to her in the Blood of My Son. As long as her eye thus watches, illumined by the knowledge of Me and of herself, she continues to pray with the prayer of holy desire, which is a continued prayer, and also with actual prayer, which she practises at the appointed times, according to the orders of Holy Church. This is what the soul does in order to rise from imperfection and arrive at perfection, and it is to this end, namely that she may arrive at perfection, that I withdraw from her, not by grace but by sentiment. Once more do I leave her, so that she may see and know

her defects, so that, feeling herself deprived of consolation and afflicted by pain, she may recognise her own weakness, and learn how incapable she is of stability or perseverance, thus cutting down to the very root of spiritual self-love, for this should be the end and purpose of all her self-knowledge, to rise above herself, mounting the throne of conscience, and not permitting the sentiment of imperfect love to turn again in its death-struggle, but, with correction and reproof, digging up the root of self-love, with the knife of self-hatred and the love of virtue."

#### CHAPTER LXIV.

How an imperfect lover of GOD loves his neighbour also imperfectly, and of the signs of this imperfect love.

"AND I would have thee know that just as every imperfection and perfection is acquired from Me, so is it manifested by means of the neighbour. And simple souls, who often love creatures with spiritual love, know this well, for, if they have received My love sincerely without any self-regarding considerations, they satisfy the thirst of their love for their neighbour equally sincerely. If a man carry away the vessel which he has filled at the fountain and then drink of it, the vessel becomes empty, but if he keep his vessel standing in the fountain, while he drinks, it always remains full. So the love of the neighbour, whether spiritual or temporal, should be drunk in Me, without any self-regarding considerations. I require that you should love Me with the same love with which I love you. This indeed you cannot do, because I loved you without being loved. All the love which you have for Me you owe to Me, so that it is not of grace that you love Me, but because you ought to do so. While I love you of grace, and not because I owe you My love. Therefore to Me, in person, you cannot repay the love which I require of you, and I have placed you in the midst of your fellows, that you may do to them

that which you cannot do to Me, that is to say, that you may love your neighbour of free grace, without expecting any return from him, and what you do to him, I count as done to Me, which My Truth showed forth when He said to Paul, My persecutor,—‘*Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?*’ This He said, judging that Paul persecuted Him in His faithful. This love must be sincere, because it is with the same love with which you love Me, that you must love your neighbour. Dost thou know how the imperfection of spiritual love for the creature is shown? It is shown when the lover feels pain if it appear to him that the object of his love does not satisfy or return his love, or when he sees the beloved one’s conversation turned aside from him, or himself deprived of consolation, or another loved more than he. In these and in many other ways can it be seen that his neighbourly love is still imperfect, and that, though his love was originally drawn from Me, the Fountain of all love, he took the vessel out of the water, in order to drink from it. It is because his love for Me is still imperfect, that his neighbourly love is so weak, and because the root of self-love has not been properly dug out. Wherefore I often permit such a love to exist, so that the soul may in this way come to the knowledge of her own imperfection, and for the same reason do I withdraw myself from the soul by sentiment, that she may be thus led to enclose herself in the house of self-knowledge, where is acquired every perfection. After which I return into her with more light and with more knowledge of My Truth, in proportion to the degree in which she refers to grace the power of slaying her own will. And she never ceases to cultivate the vine of her soul, and to root out the thorns of evil thoughts, replacing them with the stones of virtues, cemented together in the Blood of Christ crucified, Which she has found on her journey across the Bridge of Christ, My only-begotten Son. For I told thee, if thou remember, that upon the Bridge, that is, upon the doctrine of My Truth, were built up the stones, based upon the virtue of His Blood, for it is in virtue of this Blood that the virtues give life.”

## CHAPTER LXV.

## A TREATISE OF PRAYER

Of the means which the soul takes to arrive at pure and generous love ; and here begins the Treatise of Prayer.

“ WHEN the soul has passed through the doctrine of Christ crucified, with true love of virtue and hatred of vice, and has arrived at the house of self-knowledge and entered therein, she remains, with her door barred, in watching and constant prayer, separated entirely from the consolations of the world. Why does she thus shut herself in ? She does so from fear, knowing her own imperfections, and also from the desire, which she has, of arriving at pure and generous love. And because she sees and knows well that in no other way can she arrive thereat, she waits, with a lively faith for My arrival, through increase of grace in her. How is a lively faith to be recognised ? By perseverance in virtue, and by the fact that the soul never turns back for anything, whatever it be, nor rises from holy prayer, for any reason except (note well) for obedience or charity’s sake. For no other reason ought she to leave off prayer, for, during the time ordained for prayer, the Devil is wont to arrive in the soul, causing much more conflict and trouble than when the soul is not occupied in prayer. This he does in order that holy prayer may become tedious to the soul, tempting her often with these words :—‘ *This prayer avails thee nothing, for thou needest attend to nothing except thy vocal prayers.*’ He acts thus in order that, becoming wearied and confused in mind, she may abandon the exercise of prayer, which is a weapon with which the soul can defend herself from every adversary, if grasped with the hand of love, by the arm of free choice in the light of the Holy Faith.”

## CHAPTER LXVI.

Here, touching something concerning the Sacrament of the Body of Christ, the complete doctrine is given ; and how the soul proceeds from vocal to mental prayer, and a vision is related which this devout soul once received.

“KNOW, dearest daughter, how, by humble, continual and faithful prayer, the soul acquires, with time and perseverance, every virtue. Wherefore should she persevere and never abandon prayer, either through the illusion of the Devil or her own fragility, that is to say, either on account of any thought or movement coming from her own body, or of the words of any creature. The Devil often places himself upon the tongues of creatures, causing them to chatter nonsensically, with the purpose of preventing the prayer of the soul. All of this she should pass by, by means of the virtue of perseverance. Oh, how sweet and pleasant to that soul and to Me is holy prayer, made in the house of knowledge of self and of Me, opening the eye of the intellect to the light of faith, and the affections to the abundance of My charity, which was made visible to you, through My visible only-begotten Son, who showed it to you with His Blood ! Which Blood inebriates the soul and clothes her with the fire of divine charity, giving her the food of the Sacrament [which is placed in the tavern of the mystical body of the Holy Church] that is to say, the food of the Body and Blood of My Son, wholly God and wholly man, administered to you by the hand of My vicar, who holds the key of the Blood. This is that tavern, which I mentioned to thee, standing on the Bridge, to provide food and comfort for the travellers and the pilgrims, who pass by the way of the doctrine of My Truth, lest they should faint through weakness. This food strengthens little or much, according to the desire of the recipient, whether he receives sacramentally or virtually. He receives sacramentally when he actually communicates with the Blessed Sacrament. He receives virtually when he communicates, both by desire of com-

munion, and by contemplation of the Blood of Christ crucified, communicating, as it were, sacramentally, with the affection of love, which is to be tasted in the Blood Which, as the soul sees, was shed through love. On seeing this the soul becomes inebriated, and blazes with holy desire and satisfies herself, becoming full of love for Me and for her neighbour. Where can this be acquired? In the house of self-knowledge with holy prayer, where imperfections are lost, even as Peter and the disciples, while they remained in watching and prayer, lost their imperfection and acquired perfection. By what means is this acquired? By perseverance seasoned with the most holy faith.

“But do not think that the soul receives such ardour and nourishment from prayer, if she pray only vocally, as do many souls whose prayers are rather words than love. Such as these give heed to nothing except to completing Psalms and saying many paternosters. And when they have once completed their appointed tale, they do not appear to think of anything further, but seem to place devout attention and love in merely vocal recitation, which the soul is not required to do, for, in doing only this, she bears but little fruit, which pleases Me but little. But if thou askest Me, whether the soul should abandon vocal prayer, since it does not seem to all that they are called to mental prayer, I should reply ‘No.’ The soul should advance by degrees, and I know well that, just as the soul is at first imperfect and afterwards perfect, so also is it with her prayer. She should nevertheless continue in vocal prayer, while she is yet imperfect, so as not to fall into idleness. But she should not say her vocal prayers without joining them to mental prayer, that is to say, that, while she is reciting, she should endeavour to elevate her mind in My love, with the consideration of her own defects and of the Blood of My only-begotten Son, wherein she finds the breadth of My charity and the remission of her sins. And this she should do, so that self-knowledge and the consideration of her own defects should make her recognise My goodness in herself and continue her exercises with true humility. I do not wish defects to be con-

sidered in particular, but in general, so that the mind may not be contaminated by the remembrance of particular and hideous sins. But, as I said, I do not wish the soul to consider her sins, either in general or in particular, without also remembering the Blood and the broadness of My mercy, for fear that otherwise she should be brought to confusion. And together with confusion would come the Devil, who has caused it, under colour of contrition and displeasure of sin, and so she would arrive at eternal damnation, not only on account of her confusion, but also through the despair which would come to her, because she did not seize the arm of My mercy. This is one of the subtle devices with which the Devil deludes My servants, and, in order to escape from his deceit, and to be pleasing to Me, you must enlarge your hearts and affections in My boundless mercy, with true humility. Thou knowest that the pride of the Devil cannot resist the humble mind, nor can any confusion of spirit be greater than the broadness of My good mercy, if the soul will only truly hope therein. Wherefore it was, if thou remember rightly, that, once, when the Devil wished to overthrow thee, by confusion, wishing to prove to thee that thy life had been deluded, and that thou hadst not followed My will, thou didst that which was thy duty, which My goodness (which is never withheld from him who will receive it) gave thee strength to do, that is thou didst rise, humbly trusting in My mercy, and saying: *'I confess to my Creator that my life has indeed been passed in darkness, but I will hide myself in the Wounds of Christ crucified, and bathe myself in His Blood and so shall my iniquities be consumed, and with desire will I rejoice in my Creator.'* Thou rememberest that then the Devil fled, and, turning round to the opposite side, he endeavoured to inflate thee with pride, saying: *'Thou art perfect and pleasing to God, and there is no more need for thee to afflict thyself or to lament thy sins.'* And once more I gave thee the light to see thy true path, namely, humiliation of thyself, and thou didst answer the Devil with these words: *'Wretch that I am, John the Baptist never sinned and was sanctified in his mother's womb. And I*

*have committed so many sins, and have hardly begun to know them with grief and true contrition, seeing Who God is, Who is offended by me, and who I am, who offend Him.'* Then, the Devil, not being able to resist thy humble hope in My goodness, said to thee: '*Cursed that thou art, for I can find no way to take thee. If I put thee down through confusion, thou risest to Heaven on the wings of mercy, and if I raise thee on high, thou humblest thyself down to Hell, and when I go into Hell thou persecutest me, so that I will return to thee no more, because thou strikest me with the stick of charity.'* The soul, therefore, should season the knowledge of herself with the knowledge of My goodness, and then vocal prayer will be of use to the soul who makes it, and pleasing to Me, and she will arrive, from the vocal imperfect prayer, exercised with perseverance, at perfect mental prayer; but if she simply aims at completing her tale, and, for vocal, abandons mental prayer, she will never arrive at it. Sometimes the soul will be so ignorant that, having resolved to say so many prayers vocally, and I, visiting her mind, sometimes in one way, and sometimes in another, in a flash of self-knowledge or of contrition for sin, sometimes in the broadness of My charity, and sometimes by placing before her mind, in diverse ways, according to My pleasure and the desire of the soul, the presence of My Truth, she (the soul), in order to complete her tale, will abandon My visitation, that she feels, as it were, by conscience, rather than abandon that which she had begun. She should not do so, for, in so doing, she yields to a deception of the Devil. The moment she feels her mind disposed by My visitation, in the many ways I have told thee, she should abandon vocal prayer; then, My visitation past, if there be time, she can resume the vocal prayers which she had resolved to say, but if she has not time to complete them, she ought not on that account to be troubled or suffer annoyance and confusion of mind; of course provided that it were not the Divine office which clerics and religious are bound and obliged to say under penalty of offending Me, for, they must, until death, say their office. But if they, at the hour appointed for saying it, should feel their minds drawn and raised by desire, they should so arrange as to say it before or after



My visitation, so that the debt of rendering the office be not omitted. But, in any other case, vocal prayer should be immediately abandoned for the said cause. Vocal prayer, made in the way that I have told thee, will enable the soul to arrive at perfection, and therefore she should not abandon it, but use it in the way that I have told thee.

And so, with exercise in perseverance, she will taste prayer in truth, and the food of the Blood of My only-begotten Son, and therefore I told thee that some communicated virtually with the Body and Blood of Christ, although not sacramentally; that is, they communicate in the affection of charity, which they taste by means of holy prayer, little or much, according to the affection with which they pray. They who proceed with little prudence and without method, taste little, and they who proceed with much, taste much. For the more the soul tries to loosen her affection from herself, and fasten it in Me with the light of the intellect, the more she knows; and the more she knows, the more she loves, and, loving much, she tastes much. Thou seest then, that perfect prayer is not attained to through many words, but through affection of desire, the soul raising herself to Me, with knowledge of herself and of My mercy, seasoned the one with the other. Thus she will exercise together mental and vocal prayer, for, even as the active and contemplative life is one, so are they. Although vocal or mental prayer can be understood in many and diverse ways, for I have told thee that a holy desire is a continual prayer, in this sense that a good and holy will disposes itself with desire to the occasion actually appointed for prayer in addition to the continual prayer of holy desire, wherefore vocal prayer will be made at the appointed time by the soul who remains firm in a habitual holy will, and will sometimes be continued beyond the appointed time, according as charity commands for the salvation of the neighbour, if the soul see him to be in need, and also her own necessities according to the state in which I have placed her. Each one, according to his condition, ought to exert himself for the salvation of souls, for this exercise lies at the root of a holy will, and whatever he may contribute, by words or deeds, towards the salvation of his neighbour, is virtually a prayer, although it

does not replace a prayer which one should make oneself at the appointed season, as My glorious standard-bearer Paul said, in the words, '*He who ceases not to work ceases not to pray.*' It was for this reason that I told thee that prayer was made in many ways, that is, that actual prayer may be united with mental prayer if made with the affection of charity, which charity is itself continual prayer. I have now told thee how mental prayer is reached by exercise and perseverance, and by leaving vocal prayer for mental when I visit the soul. I have also spoken to thee of common prayer, that is, of vocal prayer in general, made outside of ordained times, and of the prayers of good-will, and how every exercise, whether performed, in oneself or in one's neighbour, with good-will, is prayer. The enclosed soul should therefore spur herself on with prayer, and when she has arrived at friendly and filial love she does so. Unless the soul keep to this path, she will always remain tepid and imperfect, and will only love Me and her neighbour in proportion to the pleasure which she finds in My service."

## CHAPTER LXVII.

Of the mistake which worldly men make who desire to serve God for their own consolation and delight.

"I WISH to tell thee somewhat of imperfect love, and not conceal from thee one snare, which those who love Me for their own consolation alone, may fall into. I would have thee know that My servant, who loves Me imperfectly, seeks rather the consolation, on account of which he loves Me, than Myself, and it is to be observed that, when he fails to obtain either spiritual or temporal consolation, he is troubled. This often shows itself in regard to temporal consolation in men of the world, who practise every act of virtue as long as they live prosperously. But when tribulation comes upon them, which I send them for their good, they are disturbed, and do no longer that little good which they once did; and if one should ask them, "Why are you disturbed?" they reply, "Because we have received tribula-

tion, and that little good which we did seems to be almost lost, because we no longer do it with that heart and courage which we used to possess, on account of the tribulations which we have received, for it seems to us that we exerted ourselves more when our hearts were at rest than we do now." Such as these are deceived by their own delight, for it is not true that tribulation causes them to love and work less. The works which they do in the time of tribulation are worth as much in themselves as those which they did before in the time of consolation; they might indeed be worth more if the murmurers had patience. But this comes to them because they delighted in their own prosperity, while they loved Me with but slight virtue, in order to pacify their conscience. Being deprived of that on which they really rested, it seems to them that the repose, in which they exerted themselves, is taken away from them, but it is not so, for it happens to them as to a man in a garden who, because he takes pleasure in the garden, finds peace of mind and repose in working in it; that is to say, that it seems to him that he finds repose in his labours, but he is really all the time reposing in the delight caused him by the garden. He takes more delight in the garden than in his labours, because when the garden is taken away from him he feels himself deprived of the pleasure, for had his principal pleasure been placed in his labours he would not have lost it, but would have it still with him. For the exercise of working well cannot be lost unless a man be willing to lose it. From such as these the delight of prosperity, the garden, as it were, in which they worked, has been taken away, so that they have deceived themselves. Therefore they deceive themselves in working for their own pleasure, and acquire the habit of saying, "I know that I did better and had more consolation before I was troubled than now, and I rejoiced in doing good, but now I take no delight therein." Their sight and their speech is false, because, if they had had delight in doing good for love of virtue, they would not have lost it, neither would it have failed, but rather increased. But it fails because their good works

were founded upon love of their own consolation. In this way are people in general deceived in all their good works, that is, through love of their own consolation and of the delight which they find in Me.

### CHAPTER LXVIII.

How the servants of God are deceived who go on loving God in the aforesaid way.

“BUT My servants, who are still in the imperfect love, seek and love Me because of the affection they have towards the consolation and delight they find in Me, and because I am the Rewarder of every good which is done, great or small, according to the measure of the love of him who receives the reward. For this reason I give mental consolation during the time of prayer, sometimes in one way and sometimes in another. I do not this in order that the soul ignorantly receive the consolation, that is, that she regard more the consolation than Me Who give it, but in order that she may regard the affection of My charity with which I give it, and the unworthiness with which she receives it, more than the delight of her own consolation. But if, ignorantly, she takes hold of the delight alone, without regarding My affection, she will receive damage from it and fall into snares of which I will tell thee; one being that, deceived by her own consolation, she seeks this consolation and therein delights herself, and moreover, having at some former time experienced the consolation of My visitation in one way or another, she will endeavour to go back by the way which she has come, in order again to experience the same consolation. But I do not grant the consolation of My visitations in one way alone, which would appear as if I had but one way in which to do so, but I grant it in diverse ways, according as pleases My goodness, and according to the need and the necessity of the soul. But the soul, in her ignorance, will, nevertheless, seek My consolations in that way alone which she has experienced, thereby, as it were, imposing laws on the Holy Spirit.

She should not do so, but should pass on manfully by the doctrine of Christ crucified, receiving what it pleases My Goodness to give her, and in the manner, time and place that I choose. And if, nevertheless, I give not, it is through love and not through hatred, and that she may seek and love Me in truth, and not for her own delight, receiving My charity with humility. If she still goes on delighting in her own way and not in mine, when the object upon which she has fixed the eye of her intellect and in which alone she delights is taken from her, she will experience pain and intolerable confusion.

“Such as these, of whom I have spoken, desire to choose their own consolations in their own way, and so to go through life, and their ignorance is at times so great that, having imagined a particular consolation, and I, visiting them in any way except that of their imagination, they will resist Me and will not receive Me. A soul who would act thus is deceived by her own pleasure and spiritual delight, for it would be impossible to remain always in one state. She must either go forward to the virtues or turn right backwards. And neither could the mind remain stationary in the enjoyment of one delight alone without My Goodness increasing that delight. Many are the kinds of delights that I give to the soul—sometimes the delight of a mental joyousness, sometimes of contrition and displeasure of self, and, at times, I may be in the soul and she will not feel Me; or I may form My Will, that is, My Incarnate Word, before the eye of the intellect, and it will not seem to her that she experiences that heat and delight in the sentiment of her soul at such a vision. At other times she will feel without any mental vision the greatest delight. These various methods I use through love to preserve her and to increase, in her, humility and perseverance, and to show her that she need place no rules for me, nor seek her end in consolation, but only in virtue founded in Me, and to teach her with humility to receive what I choose to give her in My own time and manner, and to believe, with lively faith, that I give her what I give, either for her own salvation or to bring her to great perfection.

“She should then remain humble, making her beginning and end to be in My charity, and taking delight in this charity alone, according to My will and not according to hers. The only way not to be deceived is to receive everything through love of Me, being rooted and grounded in My sweet Will.”

## X CHAPTER LXIX.

Of those who, in order not to lose their own peace of mind and consolations, do not succour their neighbour in his necessities.

“I HAVE told thee how they are deceived who desire to taste and receive Me mentally in their own way, and now I wish to tell thee of the second mistake they make, who have placed all their delight in the receiving of mental consolation. They will oftentimes see their neighbour in necessity, spiritual or temporal, and they will not succour him, under pretence of virtue, saying, *‘If I do so I shall lose my peace and quiet of mind, or I shall not be able to say my Hours at the right time.’* For they think that if they receive no consolation, I am thereby offended, but they are deceived by their own mental and spiritual delight, for they offend Me more by not relieving their neighbour’s necessity, than if they had abandoned all those things whereby they receive consolation; for all vocal and mental exercise is ordained by Me to bring the soul to perfect love of Me, and of the neighbour, and to preserve her in this love. Therefore, in failing in love to his neighbour, a man offends Me more than if he had abandoned his ordinary exercise and lost his peace of mind; and, moreover, he would truly find Me in exercising love towards his neighbour, whereas, in seeking delight in his own consolation, he is deprived of Me, for by not succouring his neighbour immediately, his love for, him diminishes, and his love for his neighbour diminishing, My affection towards him also diminishes, and thus is his consolation diminished too. So that, thinking to gain, he loses, and where he would think to lose, he gains. That is, being willing to lose his own

consolation for his neighbour's salvation, he receives and gains Me, and the neighbour too, succouring him and serving him charitably, and tasting each time he does so, the sweetness of My love. But, not doing so, he suffers pain, for it sometimes happens that he will be obliged, either through love or force of circumstances, to help his neighbour either for some spiritual or corporal infirmity, and, doing it in this way, he does it with mental tedium, being pricked by conscience, and becomes insupportable to himself and to others. And should any one ask him: '*Why dost thou feel this pain?*' He would reply: '*I seem to have lost all peace and quiet of mind, and many things that I used to do I have left off, and I think that thereby I have offended God.*' But he is mistaken. He has placed the vision of the eye of his intellect on his own delight alone, and therefore he discerns not, nor knows where his offence truly lies. Because, could he discern, he would see that his offence does not consist in not having his customary mental consolation, or in having abandoned the exercise of prayer in the time of his neighbour's need, but in having been found without true love for his neighbour, whom he should love and serve through love of Me.

"So that thou seest how spiritual self-love alone is capable of deceiving the soul."

## CHAPTER LXX.

Of the deception, which those fall into, who have placed all their affections in consolations and mental visions.

"SOMETIMES, through such love as this, the soul receives even more damage than if her affection is altogether placed in consolations and visions which I often give to My servants, for, when she feels herself deprived of them, she falls into bitterness and tedium of mind, for it seems to her that she is deprived of grace, though I have only withdrawn Myself from her mind by sentiment, and not by grace, as I have told thee that I often do, in order to bring the soul to per-

fection. So she falls into bitterness, and seems to herself to have entered into Hell, feeling no delight, but the molestation of many temptations. She should not be so ignorant, nor allow herself to be so deceived by spiritual self-love; but she does not know Me truly in herself, Who am her Supreme Good, preserving to her My goodwill in the time of battle, though she does not hasten to the warfare with delight. She should rather humiliate herself, deeming herself unworthy of peace and quiet of mind. For this purpose do I withdraw from her, so that she may humiliate herself and learn My charity in her, seeing the goodwill which I preserve to her in the time of battle, and also that she may not only receive the milk of sweetness sprinkled by Me on the face of her soul, but that, clinging to the breast of My Truth, she may receive milk together with meat, that is, may draw to herself the milk of My charity, by means of the Flesh of Christ crucified; which is the Doctrine of which I have made for you a Bridge, by crossing which you arrive at Me, Who have withdrawn Myself from you for this purpose. Wherefore, to souls who act with prudence, not ignorantly receiving the milk alone, I return with more delight and strength, with more light and ardour of charity. But if, on the other hand, they endure with tedium and sadness and confusion of mind, the suffering caused them by the loss of mental sweetness, they gain but little, and remain in their tepidity."

## CHAPTER LXXI.

How it is possible for the aforesaid souls, who take delight in consolations and mental visions, to be deceived by the Devil in a form of light; and how to know when a vision is from GOD, and when from the Devil.

"ANOTHER delusion that the Devil often practises upon such souls is, that he transforms himself into a form of light. For, seeing the soul to be disposed to desire and receive such a form, her mind being absorbed, and her desires placed



in consolations and mental visions alone, (which should not be so, for the soul should place her desires in virtue alone, deeming herself unworthy of consolation), he transforms himself into a form of light in diverse ways, sometimes as an angel, and sometimes as My Truth, or as one of My saints, doing so in order to catch that soul with the hook of her own spiritual delight, which consists in visions and mental pleasure. And if this soul does not rise above herself with true humility, despising every delight, she will remain, caught by the hook, in the hands of the Devil; but if she, with humility, disdaining the bait of delight, will bind her affections fast to Me, Who am the Giver, and not to the gift, she will be released, for the Devil, on account of his pride, cannot bear a humble mind.

“If thou askest Me how it is to be known whether a visitation is from Me or from the Devil, I reply to thee that this is the sign. If it is the Devil who has come into thy mind in a form of light, as has been said, to visit it, thou wilt suddenly feel in his coming great joyousness, but as he stays thou wilt gradually lose joyousness, and thy mind will be left in tedium or excitement, darkening thee within. But if the soul is in truth visited by Me, Eternal Truth, she will, in the first sensation, experience holy fear, and with this fear joy and security, with a sweet prudence, that in doubting does not doubt, the soul, deeming herself unworthy, saying, ‘*I am not worthy to receive Thy visitation, and, not being worthy, how can such a thing be?*’ But she will then turn to the broadness of My charity, knowing and seeing that it is possible for Me to give, and that I do not regard her unworthiness, but rather My worthiness, which makes her worthy to receive Me, through grace, in sentiment; and she will see that I do not despise her desire when she calls to Me, and she will humbly receive Me, saying, ‘*Behold thine handmaid. Thy will be done in Me.*’ And she will arise from her prayer and My visitation with joyousness, and will humbly rejoice in mind, deeming herself unworthy, but, recognising with love her joyousness as coming from Me.

“This, then, that I have told thee, is the sign by which

the soul may know whether her visitation is of Me or of the Devil. If it be of Me, her first sensation will be one of holy fear, her second, joyousness, and at the end she will feel joy and hunger for the virtues. And if it be of the Devil, the first sensation is joyousness, but the mind is left in confusion and darkness.

“I have thus shown thee a means by which the soul, if she will go humbly and with prudence, cannot be deceived, which she will be if she tries to navigate herself by means of her own imperfect love of consolations, rather than by love of Me, as I have told thee.”

## CHAPTER LXXII.

How the soul who truly knows herself, wisely guards against all the aforesaid deceptions.

“I HAVE not wanted to conceal from thee the deception that common folk receive through sensitive love, through the small good which they practise, that is to say, through that little virtue which they exercise in times of spiritual consolation, or the spiritual self-love which My servants have in their own consolations, and how they deceive themselves with the self-love of delight, which does not let them know the truth of My affection, nor discern their own guilt, and the deception which the Devil practises on them, through their own fault, if they keep not the way which I have told thee. And all these things I have told thee, so that thou and My servants may walk in virtue, through love of Me, and nothing else. But they who love Me with imperfect love, that is, who love Me for My gifts and not for Myself, Who am the Giver, fall into all these perils and deceptions. But the soul who has in truth entered the House of Self-Knowledge, and, by the exercise of perfect prayer, has raised herself from the imperfect love of imperfect prayer, by the means of which I speak to thee in this Treatise on Prayer, receives Me, through affection of

love, seeking to draw to herself the milk of My sweetness from the breast of the doctrine of Christ crucified. And when these souls have attained to the third state, that is, to friendly and filial love, they have no longer any mercenary love, but they act as do very dear friends. For, as the eye of one, on being given a present by his friend, does not turn to the gift alone but also to the heart of the giver, receiving and keeping the present for the sake of the affection which gave it, so the soul, who has attained to the third state of perfect love, when she receives My gifts and graces, looks not only at the gifts, but, with the eye of her intellect, looks at the affection of charity of Me, the Giver. And, in order that she may have no excuse for not doing so, in My Providence I have united the Gift with the Giver, that is, the Divine nature with the human nature, when I gave you the Word of My only-begotten Son, Who is one thing with Me and I with Him. So that, by this union, you cannot look at the Gift without looking at Me, the Giver. Thou seest then with how great affection thou shouldest love and desire both Gift and Giver. Doing thus your love will be pure and not mercenary, as is the love of those who remain barred up in the House of Self-Knowledge."

### CHAPTER LXXIII.

Of the method by which the soul separates herself from imperfect love, and attains to perfect love, friendly and filial.

"HITHERTO I have shown thee in many ways how the soul raises herself from imperfection and attains to perfection, which she does after she has attained to friendly and filial love. I tell thee that she arrives at perfect love by means of perseverance, barring herself into the House of Self-Knowledge, which knowledge of self requires to be seasoned with knowledge of Me, lest it bring the soul to confusion, for it would cause the soul to hate her own sensitive pleasure and the delight of her own consolations. But

X from this hatred, founded in humility, she will draw patience, with which she will become strong against the attacks of the Devil, against the persecutions of man, and towards Me, when, for her good, I withdraw delight from her mind. And if her sensuality, through malevolence, should lift its head against reason, the judgment of conscience should rise against it, and, with hatred of it, hold out reason against it, not allowing such evil emotions to get by it. Though sometimes the soul who lives in holy hatred corrects and reproves herself, not only for those things that are against reason, but also for things that in reality come from Me, which is what My sweet servant S. Gregory meant, when he said that a holy and pure conscience made sin where there was no sin, that is, that through purity of conscience, it saw sin where there was no sin.

“Now the soul who wishes to rise above imperfection should await My Providence in the House of Self-Knowledge, with the light of faith, as did the disciples, who remained in the house in perseverance and in watching, and in humble and continual prayer, awaiting the coming of the Holy Spirit. She should remain fasting and watching, the eye of her intellect fastened on the doctrine of My Truth, and she will become humble because she will know herself in humble and continual prayer and holy and true desire.”

#### CHAPTER LXXIV.

Of the signs by which the soul knows she has arrived  
at perfect love.

“IT now remains to be told thee how it can be seen that souls have arrived at perfect love. This is seen by the same sign that was given to the holy disciples after they had received the Holy Spirit, when they came forth from the house, and fearlessly announced the doctrine of My Word, My only-begotten Son, not fearing pain, but rather glorying therein. They did not mind going before the tyrants of

the world, to announce to them the truth, for the glory and praise of My Name. So the soul, who has awaited Me in self-knowledge as I have told thee, receives Me, on My return to her, with the fire of charity, in which charity, while still remaining in the house with perseverance, she conceives the virtues by affection of love, participating in My power; with which power and virtues she overrules and conquers her own sensitive passions, and through which charity she participates in the wisdom of My Son, in which she sees and knows, with the eye of her intellect, My Truth and the deceptions of spiritual self-love, that is, the imperfect love of her own consolations, as has been said, and she knows also the malice and deceit of the devil, which he practises on those souls who are bound by that imperfect love. She therefore arises, with hatred of that imperfection and with love of perfection, and, through this charity, which is of the Holy Spirit, she participates in His will, fortifying her own to be willing to suffer pain, and, coming out of the house through My Name, she brings forth the virtues on her neighbour. Not that by coming out to bring forth the virtues, I mean that she issues out of the House of Self-Knowledge, but that, in the time of the neighbour's necessity she loses that fear of being deprived of her own consolations, and so issues forth to give birth to those virtues which she has conceived through affection of love. The souls, who have thus come forth, have reached the fourth state, that is, from the third state, which is a perfect state, in which they taste charity and give birth to it on their neighbours, they have arrived at the fourth state, which is one of perfect union with Me. The two last-mentioned states are united, that is to say, one cannot be without the other, for there cannot be love of Me, without love of the neighbour, nor love of the neighbour without love of Me."

## CHAPTER LXXV.

How they who are imperfect desire to follow the Father alone, but they who are perfect desire to follow the Son. And of a vision, which this holy soul had, concerning diverse baptisms, and of many other beautiful and useful things.

“ As I have told thee, these latter have issued forth from the house, which is a sign that they have arisen from imperfection and arrived at perfection. Open the eye of thy intellect and see them running by the Bridge of the doctrine of Christ crucified, which was their rule, way and doctrine. They place none other before the eye of their intellect than Christ crucified, not the Father, as they do who are in imperfect love and do not wish to suffer pain, but only to have the delight which they find in Me. But they, as if drunken with love and burning with it, have gathered together and ascended the three steps, which I figured to thee as the three powers of the soul, and also the three actual steps, figured to thee as in the Body of My only Son, Christ crucified, by which steps the soul, as I told thee, ascended, first climbing to the Feet, with the feet of the soul's affection, from thence arriving at the Side, where she found the secret of the Heart and knew the baptism of water, which has virtue through the Blood, and where I dispose the soul to receive grace, uniting and kneading her together in the Blood. Where did the soul know of this her dignity, in being kneaded and united with the Blood of the Lamb, receiving the grace in Holy Baptism, in virtue of the Blood? In the Side, where she knew the fire of divine Charity, and so, if thou remember well, My Truth manifested to thee, when thou askedst, saying: *‘Sweet and Immaculate Lamb, Thou wert dead when Thy side was opened. Why then didst Thou want to be struck and have Thy heart divided?’* And He replied to thee, telling thee that there was occasion enough for it; but the principal part of what He said I will tell thee. He said: Because My desire towards the human generation was ended, and I

had finished the actual work of bearing pain and torment, and yet I had not been able to show, by finite things, because My love was infinite, how much more love I had, I wished thee to see the secret of the Heart, showing it to thee open, so that thou mightest see how much more I loved than I could show thee by finite pain. I poured from it Blood and Water, to show thee the baptism of water, which is received in virtue of the Blood. I also showed the baptism of love in two ways, first in those who are baptised in their blood, shed for Me, which has virtue through My Blood, even if they have not been able to have Holy Baptism, and also in those who are baptised in fire, not being able to have Holy Baptism, but desiring it with the affection of love. There is no baptism of fire without the Blood, because the Blood is steeped in and kneaded with the fire of Divine charity, because, through love was It shed. There is yet another way by which the soul receives the baptism of Blood, speaking, as it were, under a figure, and this way the Divine charity provided, knowing the infirmity and fragility of man, through which he offends, not that he is obliged, through his fragility and infirmity, to commit sin unless he wish to do so; but, falling, as he will, into the guilt of mortal sin, by which he loses the grace which he drew from Holy Baptism in virtue of the Blood, it was necessary to leave a continual baptism of Blood. This the Divine charity provided in the Sacrament of Holy Confession, the soul receiving the Baptism of Blood, with contrition of heart, confessing, when able, to My ministers, who hold the keys of the Blood, sprinkling It, in absolution, upon the face of the soul. But, if the soul be unable to confess, contrition of heart is sufficient for this baptism, the hand of My clemency giving you the fruit of this precious Blood. But if you are able to confess, I wish you to do so, and if you are able to, and do not, you will be deprived of the fruit of the Blood. It is true that, in the last extremity, a man, desiring to confess and not being able to, will receive the fruit of this baptism, of which I have been speaking. But let no one be so mad as so to arrange his deeds, that, in the hope of receiving it, he puts

off confessing until the last extremity of death, when he may not be able to do so. In which case, it is not at all certain that I shall not say to him, in My Divine Justice: '*Thou didst not remember Me in the time of thy life, when thou couldst, now will I not remember thee in thy death.*'

"Thou seest then that these Baptisms, which you should all receive until the last moment, are continual, and though My works, that is the pains of the Cross were finite, the fruit of them which you receive in Baptism, through Me, are infinite. This is in virtue of the infinite Divine nature, united with the finite human nature, which human nature endures pain in Me, the Word, clothed with your humanity. But because the one nature is steeped in and united with the other, the Eternal Deity drew to Himself the pain, which I suffered with so much fire and love. And therefore can this operation be called infinite, not that My pain, neither the actuality of the body be infinite, nor the pain of the desire that I had to complete your redemption, because it was terminated and finished on the Cross, when the Soul was separated from the Body; but the fruit, which came out of the pain and desire for your salvation, is infinite, and therefore you receive it infinitely. Had it not been infinite, the whole human generation could not have been restored to grace, neither the past, the present, nor the future. This I manifested in the opening of My Side, where is found the secret of the Heart, showing that I loved more than I could show, with finite pain. I showed to thee that My love was infinite. How? By the Baptism of Blood, united with the fire of My charity, and by the general baptism, given to Christians, and to whomsoever will receive it, and by the baptism of water, united with the Blood and the fire, wherein the soul is steeped. And, in order to show this, it was necessary for the Blood to come out of My Side. Now I have shown thee (said My Truth to thee) what thou askedst of Me."



## CHAPTER LXXVI.

How the soul, having mounted the third step of the holy Bridge, that is, having arrived at the Mouth, at once makes use of it—and how the death of self-will is the true sign that the soul has arrived there.

“ Now I say to thee, that all this, which I have just narrated to thee, as thou knowest, in the person of My Truth, was narrated to thee, so that thou mightest know the excellence of the state of that soul, who has ascended the second step, where she learns and acquires so much fire of love, and from whence she immediately runs to the third, that is, to the Mouth, which proves her to have arrived at the perfect state. Through what did she pass ? Through the midst of the Heart, that is the Blood, wherein she was re-baptised, leaving imperfect love, through the knowledge that she drew from the cordial love, seeing, tasting and proving the fire of My charity.

“ Such, then, have arrived at the Mouth, and they show it by taking the office of the mouth. The mouth speaks by means of the tongue, which is in the mouth, and tastes by means of the palate, giving to the stomach what the mouth retains and which has been chewed by the teeth to make it fit to be swallowed. The soul does likewise. First she speaks to me, with the tongue, which is in the mouth of holy desire, that is to say, the tongue of holy and continual prayer. This tongue speaks actually and mentally, mentally offering to Me sweet and amorous desires for the salvation of souls, and actually announcing the doctrine of My Truth, admonishing, counselling, confessing without fear of any pain which the world may cause her. I say that she eats, taking the food of souls, for My honour, on the table of the Cross, and on no other table and in no other way could she eat perfectly and in truth. She then chews with the teeth of hatred and love ; that is, hatred of vice and love of virtue, which are the two rows of teeth in the mouth of holy desire, for otherwise she would not be able to swallow the food of souls.

She chews, I say, for the sake of the salvation of souls, insults, villainies, reproofs and persecutions, enduring hunger and thirst, cold and heat, painful desires and tears and sweat, and she chews them all for My honour, bearing and supporting her neighbour. She then tastes the relish of the fruit of toil and the delight of the food of souls, in fire of My love and that of her neighbour. The food then reaches the stomach, that is, the stomach of the heart, which, by desire and the soul's hunger, is disposed to receive it, with cordial love and delight and affection for the neighbour. Delighting in the food, the stomach of the heart heaps it up by the aforesaid process, and loses corporal hunger, becoming able to take the food of the table of the doctrine of Christ crucified. The soul fattens on the royal and true virtues, and swells so greatly through the abundance of her food that her clothing of sensuality, that is to say her body, which covers the soul, bursts, and the body that bursts is dead; thus is the sensitive will of the soul dead, but the spiritual will is living, clothed in My eternal Will.

Now this death of the sensitive will, after the soul had eaten of the affection of My charity, is the sign, by which it is known, in truth, that the soul has arrived at the third step, that is the Mouth. And in the Mouth she found peace and quiet, and nothing can disturb her peace and quiet, because her sensitive will is dead. They who have arrived at this step, bring forth the virtues upon their neighbour without pain, not because pain is no longer painful to them, but because, their sensitive will being dead, they voluntarily bear pain for My sake. They run without negligence, by the doctrine of Christ crucified, and slacken not their pace on account of the persecutions, injuries or pleasures of the world. They pass by all these things, with fortitude and perseverance, their affection, clothed in the affection of charity, and eating the food of souls with true and perfect patience, which patience is a sign that the soul is in perfect love, loving without any consideration of self. For did she love Me and her neighbour for her own profit, she would, in impatience, slacken her steps, but, loving Me, Who am the Supreme Being and worthy to be loved, she

loves herself and her neighbour through Me alone, caring only for the glory and praise of My name, which causes her to be patient and strong to suffer, and persevering."

## CHAPTER LXXVII.

Of the works of the soul after she has ascended the aforesaid holy step.

"THE three glorious virtues which crown the soul who, with the light of the most holy faith, has attained to the summit of this charity, are Patience, Fortitude, and Perseverance, and, in the light of the most holy faith, she now runs the way of the truth without darkness, and is so raised on high by holy desire, that no one can offend her, neither the devil, with his temptations, because he fears the soul burning in the furnace of holy charity, nor men with their injuries and detractions, for, though the world may persecute her, it fears her, and such trials as the devil or the world may cause her, I permit in My Goodness, and, because she makes herself small through humility, I fortify her and make her great before the world. As thou hast seen well in My saints, who, for My sake, made themselves small, and I have made them great in eternal life and in the mystic body of My Holy Church, where mention is always made of them, because their names are written in the Book of Life, and the world holds them in reverence, because they despised it. Such as they hide not their virtue through fear, but through humility, and, if their neighbour needs their service, they do not hide themselves for fear of trouble or of losing their own consolation, but they serve him manfully not caring what they lose thereby themselves. And in whatever way they use their life and time in My honour, they rejoice, finding for themselves peace and quiet of mind. Why is it thus with them? Because they do not choose to serve Me in their way, but in My way, and, for that reason, times of consolation appear to them as heavy

as times of tribulation, and the time of prosperity as that of adversity. The one seems to them the same as the other, because in everything they see My will, and they think of nothing except of conforming themselves in every time and place to My will. They have seen that nothing is made without Me, and that all, except sin, is made with mystery and Divine Providence, therefore, except sin which they hate, they hold everything in reverence. Their will is therefore firm and stable, and they go on by the way of truth, and do not slacken their pace, helping their neighbour, without regarding his ignorance and ingratitude, and caring not for the injuries and reproofs of the vicious, but rather crying before My Face in prayer for them, grieving more for the injury they do Me, and the damnation of their soul, than for their own annoyance. They say with glorious Paul, My standard bearer: '*The world curses us and we bless, it persecutes us and we return thanks, we are swept away as the dirt and refuse of the world and we endure patiently.*' So, most delightful daughter, thou seest the sweet signs, and above all other signs, the virtue of patience, by which the soul shows herself in truth, to have arisen from imperfection and attained to perfect love, following the sweet and immaculate Lamb, My only-begotten Son, Who, being on the Cross, held by the nails of love, did not draw back on account of the taunts of the Jews who said: '*Descend from the Cross and we will believe Thee,*' and neither did He draw back for your ingratitude, and not persevere in the obedience which I had imposed upon Him, but He endured with so much patience, that no cry of murmuring was heard from Him.

"In a like way do my most delightful sons, and faithful servants, follow the doctrine and example of My Truth, and they do not turn back from following the plough, because the world would withdraw them by flattery or threats, but they fix their eyes on My Truth alone. Such as they would not want to leave the field of battle in order to don the garment of peace and remain at home, but would rather want to flee creatures and pleasures than Me, their Creator. They will stand with delight in the field of battle, drunk

and inebriated with the Blood of Christ crucified, which is placed in the tavern of the church of My charity, to give life to those who would be true knights, and fight against their own sensuality and fragile flesh, against the world and the devil, with the knife of hatred of vice and the knife of the love of virtue, which knife of love is a weapon that parries all sin, and which the enemy cannot take from them, unless they voluntarily take off their armour, surrendering the knife of the said love into the enemy's hand. They who are inebriated with the Blood would not do thus, but they would rather manfully persevere until death, when all their enemies will be discomfited.

“O glorious virtues! how pleasing they are to Me, and how, in the world, they shine in the darkened eyes of the ignorant, who cannot participate in the light of My servants! In the hatred of those who persecute My servants, shines the clemency which the persecuted ones have for the salvation of their tormentors; in their envy shines the broadness of charity, and in their cruelty, pity—for they are cruel to themselves; in injury shines Queen Patience, who is supreme over all the virtues, because she is the mirror of charity. She shows up in review the virtues of the soul, and shows whether they are founded by Me, in truth or not. She conquers and is never conquered. She is accompanied by Perseverance and Fortitude, as I have told thee, and when she comes out of the battle-field and returns with victory to the house, to Me, Eternal Father, the Rewarder of every toil, she receives the Crown of Glory.”

## CHAPTER LXXVIII.

Of the fourth state, which is, nevertheless, not separated from the third, and of the works of the soul who has arrived at this state, and how she is never left by GOD, Who remains with her in continual sentiment.

“Now I have told thee how it is to be seen that souls have arrived at the perfection of love, friendly and filial

Now I do not want to conceal from thee how great is the delight with which they taste Me, though they are still in the mortal body. This is because, having arrived at the third state, they acquire the fourth, which, however, is not separated from the third, but is united with it, and the one cannot be without the other, except in the same way as love of Me can be without love of the neighbour. A fruit that arises from this third condition of the soul's perfect union with Me, wherein she acquires fortitude, is that, not only does she bear with patience, but she anxiously desires to suffer pain for the glory and praise of My Name. Such as these glory in the shame of My only-begotten Son, as said Paul, My standard-bearer: '*I glory in tribulations, and in the shame of Christ crucified*'—and in another place—'*God forbid that I should glory save in Christ crucified*'—and again—'*I bear in My body the stigmata of Christ crucified.*' Such as these, I say, as if enamoured of My honour, and famished for the food of souls, run to the table of the Most Holy Cross, willing to suffer pain and endure much for the service of the neighbour, and desiring to preserve and acquire the virtues, bearing in their body the stigmata of Christ crucified, causing the crucified love which is theirs to shine, being visible through self-contempt and delighted endurance of the shames and vexations on every side. To these, My most dear sons, trouble is a pleasure, and pleasure and every consolation that the world would offer them, are a toil, and not only the consolation that the servants of the world, by My dispensation, are constrained to give them, in reverence and in compassion of their corporal necessities, out also the mental consolation which they receive from Me, the Eternal Father. Even this they despise through humility and self-hatred. They do not despise consolation itself, which is my gift and grace, but only the pleasure which the soul's appetite finds therein. And this they do through the virtue of true humility, obtained through holy self-hatred, which is the nurse and nourisher of love, and has been acquired through true knowledge of themselves and of Me. Wherefore, as thou seest, the virtues and wounds of Christ crucified shine in

their bodies and souls. Such as these do not feel any separation from Me, as happens in the case of others, of whom I have told thee, namely, that I would leave them, not by grace, but by feeling, afterwards returning to them again. I do not act thus to these most perfect ones who have arrived at the great perfection, and are entirely dead to their own will, but I remain continually both by grace and feeling in their souls, so that at any time that they wish they can unite their minds to Me, through love. They can in no way be separated from My love, for, by love, they have arrived at so close a union. Every place is to them an oratory, every moment a time for prayer—their conversation has ascended from earth to heaven—that is to say, they have cut off from themselves every form of earthly affection and sensual self-love, and have risen alone themselves into the very height of heaven, having climbed the staircase of the virtues and mounted the three Steps which I figured to thee, in the Body of My Son. On the first step the feet of their affection are divested of the love of vice; on the second they taste the secret love of the Heart, where they can see desire of virtue; on the third, the step of purity and peace of mind, they find in themselves the virtues, and, rising above imperfect love, they attain the great perfection. For they have found rest to their souls in the doctrine of My Truth, having found both Table and Food and Server, which Food they taste, through the doctrine of Christ crucified, My only-begotten Son. I am their Bed and Board, and My sweet and amorous Word is their Food, for they eat the Bread of souls in the person of this glorious Word, for I give Him to you, that is His Flesh and Blood, wholly GOD and wholly man, in the Sacrament of the Altar, by My Goodness, while you are still pilgrims and wayfarers, so that you may not slacken your pace through faintness, or lose the memory of the benefits of the Blood, shed for you with so much fire of love, and may always be able to comfort and delight yourselves while on your journey. The Holy Spirit serves these souls, for He is the affection of My charity which ministers to them both gifts and graces. This sweet

Servant both fetches and carries, to Me their painful but sweetly amorous desires, and to them the fruit of the Divine Love, and of their labours, so that they feed on the sweetness of My charity, so that, as thou seest, I am the Table, and My Son is the Food, and the Holy Spirit proceeding from Me, the Father, and from Him, the Son, is the Server. Thou seest, then, that they always feel Me in their minds, by sentiment as well as by grace; and the more they have despised trouble, taking pleasure in it and desiring it, the more completely have they passed beyond it and acquired delight, because their ardent souls are enflamed with My love, wherein their will is consumed. The devil fears the rod of their charity, and the world strikes the outside of their bodies to hurt them, but to its own injury, because the arrow, which cannot find a place to enter, returns against him who sent it. For when the world hurls the darts of injuries, persecutions and murmurings against My most perfect servants, there is no joint in their harness for them to enter by, the garden of their soul being walled up, so that the dart returns against him who hurled it, poisoning him with the venom of his own sin. Thou seest, then, that the soul can in no way be attacked through the body, but remains both blessed and sorrowful. Sorrowful for the sake of her neighbour's sin, and blessed through the union of love with Me which she enjoys in herself. Such as these follow the Immaculate Lamb, My only-begotten Son, Who was both blessed and sorrowful on the Cross. He was sorrowful in that He bore the cross of the Body, suffering pain and the cross of desire, in order to satisfy for the guilt of the human race, and He was blessed, because the Divine nature, though united with the human, could suffer no pain, but always kept His Soul in a state of blessedness, being revealed without a veil to her, so that He was both blessed and sorrowful, for, while the flesh endured, neither the Deity nor the superior part of the soul, which is above the intellect, could suffer.

“So these, My sons of delight, who have arrived at the third and fourth states, are sorrowful, for they carry both a physical and a mental Cross—that is to say, they bear



pain in their bodies according to My permission, and in their mind, the cross of desire, for they are tortured by sorrow at the offence done to Me, and the loss of their neighbour. Yet I say to thee that they are blessed, because the delight of charity which makes them so, cannot be taken away from them. Their grief, then, cannot be called afflicting sorrow, but rather fattening, for the soul is fattened by her love, and virtues are augmented and fortified by trouble. Their trouble fattens them and does not afflict them, because no trouble can draw them out of the fire of My love. These souls, thrown into the furnace of My charity, no part of their will remaining outside, but the whole of them being enflamed in Me, are like a brand, wholly consumed in the furnace, so that no one can take hold of it to extinguish it, because it has become fire. In the same way, no one can seize these souls or draw them outside of Me, because they are made one thing with Me through grace, and I never withdraw Myself from them by sentiment, as in the case of those who I am leading on to perfection. For, with souls who have arrived at perfection, I play no more the Game of Love, which consists in leaving and returning again to the soul, though thou must understand that it is not, properly speaking, I, the immoveable GOD, Who thus illude them, but rather the sentiment that My charity gives them of Me."

## CHAPTER LXXIX.

How GOD does not withdraw Himself from the aforesaid perfect ones by sentiment or by grace, but how He withdraws the union of Himself from them.

"I HAVE said, that, from these perfect ones, I never withdraw by sentiment. But, in another way, I depart from them, for the soul, being bound in the body, is not sufficient continually to receive that union which I make with her. And because she is not sufficient, I withdraw Myself, not by sentiment or by grace, but by that union which I

make with her. For souls, arising with anxious desire, run, with virtue, by the Bridge of the doctrine of Christ crucified, and arrive at the gate, lifting up their minds in Me, and in the Blood, and burning with the fire of love they taste in Me, the Eternal Deity, Who am to them a Sea Pacific, with Whom the soul has made so great union, that she has no movement except in Me. And, being yet mortal, they taste the good of the immortals, and having yet the weight of the body, they receive the joy of the spirit. Wherefore oftentimes, through the perfect union which the soul has made with Me, she is raised from the earth almost as if the heavy body became light. But this does not mean that the heaviness of the body is taken away, but that the union of the soul with Me is more perfect than the union of the body with the soul ; wherefore the strength of the spirit, united with Me, raises the weight of the body from the earth, leaving it as if immovable and all pulled to pieces in the affection of the soul. Thou rememberest to have heard it said of some creatures, that were it not for My Goodness, in seeking strength for them, they would not be able to live, and I would tell thee, that, in the fact that the souls of some do not leave their bodies, is to be seen a greater miracle, than in the fact that some have arisen from the dead, so great is the union which they have with Me. I, therefore, sometimes for a space, withdraw from the union, making the soul return to the vessel of her body, that is, to the sentiment of the body, from which she was separated though the affection of love. From the body she did not depart, because that cannot be, except in death, the bodily powers alone departed, becoming united to Me, through affection of love. The memory is full of nothing but Me, the intellect, elevated, gazes upon the object of My Truth ; the affection, which follows the intellect, loves and becomes united with that which the intellect sees. These powers, being united and gathered together and immersed and inflamed in Me, the body loses its feeling, so that the seeing eye sees not, and the hearing ear hears not, and the tongue does not speak, except as the abundance of the heart will sometimes permit it for the

alleviation of the heart and the praise and glory of My Name.

“The hand does not touch and the feet walk not, because the members are bound with the sentiment of love, and as, it were, contrary to all their natural functions, cry to Me the Eternal Father for the separation of the soul from the body, as did My glorious Paul, saying, ‘*Oh wretched man that I am, who will separate Me from this body? for I feel within Me a perverse law which wars against the Spirit.*’ Paul was not referring to the warring of senses against the Spirit, from which he knew he was secured by My words: *My grace is sufficient for thee.* Why then, did he utter those words? Because he found himself bound in the vessel of the body, which for a space of time impeded his vision of Me, that is to say, that, until death, his eyes were bound so as not to be able to see Me, the Eternal Trinity, Who am in the sight of the Blessed Immortals, who render praise and glory to My name. Whereas he found himself in the midst of mortals who always offend Me, deprived of the sight of Me, that is of Me in My Essence. Not that he and My other servants see Me not in the virtue of Charity in diverse ways, according as pleases My Goodness, but they see Me not in Essence. But every vision, which the soul, while it is in the mortal body, receives of Me is a darkness compared to that sight which the soul has who is separated from the body. So that it seemed to Paul that the bodily vision warred against the vision of the Spirit, and that the feeling of the grossness of the human body impeded the intellectual eye, not allowing him to see Me face to face, and it seemed to him that his will was so bound that he could not love as he wanted to love, for every love in this life, until it reaches its perfection, is imperfect. Not that the love of Paul and of My other servants was imperfect in grace and in charity, because it was perfect, but it was imperfect in that it had not satisfaction, which gave him pain, for, had his desire been filled with that which he loved, he would have felt no pain. But the soul, who is separated from the body, has her desire filled, and has therefore no pain. She is satisfied, the tedium of

satiety, being far from her, and the pain of hunger. Her vessel is filled, and she is firm and stable in Me, the Truth, so that she can desire nothing which she has not. Desiring Me, she sees Me face to face, desiring to see the glory and praise of My Name in My saints, she sees them in the angelic as well as in the human nature."

#### CHAPTER LXXX.

How worldly people render glory and praise to GOD, whether they will or no.

"AND so perfect is her vision that she sees the glory and praise of My Name, not so much in the angelic nature as in the human, for, whether worldly people will or no, they render glory and praise to My Name, not that they do so in the way they should, loving Me above everything, but that My mercy shines in them, in that, in the abundance of My charity, I give them time, and do not order the earth to open and swallow them up on account of their sins. I even wait for them, and command the earth to give them of her fruits, the sun to give them light and warmth, and the sky to move above them. And in all things created and made for them, I use My charity and mercy, withdrawing neither on account of their sins. I even give equally to the sinner and the righteous man, and often more to the sinner than to the righteous man, because the righteous man is able to endure privation, and I take from him the goods of the world that he may the more abundantly enjoy the goods of heaven. So that in worldly men My mercy and charity shine, and they render praise and glory to My Name, even when they persecute My servants; for they prove in them the virtues of patience and charity, causing them to suffer humbly and offer to Me their persecutions and injuries, thus turning them into My praise and glory.

"So that, whether they will or no, worldly people render to My Name praise and glory, even when they intend to do Me infamy and wrong."

## CHAPTER LXXXI.

How even the devils render glory and praise to GOD.

“SINNERS, such as those of whom I have just spoken, are placed in this life in order to augment virtues in My servants, as the devils are in Hell as My justitiars and augmentors of My Glory ; that is, my instruments of justice towards the damned, and the augmentors of My Glory in My creatures, who are wayfarers and pilgrims on their journey to reach Me, their End. They augment in them the virtues in diverse ways, exercising them with many temptations and vexations, causing them to injure one another and take one another’s property, and not for the motive of making them receive injury or be deprived of their property, but only to deprive them of charity. But in thinking to deprive My servants, they fortify them, proving in them the virtues of patience, fortitude, and perseverance. Thus they render praise and glory to My Name, and My Truth is fulfilled in them, which Truth created them for the praise and glory of Me, Eternal Father, and that they might participate in My beauty. But, rebelling against Me in their pride, they fell and lost their vision of Me, wherefore they rendered not to Me glory through the affection of love, and I, Eternal Truth, have placed them as instruments to exercise My servants in virtue in this life and as justitiars to those who go, for their sins, to the pains of Purgatory. So thou seest that My Truth is fulfilled in them, that is, that they render Me glory, not as citizens of life eternal, of which they are deprived by their sins, but as My justitiars, manifesting justice upon the damned, and upon those in Purgatory.”

## CHAPTER LXXXII.

How the soul, after she has passed through this life, sees fully the praise and glory of My Name in everything, and, though, in her the pain of desire is ended, the desire is not.

“THUS in all things created, in all rational creatures, and in the devils is seen the glory and praise of My Name. Who can see it? The soul who is denuded of the body and has reached Me, her End, sees it clearly, and, in seeing, knows the truth. Seeing Me, the Eternal Father, she loves, and loving, she is satisfied. Satisfied, she knows the Truth, and her will is stayed in My Will, bound and made stable, so that in nothing can it suffer pain, because it has that which it desired to have, before the soul saw Me, namely, the glory and praise of My Name. She now, in truth, sees it completely in My saints, in the blessed spirits, and in all creatures and things, even in the devils, as I told thee. And although she also sees the injury done to Me, which before caused her sorrow, it no longer now can give her pain, but only compassion, because she loves without pain, and prays to Me continually with affection of love, that I will have mercy on the world. Pain in her is ended, but not love, as the tortured desire, which My Word, the Son, had borne from the beginning when I sent Him into the world, terminated on the Cross in His painful death, but His love—no. For had the affection of My charity, which I shewed you by means of Him, been terminated and ended then, you would not be, because by love you are made, and had My love been drawn back, that is, had I not loved your being, you could not be, but My love created you, and My love possesses you, because I am one thing with My Truth, and He, the Word Incarnate with Me. Thou seest then, that the saints and every soul in Eternal Life have desire for the salvation of souls without pain, because pain ended in their death, but not so the affection of love.

“Thus, as if drunk with the Blood of the Immaculate Lamb, and clothed in the love of the neighbour, they pass

through the Narrow Gate, bathed in the Blood of Christ crucified, and they find themselves in Me, the Sea Pacific, raised from imperfection, far from satiety, and arrived at perfection, satisfied by every good."

## CHAPTER LXXXIII.

How after Saint Paul was drawn to the glory of the blessed, he desired to be loosened from the body, as they do, who have reached the aforesaid third and fourth states.

"PAUL, then, had seen and tasted this good, when I drew him up into the third heaven, that is into the height of the Trinity, where he tasted and knew My Truth, receiving fully the Holy Spirit, and learning the doctrine of My Truth, the Word Incarnate. The soul of Paul was clothed, through feeling and union, in Me, Eternal Father, like the blessed ones in Eternal Life, except that his soul was not separated from his body, except through this feeling and union. But it being pleasing to My Goodness to make of him a vessel of election in the abyss of Me, Eternal Trinity, I dispossessed him of Myself, because on Me can no pain fall, and I wished him to suffer for My name; therefore I placed before him, as an object for the eyes of his intellect, Christ crucified, clothing him with the garment of His doctrine, binding and fettering him with the clemency of the Holy Spirit and enflaming him with the fire of charity. He became a vessel, disposed and reformed by My Goodness, and, on being struck, made no resistance, but said: '*My Lord, what dost Thou wish me to do? Show me that which it is thy pleasure for me to do, and I will do it.*' Which I answered when I placed before him Christ crucified, clothing him with the doctrine of My charity. I illuminated him perfectly with the light of true contrition, by which he extirpated his defects, and founded him in My charity."

## CHAPTER LXXXIV.

How the soul who finds herself in the unitive state desires infinitely to leave the barren earthly state and unite herself to GOD.

“AND when I depart from the soul in the aforesaid way that the body may return a little to its corporal sentiment, the soul, on account of the union which she had made with Me, is impatient in her life, being deprived of union with Me, and the conversation of the Immortals, who render glory to Me, and finding herself, amid the conversation of mortals, and seeing them so miserably offending Me. This vision of My offence is the torture which such souls always have, and which, with the desire to see Me, renders their life insupportable to them. Nevertheless, as their will is not their own, but becomes one with Mine, they cannot desire other than what I desire, and though they desire to come and be with Me, they are contented to remain, if I desire them to remain, with their pain, for the greater praise and glory of My Name and the salvation of souls. So that in nothing are they in discord with My Will ; but they run their course with ecstatic desire, clothed in Christ crucified, and keeping by the Bridge of His doctrine, glorying in His shame and pains. Inasmuch as they appear to be suffering they are rejoicing, because the enduring of many tribulations is to them a relief in the desire which they have for death, for oftentimes the desire and the will to suffer pain mitigates the pain caused them by their desire to quit the body. These not only endure with patience, as I told thee they did, who are in the third state, but they glory, through My Name, in bearing much tribulation. In bearing tribulation they find pleasure, and not having it they suffer pain, fearing that I reward not their well-doing or that the sacrifice of their desires is not pleasing to Me ; but when I permit to them many tribulations they rejoice, seeing themselves clothed with the suffering and shame of Christ crucified. Wherefore were it



possible for them to have virtue without toil they would not want it. They would rather delight in the Cross, with Christ, acquiring it with pain, than in any other way obtain Eternal Life. Why? Because they are inflamed and steeped in the Blood, where they find the blaze of My charity, which charity is a fire proceeding from Me, ravishing their heart and mind and making their sacrifices acceptable. Wherefore, the eye of the intellect is lifted up and gazes into My Deity, when the affection behind the intellect is nourished and united with Me. This is a sight which I grant to the soul, infused with grace, who, in truth, loves and serves Me."

#### CHAPTER LXXXV.

How they, who are arrived at the aforesaid unitive state, have the eye of their intellect illuminated by supernatural light infused by grace. And how it is better to go for counsel for the salvation of the soul, to a humble and holy conscience than to a proud lettered man.

"WITH this light that is given to the eye of the intellect, Thomas Aquinas saw Me, wherefore he acquired the light of much science; also Augustine, Jerome, and the doctors, and my saints. They were illuminated by My Truth to know and understand My Truth in darkness. By My Truth I mean the Holy Scripture, which seemed dark because it was not understood; not through any defect of the Scriptures, but of them who heard them, and did not understand them. Wherefore I sent this light to illuminate the blind and coarse understanding, uplifting the eye of the intellect to know the Truth. And I, Fire, Acceptor of sacrifices, ravishing away from them their darkness, give the light; not a natural light, but a supernatural, so that, though in darkness, they know the Truth. Wherefore that, which at first appeared to be dark, now appears with the most perfect light, to the gross or subtle mind; and every one receives according as he is capable or disposed

to know Me, for I do not despise dispositions. So thou seest that the eye of the intellect has received supernatural light, infused by grace, by which the doctors and saints knew light in darkness, and of darkness made light. The intellect was, before the Scriptures were formed, wherefore, from the intellect came science, because in seeing they discerned. It was thus that the holy prophets and fathers understood, who prophesied of the coming and death of My Son, and the Apostles, after the coming of the Holy Spirit, which gave them that supernatural light. The evangelists, doctors, confessors, virgins and martyrs were all likewise illuminated by the aforesaid perfect light. And every one has had the illumination of this light according as he needed it for his salvation or that of others, or for the exposition of the Scriptures. The doctors of the holy science had it, expounding the doctrine of My Truth, the preaching of the Apostles, and the Gospels of the Evangelists. The martyrs had it, declaring in their blood the Most Holy Faith, the fruit and the treasure of the Blood of the Lamb. The virgins had it in the affection of charity and purity. To the obedient ones is declared, by it, the obedience of the Word, showing them the perfection of obedience, which shines in My Truth, Who for the obedience that I imposed upon Him, ran to the opprobrious death of the Cross. This light is to be seen in the Old and New Testament; in the Old, by it, were seen by the eye of the intellect, and known the prophecies of the holy prophets. In the New Testament of the evangelical life, how is the Gospel declared to the faithful? By this same light. And because the New Testament proceeded from the same light, the new law did not break the old law; rather are the two laws bound together, the imperfection of the old law, founded in fear alone, being taken from it, by the coming of the Word of My only-begotten Son, with the law of Love, completing the old law by giving it love, and replacing the fear of penalty by holy fear. And, therefore, said My Truth to the disciples, to show that He was not a breaker of laws: *'I came not to dissolve the law, but to fulfil it.'* It is almost

as if My Truth would say to them—The Law is now imperfect, but with My Blood I will make it perfect, and I will fill it up with what it lacks, taking away the fear of penalty, and founding it in love and holy fear. How was this declared to be the Truth? By this same supernatural light, which was and is given by grace to all, who will receive it? Every light that comes from Holy Scripture comes and came from this supernatural light. Ignorant and proud men of science were blind notwithstanding this light, because their pride and the cloud of self-love had covered up and put out the light. Wherefore they understood the Holy Scripture rather literally than with understanding, and taste only the letter of it, still desiring many other books; and they get not to the marrow of it, because they have deprived themselves of the light, with which is found and expounded the Scripture; and they are annoyed and murmur, because they find much in it that appears to them gross and idiotic. And, nevertheless, they appear to be much illuminated in their knowledge of Scripture, as if they had studied it for long; and this is not remarkable, because they have of course the natural light from whence proceeds science. But because they have lost the supernatural light, infused by grace, they neither see nor know My Goodness, nor the grace of My servants. Wherefore, I say to thee, that it is much better to go for counsel for the salvation of the soul, to a holy and upright conscience, than to a proud lettered man, learned in much science, because such a one can only offer what he has himself, and, because of his darkness, it may appear to thee, that, from what he says, the Scriptures offer darkness. The contrary wilt thou find with My servants, because they offer the light that is in them, with hunger and desire for the soul's salvation. This I have told thee, my sweetest daughter, that thou mightest know the perfection of this unitive state, when the eye of the intellect is ravished by the fire of My charity, in which charity it receives the supernatural light. With this light the souls in the unitive state love Me, because love follows the intellect, and the more it knows the more can it love. Thus the one feeds

the other, and, with this light, they both arrive at the Eternal Vision of Me, where they see and taste Me, in Truth, the soul being separated from the body, as I told thee when I spoke to thee of the blissfulness that the soul received in Me. This state is most excellent, when the soul, being yet in the mortal body, tastes bliss with the immortals, and oftentimes she arrives at so great a union that she scarcely knows whether she be in the body or out of it; and tastes the earnest-money of Eternal Life, both because she is united with Me, and because her will is dead in Christ, by which death her union was made with Me, and in no other way could she perfectly have done so. Therefore do they taste life eternal, deprived of the hell of their own will, which gives to man the earnest-money of damnation, if he yield to it."

#### CHAPTER LXXXVI.

A useful repetition of many things already said and how GOD leads this devout soul to pray to Him for every creature, and for the Holy Church.

"Now thou hast seen, with the eye of thy intellect, and heard, with the ear of thy feeling, from Me, Eternal Truth, what method thou must hold to make use of this doctrine for thyself, and thy neighbour, and to know My Truth. As I told thee in the beginning, a knowledge of Truth is arrived at through a knowledge of self. Not a pure knowledge of self, but a knowledge of self seasoned and united with a knowledge of Me. Wherefore thou foundest humility and hatred and displeasure of thyself and the fire of My charity, through the knowledge that thou foundest of thyself from whence thou camest to love and take delight in thy neighbour, bringing him to a holy and honest life, by means of the doctrine. I have also shown thee the Bridge, and the three general steps, placed there for the three powers of the soul, and I have told thee how no one can attain to the life of grace unless he has mounted all three

steps, that is, gathered together all the three powers of the soul in My Name. I have also made known to thee, in particular, the three states of the soul, figured in the Body of My only-begotten Son, of Whom I told thee, that He had made of His Body a staircase, showing it to thee in His nailed Feet, and in the opening of His Side, and in His Mouth, where the soul attains to peace and quiet, in the way that I told thee. And I have shown thee the imperfection of servile fear, and the imperfection of the love, that is only for the sweetness found in Me, and I have shown thee, the perfection of the third state, namely of those who have arrived at the peace of the Mouth, having run, with anxious desire, by the Bridge of Christ crucified, ascending the three general steps, that is, gathering together in My Name the three powers of the soul and all their functions, as I explained to thee more clearly above, and thus have ascended the three principal steps, that is, passed from the imperfect state to the perfect. And so hast thou seen them run in truth, and taste with satisfaction the perfection of the soul, with the odour of the virtues. Thou hast also seen the deceptions into which they fall before they arrive at perfection, if they do not exercise themselves in the knowledge of Me and of themselves. I have also declared to thee the misery of those who are drowned in the river, because they keep not by the Bridge of the doctrine of Christ crucified, the which I placed there that they might not be drowned. But they, as if they were mad, would drown in the misery and filth of the world. All these things have I declared to thee to increase in thee the fire of holy desire, and compassion and sorrow for the damnation of souls, and that thy sorrow and love might constrain thee to urge Me, with tears and sweat and humble and continual prayer, offered to Me with the fire of most ardent desire, to have mercy on the world. And that not only thou, but many others of my creatures and servants who may hear these things, might be constrained to urge Me to have mercy on the world and particularly on the mystic body of the Holy Church. I have already told thee, if thou remember well, that I would fulfil all thy desires, giving thee refreshment in thy toil, and satisfying the pain

of thy desires, reforming the Church with holy and good pastors. Not reforming her by war, or the knife or cruelty, as I told thee, but by peace and quiet and by the tears and sweat of My servants, whom I have placed as labourers for souls in the mystic body of the Church, labouring for them in virtue, in example and in doctrine, offering to Me, for the Church and every creature, continual prayer, bringing forth the virtues on their neighbour in the way I have told thee, because every virtue and every fault is increased by its relation to the neighbour. Wherefore I wish you all to be of service to your neighbour, and thus to bear fruit. Cease not to cast up before Me the incense of fragrant prayers for the salvation of souls, because with those prayers, tears and sweatings will I wash the face of My Spouse, the Holy Church. I have already shown her to thee under the form of a damsel, her face all befouled, as if with leprosy. And this is on account of the sins of My ministers and of the whole Christian people who feed at the breast of this My Spouse, and of whose sins I will speak to thee in another place."

## CHAPTER LXXXVII.

How this devout soul seeks knowledge from God concerning the state and fruit of tears.

THEN this soul, yearning with very great desire, and rising as one intoxicated both by the union which she had had with God, and by what she had heard and tasted of the Supreme and Sweet Truth, yearned with grief over the ignorance of creatures, in that they did not know their Benefactor, or the affection of the love of God. And nevertheless she had joy from the hope of the promise that the Truth of God had made to her, teaching her the way she was to direct her will (and the other servants of God as well as herself) in order that He should do mercy to the world. And, lifting up the eye of her intellect upon the sweet Truth, to

Whom she remained united, wishing to know somewhat of the aforesaid states of the soul of which God had spoken to her, and seeing that the soul passes through these states with tears, she wished to learn from the Truth concerning the different kinds of tears, and how they came to be, and whence they proceeded, and the fruit that resulted from weeping. Wishing then to know this from the Sweet, Supreme and First Truth, as to the manner of being and reason of the aforesaid tears, and inasmuch as the truth cannot be learnt from any other than from the Truth Himself, and nothing can be learnt in the Truth but what is seen by the eye of the intellect, she made her request of the Truth. For it is necessary for him who is lifted with desire to learn the Truth with the light of faith.

Wherefore, knowing that she had not forgotten the teaching which the Truth, that is, God, had given her, that in no other way could she learn about the different states and fruits of tears, she rose out of herself, exceeding every limit of her nature with the greatness of her desire. And, with the light of a lively faith, she opened the eye of her intellect upon the Eternal Truth, in Whom she saw and knew the Truth, in the matter of her request, for God Himself manifested it to her, and condescending in His benignity to her burning desire, fulfilled her petition.

## CHAPTER LXXXVIII.

How there are five kinds of tears.

THEN said the Supreme and Sweet Truth of God, "Oh, beloved and dearest daughter, thou beggest knowledge of the reasons and fruits of tears, and I have not despised thy desire. Open well the eye of thy intellect and I will show thee, among the aforesaid states of the soul, of which I have told thee, concerning the imperfect tears caused by fear; but first rather of the tears of wicked men of the world. These are the tears of damnation. The former

are those of fear, and belong to men who abandon sin from fear of punishment, and weep for fear. The third are the tears of those who, having abandoned sin, are beginning to serve and taste Me, and weep for very sweetness ; but since their love is imperfect, so also is their weeping, as I have told thee. The fourth are the tears of those who have arrived at the perfect love of their neighbour, loving Me without any regard whatsoever for themselves. These weep and their weeping is perfect. The fifth are joined to the fourth and are tears of sweetness let fall with great peace, as I will explain to thee. I will tell thee also of the tears of fire, without bodily tears of the eyes, which satisfy those who often would desire to weep and cannot. And I wish thee to know that all these various graces may exist in one soul, who, rising from fear and imperfect love, reaches perfect love in the unitive state. Now I will begin to tell thee of these tears in the following way."

#### CHAPTER LXXXIX.

Of the difference of these tears, arising from the explanation of the aforesaid states of the soul.

"I WISH thee to know that every tear proceeds from the heart, for there is no member of the body that will satisfy the heart so much as the eye. If the heart is in pain the eye manifests it. And if the pain be sensual the eye drops hearty tears which engender death, because proceeding from the heart, they are caused by a disordinate love distinct from the love of Me ; for such love, being disordinate and an offence to Me, receives the meed of mortal pain and tears. It is true that their guilt and grief are more or less heavy, according to the measure of their disordinate love. And these form that first class, who have the tears of death, of whom I have spoken to thee, and will speak again. Now, begin to consider the tears which give the commencement of life, the tears, that is, of those who,



knowing their guilt, set to weeping for fear of the penalty they have incurred.

“These are both hearty and sensual tears, because the soul, not having yet arrived at perfect hatred of its guilt on account of the offence thereby done to Me, abandons it with a hearty grief for the penalty which follows the sin committed, while the eye weeps in order to satisfy the grief of the heart.

“But the soul, exercising herself in virtue, begins to lose her fear, knowing that fear alone is not sufficient to give her eternal life, as I have already told thee when speaking of the second stage of the soul. And so she proceeds, with love, to know herself and My goodness in her, and begins to take hope in My mercy in which her heart feels joy. Sorrow for her grief, mingled with the joy of her hope in My mercy, causes her eye to weep, which tears issue from the very fountain of her heart.

“But, inasmuch as she has not yet arrived at great perfection, she often drops sensual tears, and if thou askest Me why, I reply: Because the root of self-love is not sensual love, for that has already been removed, as has been said, but it is a spiritual love with which the soul desires spiritual consolations or loves some creature spiritually. (I have spoken to thee at length regarding the imperfections of such souls.) Wherefore, when such a soul is deprived of the thing she loves, that is, internal or external consolation, the internal being the consolation received from Me, the external being that which she had from the creature, and when temptations and the persecutions of men come on her, her heart is full of grief. And, as soon as the eye feels the grief and suffering of the heart, she begins to weep with a tender and compassionate sorrow, pitying herself with the spiritual compassion of self-love; for her self-will is not yet crushed and destroyed in everything, and in this way she lets fall sensual tears—tears, that is, of spiritual passion. But, growing, and exercising herself in the light of self-knowledge, she conceives displeasure at herself and finally perfect self-hatred. From this she draws true knowledge of My goodness with a fire of love, and she

begins to unite herself to Me, and to conform her will to Mine and so to feel joy and compassion. Joy in herself through the affection of love, and compassion for her neighbour, as I told thee in speaking of the third stage. Immediately her eye, wishing to satisfy the heart, cries with hearty love for Me and for her neighbour, grieving solely for My offence and her neighbour's loss, and not for any penalty or loss due to herself; for she does not think of herself, but only of rendering glory and praise to My Name, and, in an ecstasy of desire, she joyfully takes the food prepared for her on the table of the Holy Cross, thus conforming herself to the humble, patient, and immaculate Lamb, My only-begotten Son, of whom I made a Bridge, as I have said. Having thus sweetly travelled by that Bridge, following the doctrine of My sweet Truth, enduring with true and sweet patience every pain and trouble which I have permitted to be inflicted upon her for her salvation, having manfully received them all, not choosing them according to her own tastes, but accepting them according to Mine, and not only, as I said, enduring them with patience, but sustaining them with joy, she counts it glory to be persecuted for My Name's sake in whatever she may have to suffer. Then the soul arrives at such delight and tranquillity of mind that no tongue can tell it. Having crossed the river by means of the Eternal Word, that is, by the doctrine of My only-begotten Son, and, having fixed the eye of her intellect on Me, the Sweet Supreme Truth, having seen the Truth, knows it; and knowing it, loves it. Drawing her affection after her intellect, she tastes My Eternal Deity, and she knows and sees the Divine nature united to your humanity.

“Then she reposes in Me, the Sea Pacific, and her heart is united to Me in love, as I told thee when speaking of the fourth and unitive state. When she thus feels Me, the Eternal Deity, her eyes let fall tears of sweetness, tears indeed of milk, nourishing the soul in true patience; an odoriferous ointment are these tears, shedding odours of great sweetness.

“Oh, best beloved daughter, how glorious is that soul who has indeed been able to pass from the stormy ocean to Me,

the Sea Pacific, and in that Sea, Which is Myself, the Supreme and Eternal Deity, to fill the pitcher of her heart. And her eye, the conduit of her heart, endeavours to satisfy her heart-pangs, and so sheds tears. This is the last stage in which the soul is blessed and sorrowful.

“Blessed she is through the union which she feels herself to have with Me, tasting the divine love; sorrowful through the offences which she sees done to My goodness and greatness, for she has seen and tasted the bitterness of this in her self-knowledge, by which self-knowledge, together with her knowledge of Me, she arrived at the final stage. Yet this sorrow is no impediment to the unitive state, which produces tears of great sweetness through self-knowledge, gained in love of the neighbour, in which exercise the soul discovers the plaint of My divine mercy, and grief at the offences caused to her neighbour, weeping with those who weep, and rejoicing with those who rejoice—that is, who live in My love. Over these the soul rejoices, seeing glory and praise rendered Me by My servants, so that the third kind of grief does not prevent the fourth, that is, the final grief belonging to the unitive state; they rather give savour to each other, for, had not this last grief (in which the soul finds such union with Me), developed from the grief belonging to the third state of neighbourly love, it would not be perfect. Therefore it is necessary that the one should flavour the other, else the soul would come to a state of presumption, induced by the subtle breeze of love of her own reputation, and would fall at once, vomited from the heights to the depths. Therefore it is necessary to bear with others and practise continually love to one’s neighbour, together with true knowledge of oneself.

“In this way will she feel the fire of My love in herself, because love of her neighbour is developed out of love of Me—that is, out of that learning which the soul obtained by knowing herself and My goodness in her. When, therefore, she sees herself to be ineffably loved by Me, she loves every rational creature with the self-same love with which she sees herself to be loved. And, for this reason, the soul that knows Me immediately expands to the love of her

neighbour, because she sees that I love that neighbour ineffably, and so, herself, loves the object which she sees Me to have loved still more. She further knows that she can be of no use to Me and can in no way repay Me that pure love with which she feels herself to be loved by Me, and therefore endeavours to repay it through the medium which I have given her, namely, her neighbour, who is the medium through which you can all serve Me. For, as I have said to thee, you can perform all virtues by means of your neighbour, I having given you all creatures, in general and in particular, according to the diverse graces each has received from Me, to be ministered unto by you ; you should therefore love them with the same pure love with which I have loved you. That pure love cannot be returned directly to Me, because I have loved you without being Myself loved, and without any consideration of Myself whatsoever, for I loved you without being loved by you—before you existed ; it was, indeed, love that moved Me to create you to My own image and similitude. This love you cannot repay to Me, but you can pay it to My rational creature, loving your neighbour without being loved by him and without consideration of your own advantage, whether spiritual or temporal, but loving him solely for the praise and glory of My Name, because he has been loved by Me.

“Thus will you fulfil the commandment of the law, to love Me above everything, and your neighbour as yourselves.

“True indeed is it that this height cannot be reached without passing through the second stage, namely the second stage of union which becomes the third (and final) stage. Nor can it be preserved when it has been reached if the soul abandon the affection from which it has been developed, the affection to which the second class of tears belongs. It is therefore impossible to fulfil the law given by Me, the Eternal God, without fulfilling that of your neighbour, for these two laws are the feet of your affection by which the precepts and counsels are observed, which were given you, as I have told thee, by My Truth, Christ crucified. These

two states united nourish your soul in virtue, making her to grow in the perfection of virtue and in the unitive state. Not that the other state is changed because this further state has been reached, for this further state does but increase the riches of grace in new and various gifts and admirable elevations of the mind, in the knowledge of the truth, as I said to thee, which, though it is mortal, appears immortal because the soul's perception of her own sensuality is mortified and her will is dead through the union which she has attained with Me.

“ Oh, how sweet is the taste of this union to the soul, for, in tasting it, she sees My secrets ! Wherefore she often receives the spirit of prophecy, knowing the things of the future. This is the effect of My Goodness, but the humble soul should despise such things, not indeed in so far as they are given her by My love, but in so far as she desires them by reason of her appetite for consolation, considering herself unworthy of peace and quiet of mind, in order to nourish virtue within her soul. In such a case let her not remain in the second stage, but return to the valley of self-knowledge. I give her this light, My grace permitting, so that she may ever grow in virtue. For the soul is never so perfect in this life that she cannot attain to a higher perfection of love. My only-begotten Son, your Captain, was the only One Who could increase in no perfection, because He was one thing with Me, and I with Him, wherefore His soul was blessed through union with the Divine nature. But do ye, His pilgrim-members, be ever ready to grow in greater perfection, not indeed to another stage, for as I have said, ye have now reached the last, but to that further grade of perfection in the last stage, which may please you by means of My Grace.”

## CHAPTER XC.

A repetition of the preceding chapter : and how the Devil flees those who have arrived at the fifth kind of tears, and how the assaults of the Devil are the true means of reaching this stage.

“THOU hast now seen the various states of tears and the difference between them, according as it has pleased My Truth to satisfy thy desire. With regard to the first tears of those who are in the state of death, in the guilt, namely, of mortal sin, thou hast seen that their sorrow, proceeding in general from their heart, on account of the conception of the principle of the affection which causes tears, is corrupt and miserable sorrow, and indeed their every work is corrupt. The second stage is that of those who are beginning to learn their own evil through the penalty which follows their guilt. This is a general beginning, generously given by Me to the fragile, who ignorantly drown in the river, loathing the doctrine of My Truth. But there are many who know their evil without servile fear (fear, that is, of the penalty due to their guilt), who abandon sin with a great self-hatred, which makes them deem themselves worthy of punishment, and who, in their simple goodness, devote themselves to serving Me, their Creator, grieving over the offence which they have done Me. It is true that he who abandons sin with very great self-hatred is more apt for perfection than the others (those actuated by servile fear), yet both classes may arrive thereat by exercise, though the former will arrive first.

“One of the latter class should take care not to remain in servile fear, and one of the former should beware of tepidity, that he does not grow cold within, through not exercising his simple goodness. This is a common vocation.

“The third and fourth stages are of those who, having arisen out of fear, have arrived at love and hope, tasting My Divine mercy, receiving many gifts and consolations from Me, on account of which the eye weeps in order to satisfy the feeling of the heart. But because this sorrow is

imperfect and mingled with the sorrow of spiritual self-love, as I have said, the soul must, by exercise in virtue, reach the fourth stage, where, having grown by her desires, she unites and conforms herself to My will to such a point, that she can neither wish nor desire other than what I wish, in the matter of love to her neighbour, from which she extracts the grief of love in herself for the offences and losses inflicted on her neighbour. This stage is united with the fifth and ultimate perfection in which the soul unites herself to the Truth, and the fire of holy desire is increased, from which desire the Devil flees, for he can persecute the soul no more, neither by injuring her, for she has grown patient in the love of her neighbour, nor by spiritual or temporal consolation, because through self-hatred and true humility she despises both. True indeed it is that the Devil, for his part, never sleeps, thus reading a lesson to you negligent ones, who sleep through the time of merit. But all his watching cannot hurt such as these, because he cannot endure the heat of their love, nor the odour of the union which they have made with Me, the Sea Pacific; while a soul thus united to Me cannot be deceived. So he avoids such a soul, as a fly the boiling kettle, from fear of the fire. The following however happens to the soul before she has reached perfection. The Devil, seeing that she seems tepid, enters into her with many and diverse temptations. But, the soul, being in the Sea of Knowledge, heat, and hatred of guilt, resists, binding the will, for fear it should consent, with the bands of hatred of sin and love of virtue. Let every soul that experiences many temptations rejoice, for through them lies the road to this glorious and sweet state. For I have already told thee, that by knowledge and hatred of yourselves and knowledge of Me, ye could arrive at perfection. At no time does the soul know so well whether I am in her or no, as in the time of battle. Thou askest, in what way? I will tell thee. If she know well, seeing herself in battle, that she cannot liberate herself, or resist the perverse will, for she has nothing of her own with which to do so. (She can indeed resist the perverse will, in the sense of not consenting to it, but in no other sense.) And then she

learns that she herself is nothing, for were she anything in her own power, she could cause this battle, which is against her will, to cease. Thus she humbles herself with true self-knowledge, and, with the light of the most Holy Faith, runs to Me, the Eternal God, through Whose Goodness she is able to preserve a good and holy will that does not consent in the time of battle, or yield to the miseries with which it is assailed. You are then quite right to comfort yourselves with the doctrine of the sweet and amorous Word, My only-begotten Son, in the time of your troubles and adversities and temptations from men or devils, for these increase your virtue and cause you to arrive at great perfection."

## CHAPTER XCI.

How those who desire the tears of the eyes and cannot have them, have tears of fire; and why God withdraws from them physical tears.

"I HAVE spoken to thee of perfect and imperfect tears, and how all of them issue from the heart. From this vessel comes every kind of tear, whatever be the cause of it, they may therefore all be called hearty tears. The sole difference lies between ordinate and disordinate love, between perfect and imperfect love, as I have said to thee above. I have yet to tell thee, in order to satisfy the request thou didst make to Me, of those who long for the perfection of tears, but apparently cannot have it. Have they any other way of weeping besides the tears of the eyes? Yes, they have the weeping of fire, namely, of true and holy desire, by which they are consumed through the affection of love and long to melt their life away in weeping, out of self-hatred, and for the salvation of souls, and yet it seems that they cannot. These, I say, have the tears of fire, in which the Holy Spirit weeps before Me for them and their neighbour. Thus, I say, does My Divine love light up with its flame the soul who offers anxious desires



before Me, without bodily tears. These, I say, are the tears of fire, and in this way does the Holy Spirit lament. Not being able to do so with tears, He offers the will and desires of weeping for love of Me. If thou openest the eye of thy intellect, thou wilt see that the Holy Spirit laments by means of every servant of Mine who sheds holy desires and humble, continual prayers before Me. This, it would seem, is what the glorious Apostle Paul meant when he said that the Holy Spirit grieved before Me, the Father, with unutterable groanings for you.

“Wherefore see that the tears of fire have no less fruit than those of water, often indeed more, according to the measure of the love from which they proceed. A soul, then, who desires tears and cannot have them, should not be put to confusion of mind, or think that she is deprived of anything by Me. She should desire tears with a will humbled, attuned to Mine, desiring them or not, according as pleases My Divine Goodness. Sometimes I do not permit the soul to shed tears physically, in order that she may remain before Me humbled in continual prayer, inasmuch as to grant her request would not be of the use to her that she thinks. For she would remain content with having received what she had asked for, and so her affection would grow weak, together with the desire with which she had been accustomed to ask for it. So, for the sake of the growth, and not the turning back of souls, do I reserve the right of not granting actual tears, but I sometimes grant them mentally and of the heart only, full of the fire of My Divine Love. In every state, therefore, and in every time will My servants be pleasing to Me, if they never let the eye of their intellect lose sight of the object of My Eternal Truth in the light of faith, with the effect of love. I am the Physician and you the patients, and I give each of you what is necessary for his salvation, and for the growth of perfection in his soul. This is the truth and the explanation of the states of tears, which I, the Eternal Truth, have given thee, My most sweet daughter. Drown thyself then in the Blood of Christ crucified, the humble and immaculate Lamb, marked with

the cross, growing continually in virtue, so that thou mayest be nourished internally with the fire of My Divine Love."

## CHAPTER XCII.

How the four stages of the soul, to which belong the five aforesaid states of tears, produce tears of infinite value: and how God wishes to be served as the Infinite, and not as anything finite.

"THESE five states are like five principal canals which are filled with abundant tears of infinite value, all of which give life if they are disciplined in virtue, as I have said to thee. Thou askest how their value can be infinite. I do not say that in this life your tears can become infinite, but I call them infinite, on account of the infinite desire of your soul from which they proceed. I have already told thee how tears come from the heart, and how the heart distributes them to the eye, having gathered them in its own fiery desire. As, when green wood is on the fire, the moisture it contains groans on account of the heat, because the wood is green, so does the heart, made green again by the renovation of grace drawn into itself among its self-love which dries up the soul, so that fiery desire and tears are united. And inasmuch as desire is never ended, it is never satisfied in this life, but the more the soul loves the less she seems to herself to love. Thus is holy desire, which is founded in love, exercised, and with this desire the eye weeps. But when the soul is separated from the body and has reached Me, her End, she does not on that account abandon desire, so as to no longer yearn for Me or love her neighbour, for love has entered into her like a woman bearing the fruits of all other virtues. It is true that suffering is over and ended, as I have said to thee, for the soul that desires Me possesses Me in very truth, without any fear of ever losing that which she has so long desired; but, in this way, hunger is kept up, because those who are hungry are

satisfied, and as soon as they are satisfied hunger, again ; in this way their satiety is without disgust, and their hunger without suffering, for, in Me, no perfection is wanting.

“ Thus is your desire infinite, otherwise it would be worth nothing, nor would any virtue of yours have any life if you served Me with anything finite. For I, Who am the Infinite God, wish to be served by you with infinite service, and the only infinite thing you possess is the affection and desire of your souls. In this sense I said that there were tears of infinite value, and this is true as regards their mode, of which I have spoken, namely, of the infinite desire which is united to the tears. When the soul leaves the body the tears remain behind, but the affection of love has drawn to itself the fruit of the tears, and consumed it, as happens in the case of the water in your furnace. The water has not really been taken out of the furnace, but the heat of the fire has consumed it and drawn it into itself. Thus the soul, having arrived at tasting the fire of My divine charity, and having passed from this life in a state of love towards Me and her neighbour, having further possessed that unitive love which caused her tears to fall, does not cease to offer Me her blessed desires, tearful indeed, though without pain or physical weeping, for physical tears have evaporated in the furnace, becoming tears of fire of the Holy Spirit. Thou seest then how tears are infinite, how, as regards the tears shed in this life only, no tongue can tell what different sorrows may cause them. I have now told thee the difference between four of these states of tears.”

### CHAPTER XCIII.

Of the fruit of worldly men's tears.

“ IT remains for Me to tell thee of the fruit produced by tears shed with desire, and received into the soul. But first will I speak to thee of that first class of men whom I

mentioned at the beginning of this My discourse ; those, that is, who live miserably in the world, making a god of created things and of their own sensuality, from which comes damage to their body and soul. I said to thee that every tear proceeded from the heart, and this is the truth, for the heart grieves in proportion to the love it feels. So worldly men weep when their heart feels pain, that is, when they are deprived of something which they loved.

“But many and diverse are their complainings. Dost thou know how many ? There are as many as there exist different loves. And inasmuch as the root of self-love is corrupt, everything that grows from it is corrupt also. Self-love is a tree on which grow nothing but fruits of death, putrid flowers, stained leaves, branches bowed down, and struck by various winds. This is the tree of the soul. For ye are all trees of love, and without love ye cannot live, for ye have been made by Me for love. The soul who lives virtuously, places the root of her tree in the valley of true humility ; but those who live thus miserably are planted on the mountain of pride, whence it follows that since the root of the tree is badly planted, the tree can bear no fruits of life but only of death. Their fruits are their actions, which are all poisoned by many and diverse kinds of sin, and if they should produce some good fruit among their actions, even it will be spoilt by the foulness of its root, for no good actions done by a soul in mortal sin are of value for eternal life, for they are not done in grace. Let not, however, such a soul abandon on this account its good works, for every good deed is rewarded, and every evil deed punished. A good action performed out of a state of grace is not sufficient to merit eternal life, as has been said, but My Justice, My Divine Goodness, grants an incomplete reward, imperfect as the action which obtains it. Often such a man is rewarded in temporal matters ; sometimes I give him more time in which to repent, as I have already said to thee in another place. This also will I sometimes do, I grant him the life of grace by means of My servants who are pleasing and acceptable to Me. I acted in this way with My glorious apostle Paul, who-

abandoned his infidelity, and the persecutions he directed against the Christians, at the prayer of St. Stephen. See truly, therefore, that, in whatever state a man may be, he should never stop doing good.

“ I said to thee that the flowers of this tree were putrid, and so in truth they are. Its flowers are the stinking thoughts of the heart, displeasing to Me, and full of hatred and unkindness towards their neighbour. So if a man be a thief, he robs Me of honour, and takes it himself. This flower stinks less than that of false judgment, which is of two kinds. The first with regard to Me, by which men judge My secret judgments, gauging falsely all My mysteries, that is, judging that which I did in love, to have been done in hatred; that which I did in truth to have been done in falsehood; that which I give them for life, to have been given them for death. They condemn and judge everything according to their weak intellect; for they have blinded the eye of their intellect with sensual self-love, and hidden the pupil of the most holy Faith, which they will not allow to see or know the Truth. The second kind of false judgment is directed against a man's neighbour, from which often come many evils, because the wretched man wishes to set himself up as the judge of the affections and heart of other rational creatures, when he does not yet know himself. And, for an action which he may see, or for a word he may hear, he will judge the affection of the heart. My servants always judge well, because they are founded on Me, the Supreme Good; but such as these always judge badly, for they are founded on evil. Such critics as these cause hatreds, murders, unhappinesses of all kinds to their neighbours, and remove themselves far away from the love of My servants' virtue.

“ Truly these fruits follow the leaves, which are the words which issue from their mouth in insult to Me and the Blood of My only-begotten Son, and in hatred to their neighbours. And they think of nothing else but cursing and condemning My works, and blaspheming and saying evil of every rational creature, according as their judgment may suggest to them. The unfortunate creatures do not

remember that the tongue is made only to give honour to Me, and to confess sins, and to be used in love of virtue, and for the salvation of the neighbour. These are the stained leaves of that most miserable fault, because the heart from which they proceeded was not clean, but all spotted with duplicity and misery. How much danger, apart from the spiritual privation of grace to the soul, of temporal loss may not occur! For ye have all heard and seen how, through words alone, have come revolutions of states, and destructions of cities, and many homicides and other evils, a word having entered the heart of the listener, and having passed through a space not large enough for a knife.

“ I say that this tree has seven branches drooping to the earth, on which grow the flowers and leaves in the way I have told you. These branches are the seven mortal sins which are full of many and diverse wickednesses, contained in the roots and trunk of self-love and of pride, which first made both branches and flowers of many thoughts, the leaves of words, and the fruits of wicked deeds. They stand drooping to the earth because the branches of mortal sin can turn no other way than to the earth, the fragile disordinate substance of the world. Do not marvel, they can turn no way but that in which they can be fed by the earth; for their hunger is insatiable, and the earth is unable to satisfy them. They are insatiable and unbearable to themselves, and it is conformable to their state that they should always be unquiet, longing and desiring that thing which they have to satiety. This is the reason why such satiety cannot content them, because they (who are infinite in their being) are always desiring something finite; because their being will never end, though their life to grace ends when they commit mortal sin.

“ Man is placed above all creatures, and not beneath them, and he cannot be satisfied or content except in something greater than himself. Greater than himself there is nothing but Myself, the Eternal God. Therefore I alone can satisfy him, and, because he is deprived of this satisfaction by his guilt, he remains in continual torment and pain.

Weeping follows pain, and when he begins to weep the wind strikes the tree of self-love, which he has made the principle of all his being."

## CHAPTER XCIV.

How the aforesaid worldly weepers are struck by four different winds.

"THE tree is struck either by the wind of prosperity, or of adversity, or of fear, or of conscience; for these are the four winds. The wind of prosperity matures pride and great self-confidence and reviling of the neighbour. If this wind be master, a man walks in great injustice and vanity of heart, in impurity of body and mind, and self-esteem, and many other things that proceed from these, which thy tongue could not tell. Is this wind of prosperity corrupt in itself? No, neither this nor any other wind; it is the chief root of the tree which is corrupt, and whence everything in the tree is corrupted. I, Who send every gift, and give everything its being, am the Supreme Good, and this wind of prosperity, which I send, is also good.

"The man weeps because his heart is not satisfied, because he desires that which he cannot have, and, being unable to have it, grieves, and grieving weeps, for the eye satisfies the heart.

"After this comes a wind of servile fear, in which he is afraid of his very shadow, fearing to lose either his own life, or his children's, or other creatures'; or again, he fears that he, or others, will lose their positions, honour, or riches (fearing for these others through self-love). This servile fear does not allow him to possess the object of his love in peace, because he does not possess it ordinally and in obedience to My Will, for which reason, servile fear pursues him. He has become the miserable slave of sin, and may esteem himself as that for which he serves.

"Meanwhile the wind of Fear has done striking him, and

the wind of tribulation and adversity, of which he was afraid, reaches him, and deprives him of something either in general or in particular. In general, when the man is deprived of life by the power of death, and so deprived of everything. In particular, when the wind takes away now one thing, now another—either health, or children, or riches, or position, or honour—according as I, the gentle Physician, see to be necessary for your salvation. But, because your fragility is wholly corrupt without knowledge or taste, and much less, fruit of patience, impatience, scandals, murmuring, hatred, and displeasure towards Me and My creatures grow up in you. And that which I gave you for life ye have received unto death with the same measure of grief that I had of love in giving it. Wherefore the man is led on to the hurtful sorrow of impatience, which dries up the soul and kills her, depriving her of the life of grace, and also dries up and consumes the body, and blinds the man spiritually and corporally, and deprives him of all pleasure and hope, so that he is deprived of the thing which he loved, in which he had placed his affection, his hope, and faith. Wherefore he weeps. Tears alone do not bring such troubles, but the disordinate love and grief of the heart whence the tear proceeds, for physical tears do not themselves give death and sorrow, but the root, from which they proceed, namely, the disordinate self-love of the heart. If the heart were ordinate and had the life of grace, the tears would also be ordinate, and would constrain Me, the Eternal God, to do mercy to the soul. For the tear is the herald of the state of the heart, whether it be in life or death.

“I said that there came one wind of conscience; and this is the doing of My divine goodness, when souls have been tried by prosperity, to bring them through love, and by fear, so that, by My very importunity, their hearts might be directed to love Me with virtue proved in tribulation, given them that they might know the fragility and weakness of the world. To others, whom this does not help, I give the prick of conscience, so ineffably do I love them, in order that they may arise, and, opening their mouths, vomit forth the



filth of their sins by holy confession. But these, like obstinate fools justly reprobated by Me on account of their iniquity, refuse to receive My grace in any way, fly the prick of conscience, and continue to pass their time in miserable pleasures, incurring My wrath and that of their neighbour. All this happens because the root is corrupt together with the whole tree, every part of it is in a state of death, and full of continual sufferings, weepings, and bitterness, as has been said. And, if they do not reform while they have time and power to use their free-will, they pass from this finite sorrow, which is theirs in finite time, to infinite sorrow; thus finite sorrow leads to infinite, for the tears were shed with infinite hatred of virtue, namely, with the desire of the soul founded in infinite hate. It is true that, had they wished, they might have abandoned it through My grace in time, while they were free. In spite of My having called hatred infinite it is only so as regards the affection and being of the soul in which it inheres, neither the hatred nor the love existing in the soul are, in themselves, infinite; for, while you are in life, you can hate or love only according to your pleasure. But if life ends in a state of love of virtue, the soul receives an infinite good; if in hatred, the soul remains in infinite hatred, receiving eternal damnation, as I have told thee when I related to thee how some drowned themselves in the river. They therefore can no longer desire good, deprived of My mercy, and your brotherly love, which the saints taste together, that is, the love of you pilgrims travelling through this life, placed here by Me, in order to reach your End which is Myself, Eternal Life. Neither prayers nor alms nor any good work help the damned. They are members cut off from the body of My divine love, for, while they lived, they would not be joined to the obedience of My holy commandments, in the mystical body of the holy Church, and in her sweet obedience, whence you draw the Blood of the immaculate Lamb My only-begotten Son; for this do they receive the fruit of eternal damnation, with sorrow and gnashing of teeth. These are those martyrs of the Devil of whom I spoke to thee. The Devil gives them the fruit which he

has himself. See therefore that this kind of sorrow gives the fruit of suffering in this finite time, and ultimately gives, for infinite eternity, the companionship of the Devil."

## CHAPTER XCV.

Of the fruit of the second and third kinds of tears.

"IT now falls to Me to speak of the fruit, received by those, who are beginning to rise from guilt, through fear of punishment, and to acquire grace. Some there are who abandon the death of mortal sin through fear of the penalty. This is a very general vocation, as has been said. What fruit does such a one receive? This fruit, that he begins to empty the house of his soul of impurity, cleansing his free-will with fear of punishment. When he has purified his soul of her guilt, he receives peace of conscience, and begins to dispose the affection of his soul, and to open the eye of his intellect, to examine his house, in which formerly, before it was empty, he could see and discern nothing but the stench of various sins. He begins to receive consolation, for the worm of conscience remains in peace, waiting, as it were, to feast on the food of virtue. As a man who has cured his stomach, and purged it of its humours, directs his appetite to food, so he waits until the hand of free-will prepares the table for him, with love of the food of virtue, after which preparation he expects to eat. And thus in truth, by exercising his soul in the first fear, and emptying his affection of all sins, he receives the second fruit, that is, the second state of tears, in which the soul, endued by the affection of love, begins to furnish the house of virtue, and the soul, although still imperfect, (we will suppose she has just risen from fear), receives consolation and delight, because her love has received pleasure from My Truth. And, through the delight and consolation which he finds in Me, he begins to love Me very sweetly, feeling the sweetness of My consolation, and that of creatures through Me. Thus, exercising

love, who has entered into him in the house of his soul, as soon as fear has purified it, he begins to receive the fruits of My Divine Goodness.

“Wherefore, after love has entered the house of his soul to possess it, he begins to taste many, various and divers fruits of consolation. And, persevering, he at last receives the fruit of laying the table, when his soul has passed from fear to the love of virtue, having arrived at the third kind of tears. So he lays the table of the holy Cross in his heart and in his soul; this is the table that he lays, because thereon he finds the fruit of the sweet and amorous Word declaring the honour of Me, His Father and your salvation, for which was opened My only-begotten Son's Body, giving Himself to you in food: then he begins to eat in honour of Me, and for the salvation of souls, with hatred and displeasure of sin. What fruit does the soul receive from this third state of tears? I tell thee. She receives a certain strength founded on a holy hatred of her own sensuality, with a pleasant fruit of true humility and patience, which bears every scandal, and saves the soul from all suffering, cutting out self-will, from which arises all suffering, with the knife of hate. (It is only the sensual will that is scandalised at persecutions, or at the loss of spiritual or temporal consolations, as I have before told thee, and thus comes to impatience.) The will being dead, the soul begins to taste, with tearful and sweet desire, the fruit of the tears of sweet patience.

“Oh, fruit of great sweetness, how sweet art thou to him who tastes thee in bitterness, though he please Me and taste My sweetness!

“In time of injury thou receivest peace, for, if thou art on the stormy sea, and perilous winds buffet, with great waves, the bark of the soul, thou remainest peaceful and tranquil, without any evil, covering the boat with the sweet eternal will of God, whence thou hast received thy robe of true and burning charity, into which water cannot enter. This Patience is indeed, My dearest daughter, a very queen standing on the rock of fortitude. She conquers, and is never conquered; she does not stand alone, but is accom-

panied by Perseverance. She is the marrow of Charity, she it is who shews whether the garment of Charity be the nuptial garment or not ; for if it be torn by imperfection, at once the contrary effect of impatience is proved.

“ All virtues can at one time or other hide, appearing to be perfect when they are imperfect, but to thee, oh Patience, they cannot be hid. For, if this sweet Patience, the marrow of Charity, be in the soul, she proves that all the virtues are living and perfect, and, if she be not there, she shows that all the virtues are imperfect and have not yet attained to the table of the holy Cross, where Patience is conceived in self-knowledge and in knowledge of My goodness to the soul, and brought forth by means of holy hatred and anointed with true humility. To this Patience is not denied the food of My honour, and the salvation of souls, indeed, she eats of it continually, and this is the truth. Gaze, dearest daughter, on the sweet and glorious martyrs who, by their endurance, ate the food of souls. Their death gave life, they raised the dead, and dissipated the darkness of mortal sin. The world, with all its grandeurs, and kings, with all their power, could not defend themselves as they did by virtue of the queen, sweet Patience. This virtue stands like a lantern on a pole. This is the glorious fruit given by tears, when a man has arrived at love of his neighbour, eating the slain and immaculate Lamb, My only-begotten Son, with painful and anxious desire, and with intolerable pain at the offence done to Me, his Creator, not an afflictive pain, because love slays with true patience all fear and self-love which can give pain, but a consolatory suffering, for My offence alone, and the loss of the neighbour, founded in charity, which sorrow fattens the soul, rejoicing in herself, for she has in her sorrow a demonstrative proof that I am present in her by grace.”

## CHAPTER XCVI.

Of the fruit of the fourth and unitive tears.

“I HAVE spoken to thee of the fruit of the third kind of tears; now follows the fourth and last state of unitive tears, which is not separated from the third but united to it, as has been said, in the same way as love for Me is united with love of the neighbour; the one love flavours the other. So greatly has the soul developed in reaching the fourth state, that she not only bears with patience, but even desires, with joy, to suffer to such an extent that she despises every recreation from whatever quarter it come, in order that she may be conformed to My Truth, Christ crucified.

“She receives the fruit of quietness of mind, a union with My sweet Divine Nature, where she tastes the milk, as when the child, who sleeps at peace on the breast of its mother, draws to itself milk by means of the flesh of its mother; so the soul, arrived at this last state, reposes on the breast of My Divine Charity, keeping in the mouth of holy desire the flesh of Christ crucified, that is, by following His Footsteps and doctrine; for the soul learnt well, when she was in the third state, that it was not right for her to come directly to Me, the Father, because no penalty could be borne by Me, the Eternal Father; but it is otherwise with My beloved Son, the sweet and amorous Word, and therefore it is that you cannot walk without pain, and, with much endurance, will you attain to proved virtue. So the soul reposes at the breast of Christ crucified, Who is the Truth, and thus draws to herself the milk of virtue, in which she finds the life of grace, tasting in herself My Divine Nature, which gives sweetness to virtue, for truly the virtues are not in themselves sweet unless they are performed in and united to Me the Divine Love, so that the soul may have no regard to her own profit, but only act for My honour and the salvation of souls.

“Now look, sweet daughter, how sweet and glorious is this state, in which the soul has made so close a union with

the breast of Charity, that the mouth is not found without the breast, neither the breast without the milk. And so this soul does not find herself without Christ crucified or without Me, the Eternal Father, Whom she finds, tasting the Supreme and Eternal Deity. Oh, who can see how the powers of that soul are filled !

“ The memory is filled with continual remembrance of Me, which remembrance she draws to herself through love of My benefits, as the affection of charity with which I gave them to her. And particularly the benefit of creation, seeing herself created in My image and similitude, through which benefit, spoken of in the first state, she feels suffering for the ingratitude with which she received it. Wherefore she has arisen from her misery through the benefit of the Blood of Christ, with which I re-created her to grace, washing the face of your souls from the leprosy of sin.

“ In the second state the soul found sweetness, tasting the sweetness of love, and the displeasure caused her by guilt, as regards which, she sees that so displeasing to Me was her guilt, that I punished it in the person of My only-begotten Son.

“ Later she discovers the advent of the Holy Spirit, Who convinced, and still convinces, the soul of truth. When does the soul receive this light ? When she has known My benefits in her, in both the first and the second states. She then receives a perfect light, knowing the truth of Me, the Eternal Father, that is, that by love have I created her, in order to give her eternal life.

“ For this indeed is the truth, and I have shewn it forth to you in the Blood of Christ crucified. When the soul has known this love, she loves it, and loving it she proves her love, sincerely loving what I love, and hating what I hate. Thus she finds herself in the third state of love to her neighbour.

“ At this breast of love the memory fills itself, forsaking all imperfections, for it recalls, and keeps in itself, My benefits. The intellect has received light, and, looking into the memory, recognises the truth, and, having lost the blindness of self-love, remains in its true object the Sun of Christ crucified

where it learns to know God and man. Besides this knowledge of union, there rises on the soul a light not acquired by nature, nor obtained through her own virtue, but given her, as a grace, by My sweet Truth, who does not despise the anxious desires and fatigue that she has offered before Me. Then the affection, following the intellect, unites itself with Me in a most perfect and ardent love. And if any one should ask Me who this soul is? I would reply, 'She is another Myself, become so by the union of love.' What tongue can tell the excellence of this last unitive state, and the divine and varied fruits that are received from it, the three powers of the soul being filled! This is that sweet gathering together which I mentioned to thee, in three general steps, in a previous discourse on the words of My Truth.

"The tongue is not sufficient to relate it, but well did the holy doctors, illuminated with this glorious light, prove its nature, for with it they explained the mysteries of holy Scripture. Hence that saying of the glorious Thomas of Aquin, that his learning had come to him rather by means of prayer, elevation of mind, and a Divine Light infused into his intellect, than by human study. He was a light whom I placed in the mystic body of the Holy Church to disperse the shadows of error. Turn to the glorious John the Evangelist—what light did he not acquire on the precious Breast of Christ, My Truth! And with this light he preached My Gospel for so long a time. And all the saints have manifested it, some in one way and some in another; but the intrinsic feeling, the ineffable sweetness of this perfect union cannot be told by thy tongue which is but a finite thing. It would seem that Paul meant this when he said: '*Eye hath not seen what He hath laid up for them that love Him.*' Oh, how sweet above all sweetness is that dwelling which the soul has made by perfect union with Me! She sheds odours over the whole world, the fruits of continual and humble prayers, the odour of her desire cries out for the salvation of souls, with no human voice, before My Divine Majesty. These are the fruits of union, eaten by the soul in this life in the last state, acquired by many fatigues, tears, and sweatings. And

thus the soul passes, by true perseverance, from the life of grace and from this union, which, though perfect as far as grace goes, is yet imperfect, to a durable eternal union. I call this union imperfect, because, while the soul is bound in the body in this life, she cannot satiate herself with what she desires, and also because she is bound by the law of sin, of her passions, though these have been put to sleep by her virtue. But the passions are not dead, for they will wake up if the instrument of virtue, which makes them sleep, be removed; for this reason the union is said to be imperfect, but it leads on the soul to receive durable perfection, which can never for any reason be taken away from the soul, because it consists, as I have told thee (in speaking of the Blessed), in tasting Me in very truth, the Eternal Life, the Supreme and Eternal Good, Who never come to an end. These have received eternal life, in contradistinction to those others who have received the fruit of their sorrow, eternal death. They have come from grief to joy, receiving eternal life with the fruit of their tears, shouting with burning love, and offering tears of fire before Me for you. And now I have completed the relation of the different states of tears, and of the perfection and fruit which the soul receives from them, and how the perfect receive, on account of them, eternal life, and the wicked, eternal damnation."

## CHAPTER XCVII.

How this devout soul, thanking God for His explanation of the above-mentioned states of tears, makes three petitions.

THEN this soul, eager with the greatness of her desire, through the sweetness of the explanation and satisfaction which she had received from the Truth, concerning the state of tears, said as one enamoured—"Thanks, thanks be to Thee, Supreme and Eternal Father, Satisfier of holy desires, and Lover of our salvation, Who, through Thy



Love, didst give us Love Himself, in the time of our warfare with Thee, in the person of Thy only-begotten Son. By this abyss of Thy fiery Love, I beg of Thee grace and mercy that I may come to Thee truly in the light, and not flee far in darkness away from Thy doctrine, of which Thou hast clearly demonstrated to me the truth, so that, by the light thereof, I perceive two other points, concerning which I fear that they are, or may become, stumbling-blocks to me. I beg, Eternal Father, that, before I leave the subject of these states of tears, Thou wouldst explain these points also to me. The first is—when a person desirous of serving Thee, comes to me, or to some other servant of Thine to ask for counsel, how should I teach him? I know, Sweet and Eternal God, that Thou didst reply above to this question—‘I am He Who takes delight in few words and many deeds.’ Nevertheless, if it please Thy Goodness to grant me a few more words on the subject, it will cause me the greatest pleasure. And also, if on some occasion, when I am praying for Thy creatures, and in particular for Thy servants, and I seem to see the subjects of my prayer, in one I find (in the course of my prayer) a well-disposed mind, a soul rejoicing in Thee; and in another, as it might seem to me, a mind full of darkness; have I the right, O Eternal Father, to judge the one soul to be in light, and the other in darkness? Or, supposing I should see that the one lives in great penance, and the other does not, should I be right to judge that he who does the greater penance has the higher perfection? I pray Thee, so that I may not be deceived through my limited vision, that Thou wouldst declare to me in detail, what Thou hast already said in general on this matter. The second request I have to make is, that Thou wilt explain further to me about the sign which Thou didst say the soul received on being visited by Thee—the sign which revealed Thy Presence. If I remember well, oh, Eternal Truth, Thou didst say that the soul remained in joy and courageous virtue. I would fain know whether this joy can consist with the delusion of the passion of spiritual self-love; for if it were so, I

would humbly confine myself to the sign of virtue. These are the things which I beg Thee to tell me, so that I may serve Thee and my neighbour in truth, and not fall into false judgment concerning thy creatures and servants. For it seems to me that the habit of judging keeps the soul far from Thee, so I do not wish to fall into this snare."

### CHAPTER XCVIII.

How the light of reason is necessary to every soul that wishes to serve God in truth; and first of the light of reason in general.

THEN the Eternal God, delighting in the thirst and hunger of that soul, and in the purity of her heart, and the desire with which she longed to serve Him, turned the eye of His benignity and mercy upon her, saying—"Oh, best-beloved, dearest and sweetest daughter, my spouse! rise out of thyself, and open the eye of thy intellect to see Me, the Infinite Goodness, and the ineffable love which I have towards thee and My other servants. And open the ear of the desire which thou feelest towards Me, and remember, that if thou dost not see, thou canst not hear, that is to say, that the soul that does not see into My Truth with the eye of her intellect, cannot hear or know My Truth, wherefore in order that thou mayest the better know it, rise above the feelings of thy senses.

"And I, Who take delight in thy request, will satisfy thy demand. Not that thou canst increase My delight, for I am the cause of thee and of thy increase; not those of Mine. Yet the very pleasure that I take in the work of My own hands causes Me delight."

Then that soul obeyed and rose out of herself, in order to learn the true solution of her difficulty. And the Eternal God said to her, "In order that thou mayest the better understand what I shall say to thee, I shall revert to the beginning of thy request concerning the three lights which issue from Me, the True Light. The first is a general

light dwelling in those who live in ordinary charity. (I shall repeat to thee here many things concerning these lights, which I have already told thee, in spite of My having done so, in order that thy creeping intelligence may better understand that which thou wishest to know.) The other two lights dwell in those who, having abandoned the world, desire perfection. Besides this I will explain to thee thy request, telling thee in great detail that which I have already pointed out to thee in general. Thou knowest, as I have told thee, that, without the light, no one can walk in the truth, that is, without the light of reason, which light of reason you draw from Me the True Light, by means of the eye of thy intellect and the light of faith which I have given you in holy baptism, though you may have lost it by your own defects. For, in baptism, and through the mediation of the Blood of My only-begotten Son, you have received the form of faith; which faith you exercise in virtue by the light of reason, which gives you life and causes you to walk in the path of truth, and, by its means, to arrive at Me, the True Light, for, without it, you would plunge into darkness.

“It is necessary for you to have two lights derived from this primary light, and to these two I will also add a third. The first lightens you all to know the transitory nature of the things of the world, all of which pass like the wind. But this you cannot know thoroughly, unless you first recognise your own fragility, how strong is your inclination, through the law of perversity with which your members are bound, to rebel against Me, your Creator (not that by this law any man can be constrained to commit any, even the smallest sin, against his will, but that this law of perversity fights lustily against the Spirit). I did not impose this law upon you, in order that My rational creature should be conquered by it, but in order that he should prove and increase the virtue of his soul, because virtue cannot be proved, except by its contrary. Sensuality is contrary to the spirit, and yet, by means of sensuality, the soul is able to prove the love which she has for Me, her Creator. How does she prove it? When, with anger and displeasure, she

rises against herself. This law has also been imposed in order to preserve the soul in true humility. Wherefore thou seest that, while I created the soul to Mine own image and similitude, placing her in such dignity and beauty, I caused her to be accompanied by the vilest of all things, imposing on her the law of perversity, imprisoning her in a body, formed of the vilest substance of the earth, so that, seeing in what her true beauty consisted, she should not raise her head in pride against Me. Wherefore, to one who possesses this light, the fragility of his body is a cause of humiliation to the soul, and is in no way matter for pride, but rather for true and perfect humility. So that this law does not constrain you to any sin by its strivings, but supplies a reason to make you know yourselves and the instability of the world. This should be seen by the eye of the intellect, with light of the holy faith, of which I said to thee that it was the pupil of the eye. This is that light which is necessary in general to every rational creature, whatever may be his condition, who wishes to participate in the life of grace, in the fruit of the Blood of the immaculate Lamb. This is the ordinary light, that is, the light which all persons must possess, as has been said, for, without it, the soul would be in a state of damnation. And, for this reason, because the soul, being without the light, is not in a state of grace, inasmuch as, not having the light, she does not know the evil of her sin or its cause, and therefore cannot avoid or hate it.

“And similarly if the soul know not good, and the reason of good, that is to say virtue, she cannot love or desire either Me, Who am the Essential Good, or virtue, which I have given you as an instrument and means for you to receive My grace, and Myself the True Good. See then how necessary is this light, for your sins consist in nothing else than in loving that which I hate, and in hating that which I love. I love virtue and hate vice; he who loves vice and hates virtue offends Me, and is deprived of My grace. Such a one walks as if blind, for he knows not the cause of vice, that is, his sensual self-love, nor does he hate himself on account of it; he is ignorant of vice and of the evil which

follows it : he is ignorant of virtue and of Me, Who am the cause of his obtaining life-giving virtue ; he is ignorant of his own dignity, which he should maintain by advancing to grace, by means of virtue. See, therefore, how his ignorance is the cause of all his evil, and how thou also needest this light, as has been said."

## CHAPTER XCIX.

Of those who have placed their desire rather in the mortification of the body than in the destruction of their own will ; and of the second light, more perfect than the former general one.

"WHEN the soul has arrived at the attainment of the general light, of which I have spoken, she should not remain contented, because, as long as you are pilgrims in this life, you are capable of growth, and he who does not go forward, by that very fact, is turning back. She should either grow in the general light, which she has acquired through My Grace, or anxiously strive to attain to the second and perfect light, leaving the imperfect and reaching the perfect. For, if the soul truly have light, she will wish to arrive at perfection. In this second perfect light are to be found two kinds of perfection ; for they may be called perfect who have abandoned the general way of living of the world. One perfection is that of those who give themselves up wholly to the castigation of the body, doing great and severe penance. These, in order that their sensuality may not rebel against their reason, have placed their desire rather in the mortification of the body than in the destruction of their self-will, as I have explained to thee in another place. These feed their souls at the table of penance, and are good and perfect, if their penance be illuminated by discretion, and founded on Me, if, that is to say, they act with true knowledge of themselves and of Me, with great humility, and wholly conformed to the judgment of My Will, and not to that of the will of man. But, if they were not thus clothed with My Will, in true humility, they would

often offend against their own perfection, esteeming themselves the judges of those who do not walk in the same path. Knowest thou why this would happen to them? Because they have placed all their labour and desire in the mortification of the body, rather than in the destruction of their own will. Such as these wish always to choose their own times, and places, and consolations, after their own fashion, and also the persecutions of the world and of the Devil, as I have narrated to thee in speaking of the second state of perfection.

“ They say, cheating themselves with the delusion of their own self-will, which I have already called their spiritual self-will, ‘ I wish to have that consolation, and not these battles, or these temptations of the Devil, not, indeed, for my own pleasure, but in order to please God the more, and in order to retain Him the more in my soul through grace ; because it seems to me that I should possess Him more, and serve Him better in that way than in this.’ And this is the way the soul often falls into trouble, and becomes tedious and insupportable to herself ; thus injuring her own perfection ; yet she does not perceive it, nor that, within her, lurks the stench of pride, and there she lies. Now, if the soul were not in this condition, but were truly humble and not presumptuous, she would be illuminated to see that I, the Primary and Sweet Truth, grant condition, and time, and place, and consolations, and tribulations as they may be needed for your salvation, and to complete the perfection to which I have elected the soul. And she would see that I give everything through love, and that therefore, with love and reverence, should she receive everything, which is what the souls in the second state do, and, by doing so, arrive at the third state. Of whom I will now speak to thee, explaining to thee the nature of these two states which stand in the most perfect light.”

## CHAPTER C.

Of the third and most perfect state, and of reason, and of the works done by the soul who has arrived at this light. And of a beautiful vision which this devout soul once received, in which the method of arriving at perfect purity is fully treated, and the means to avoid judging our neighbour is spoken of.

“THOSE who belong to the third state, which immediately follows the last, having arrived at this glorious light, are perfect in every condition in which they may be, and receive every event which I permit to happen to them with due reverence, as I have mentioned to thee when speaking of the third and unitive state of the soul. These deem themselves worthy of the troubles and stumbling-blocks caused them by the world, and of the privation of their own consolation, and indeed of whatever circumstance happens to them. And inasmuch as they deem themselves worthy of trouble, so also do they deem themselves unworthy of the fruit which they receive after their trouble. They have known and tasted in the light My Eternal Will, which wishes naught else but your good, and gives and permits these troubles in order that you should be sanctified in Me. Wherefore the soul having known My Will, clothes herself with it, and fixes her attention on nothing else except seeing in what way she can preserve and increase her perfection to the glory and praise of My Name, opening the eye of her intellect and fixing it in the light of faith upon Christ crucified, My only-begotten Son, loving and following His doctrine, which is the rule of the road for perfect and imperfect alike. And see, how My Truth, the Lamb, Who became enamoured of her when He saw her, gives the soul the doctrine of perfection. She knows what this perfection is, having seen it practised by the sweet and amorous Word, My only-begotten Son, Who was fed at the table of holy desire, seeking the honour of Me, the Eternal Father, and your salvation. And, inflamed with this desire, He ran, with great eagerness, to the shameful death of the

Cross, and accomplished the obedience which was imposed on Him by Me, His Father, not shunning labours or insults or withdrawing on account of your ingratitude or ignorance of so great a benefit, or because of the persecutions of the Jews, or on account of the insults, derision, grumbling, and shouting of the people. But all this He passed through like the true Captain and Knight that He was, Whom I had placed on the battle-field to deliver you from the hands of the Devil, so that you might be free, and drawn out of the most terrible slavery in which you could ever be, and also to teach you His road, His doctrine, and His rule, so that you might open the Door of Me, Eternal Life, with the key of His precious Blood, shed with such fire of love, with such hatred of your sins. It was as if the sweet and amorous Word, My Son, should have said to you: 'Behold, I have made the road, and opened the door with My Blood.' Do not you then be negligent to follow, laying yourselves down to rest in self-love and ignorance of the road, presuming to choose to serve Me in your own way, instead of in the way which I have made straight for you by means of My Truth, the Incarnate Word, and built up with His Blood. Rise up then, promptly, and follow Him, for no one can reach Me, the Father, if not by Him; He is the Way and the Door by which you must enter into Me, the Sea Pacific.

"When therefore the soul has arrived at seeing, knowing, and tasting, in its full sweetness, this light, she runs, as one enamoured and inflamed with love, to the table of holy desire; she does not see herself in herself, seeking her own consolation either spiritual or temporal, but, like one who has placed his all in this light and knowledge, and has destroyed his own will, she shuns no labour from whatever source it comes, but rather enduring the troubles, the insults, the temptations of the Devil, and the murmurings of men, eats at the table of the most holy Cross, the food of the honour of Me, the Eternal God, and of the salvation of souls; seeking no reward, either from Me or from creatures, because she is stripped of mercenary love, that is of love for Me based on interested motives, and is clothed



in perfect light, loving Me in perfect purity, with no other regard than for the praise and glory of My Name, serving neither Me for her own delight, nor her neighbour for her own profit, but purely through love alone. Such as these have lost themselves, and have stripped themselves of the Old Man, that is of their own sensuality, and, having clothed themselves with the New Man, the sweet Christ Jesus, My Truth, follow Him manfully. These are they who sit at the table of holy desire, having been more anxious to slay their own will than to slay and mortify their own body. They have indeed mortified their body, though not as an end in itself, but as a means which helps them to stay their own will, as I said to thee when explaining that sentence that I wished few words and many deeds, and so ought you to do. Their principal desire should be to slay their own will, so that it may not seek or wish anything else than to follow My sweet Truth, Christ crucified, seeking the honour and glory of My Name and the salvation of souls. Those who are in this sweet light know it, and remain constantly in peace and quiet, and no one scandalises them, for they have cut away that thing by which stumbling-blocks are caused, namely their own will. And all the persecutions, with which the world and the Devil can attack them, slide under their feet, standing, as they do, in the waters of many tribulations and temptations, and do not hurt them, for they remain attached to Me by the umbilical cord of fiery desire. Such a man rejoices in everything, nor does he make himself judge of My servants, or of any rational creature, but rejoices in every condition and in every manner of holiness which he sees, saying: 'Thanks be to Thee, Eternal Father, Who hast in Thy House many mansions.' And he rejoices more in the different ways of holiness which he sees, than if he were to see all travelling by one road, because, in this way, he perceives the greatness of My Goodness become more manifest, and thus, rejoicing draws from all the fragrance of the rose. And not only in the case of good, but even when he sees something evidently sinful, he does not fall into judgment, but rather into true and holy compassion, interceding with Me for

sinner and saying, with perfect humility: 'To-day it is thy turn, and to-morrow it will be mine unless the Divine Grace preserve me.'

"Enamour thyself, dearest daughter, of this sweet and excellent state, and gaze at those who run in this glorious light and holiness, for they have holy minds, and eat at the table of holy desire, and, with the light, have arrived at feeding on the food of souls, that is, the honour of Me, the Eternal Father, being clothed with burning love in the sweet garment of My Lamb, My only-begotten Son, namely His doctrine. These do not lose their time in passing false judgments, either on My servants or the servants of the world, and they are never scandalised by any murmurings of men, either for their own sake or that of others. That is to say, in their own case they are content to endure anything for My Name's sake; and when an injury is done to some one else, they endure it with compassion of this injured neighbour, and without murmuring against him who caused the injury, or him who received it, because their love is not disordinate, but has been ordered in Me, the Eternal God.

"And, since their love is so ordered, these souls, my dearest daughter, never take offence from those they love, nor from any rational creature, their will being dead and not alive, wherefore they never assume the right to judge the will of men, but only the will of My Clemency. These observe the doctrine which, as thou knowest, was given thee by My Truth at the beginning of thy life, when thou wast thinking in what way thou couldst arrive at perfect purity, and wast praying to Me with a great desire of doing so. Thou knowest what was replied to thee, while thou wast asleep, concerning this holy desire, and that the words resounded not only in thy mind, but also in thine ear. So much so, that, if thou rememberest truly, thou didst return to thy waking body, when My Truth said, 'Wilt thou arrive at perfect purity, and be freed from stumbling-blocks, so that thy mind may not be scandalised by anything?' Unite thyself always to Me by the affection of love, for I am the Supreme and Eternal Purity. I am that Fire Which purifies the soul, and the closer the soul is to Me, the purer she

becomes, and the further she is from Me, the more does her purity leave her; which is the reason why men of the world fall into such iniquities, for they are separated from Me, while the soul, who, without any medium, unites herself directly to Me, participates in My Purity. Another thing is necessary for thee to arrive at this union and purity, namely, that thou shouldst never judge the will of man in anything that thou mayest see done or said by any creature whatsoever, either to thyself or to others. My will alone shouldst thou consider, both in them and in thyself. And, if thou shouldst see evident sins or defects, draw out of those thorns the rose, that is to say, offer them to Me, with holy compassion. In the case of injuries done to thyself, judge that My will permits this in order to prove virtue in thyself, and in My other servants, esteeming that he who acts thus does so as the instrument of My will; perceiving, moreover, that such apparent sinners may frequently have a good intention, for no one can judge the secrets of the heart of man. That which thou dost not see thou shouldst not judge in thy mind, even though it may externally be open mortal sin, seeing nothing in others but My will, not in order to judge, but, as has been said, with holy compassion. In this way thou wilt arrive at perfect purity, because acting thus, thy mind will not be scandalised, either in Me or in thy neighbour. Otherwise thou fallest into contempt of thy neighbour, if thou judgest his evil will towards thee, instead of My will acting in him. Such contempt and scandal separates the soul from Me, and prevents perfection, and, in some cases, deprives a man of grace, more or less according to the gravity of his contempt, and the hatred which his judgment has conceived against his neighbour.

“A different reward is received by the soul who perceives only My will, which, as has been said, wishes nothing else but your good; so that everything which I give or permit to happen to you, I give so that you may arrive at the end for which I created you. And because the soul remains always in the love of her neighbour, she remains always in Mine, and thus remains united to Me. Wherefore, in order to arrive at purity, thou must entreat Me to do three things;

to grant thee to be united to me by the affection of love, retaining in thy memory the benefits thou hast received from Me; and with the eye of thy intellect to see the affection of My love, with which I love you inestimably; and in the will of others to discern My will only, and not their evil will, for I am their Judge, not thou, and, in doing this, thou wilt arrive at all perfection.

“This was the doctrine given to thee by My Truth, if thou rememberest well. Now I tell thee, dearest daughter, that such as these, who have learnt this doctrine taste the earnest, of eternal life in this life; and, if thou hast well retained this doctrine, thou wilt not fall into the snares of the Devil, because thou wilt recognise them in the case about which thou hast asked Me.

“But, nevertheless, in order to satisfy thy desire more clearly, I will tell thee and shew thee how men should never discern by judgment, but with holy compassion.”

## CHAPTER CI.

In what way they, who stand in the above-mentioned third most perfect light, receive the earnest of eternal life in this life.

“WHY did I say to thee that they received the earnest of eternal life? I say that they receive the earnest-money, but not the full payment, because they wait to receive it in Me, the Eternal Life, where they have life without death, and satiety without disgust, and hunger without pain, for from that divine hunger pain is far away, and though they have what they desire, disgust is far from satiety, for I am the flawless Food of Life. It is true that, in this life, they receive the earnest, and taste it in this way, namely that the soul begins to hunger for the honour of the Eternal God, and for the food of the salvation of other souls, and being hungry, she eats, that is to say, nourishes herself with love of her neighbour, which causes her hunger and desire, for the love of the neighbour is a food which never

satiates him who feeds on it, the eater being insatiable and always remains hungry. So this earnest-money is a commencement of a guarantee which is given to man, in virtue of which he expects one day to receive his payment, not through the perfection of the earnest-money in itself, but through faith, through the certitude which he has of reaching the completion of his being and receiving his payment. Wherefore this enamoured soul, clothed in My Truth, having already received in this life the earnest of My love, and of her neighbour's, is not yet perfect, but expects perfection in immortal life. I say that this earnest is not perfect, because the soul who tastes it has not, as yet, the perfection which would prevent her feeling pain in herself, or in others. In herself, through the offence done to Me by the law of perversity which is bound in her members and struggles against the spirit, and in others by the offence of her neighbour. She has indeed, in a sense, a perfect grace, but not that perfection of My saints, who have arrived at Me, Eternal Life, for, as has been said, their desires are without suffering, and yours are not. These servants of Mine, as I have said to thee in another place, who nourish themselves at this table of holy desire, are blessed and full of grief, even as My only-begotten Son was, on the wood of the holy Cross, because, while His flesh was in grief and torment, His soul was blessed through its union with the divine nature. In like manner these are blessed by the union of their holy desire towards Me, clothed, as has been said, in My sweet Will, and they are full of grief through compassion for their neighbour, and because they afflict their own self-love, depriving it of sensual delights and consolations."

## CHAPTER CII.

How one should reprove one's neighbour, without falling into false judgment.

“ Now listen, dearest daughter. In order that thou mightest understand better that which thou desiredst to know, I have spoken to thee of the general light, which you all must have, in whatever state you be, speaking of those who live in ordinary charity. And I have also spoken of those who are in the perfect light, which light I distinguished in two instances, first, that of those who, having left the world, applied themselves to the mortification of the body, and of those who, in all things, destroyed their own will ; these latter were the perfect souls who nourish themselves at the table of holy desire. I will now speak particularly to thee, and in speaking to thee, and in satisfying thy desire, I shall also speak to others. I wish that thou shouldst do three things in particular, so that ignorance may not prevent the perfection to which I call thee. And I will tell thee the first thing I wish thee to do, in order that the Devil, hidden in the cloak of love of the neighbour, may not nourish within thy soul the root of presumption, for, by this means, thou wouldest fall into false judgments, which I have forbidden thee, ordering thee to judge aright, whereas thou wouldest judge wrongly, returning to thy human point of view, for the Devil would often cause thee to see what was true, in order to lead thee into falsehood. This he would do in order to make thee judge the minds and intentions of My rational creatures, which fall, as I have told thee, under My judgment alone. This, then, is the first of the three things which I wish thee to do and observe, namely, that thou shouldst never deliver a judgment, except under a certain condition, but under that condition I wish thee to do it. The condition is this, unless I have expressly manifested to thee in thy mind, not once, nor twice, but several times thy neighbour's fault, thou shouldst say nothing in particular to him who

seems to thee to fall into it, but rather in general correct the vices of those who come to visit thee, and plant the virtues lovingly and with benignity, but with a certain sternness in thy benignity, according as thou shalt see need. And if it should appear to thee that I have shown to thee many times the defects of others, unless thou seest that it was an express revelation from Me, as has been said, thou shouldst say nothing in particular, but devote thyself to the surer way, so as to dispel the delusion and malice of the Devil ; for, with the blade of this desire to judge, he might wound thee, causing thee often to judge thy neighbour falsely, and, thus, often to scandalise him.

“ Wherefore let silence dwell in thy mouth, or holy conversation about virtue, and the contemptibleness of sin, and attribute that vice, which thou seemest to recognise in another, to thyself, at the same time as to him, and if, in truth, this person should have fallen into that vice, he will correct himself better, seeing himself so sweetly treated, and will be obliged, by thy pleasant warnings, to correct himself, and will himself tell thee that very thing which thou wast on the point of saying to him ; and thus thou wilt remain in safety, and wilt have cut away the road under the Devil’s feet, who will not be able to delude thee, or prevent the perfection of thy soul. I will too that thou shouldst know that thou shouldst not trust all thou seest, but rather cast it behind thee and refuse to look at it, looking only at thyself and recognising in thyself My bounty and My goodness. Thus do they, who have arrived at the last state, of which I spoke to thee ; they constantly turn to the valley of self-knowledge, and do not, on that account, diminish the height of their union with Me. And this is the first of the three things which, as I told thee, I wish thee to do, in order to serve Me in truth.”

## CHAPTER CIII.

How, if God should manifest to a person, praying for another, the mind of that other full of darkness, he should not be judged on that account to be in a state of sin.

“IF at any time it should happen to thee, as in the case of which thou askest Me the explanation, that thou shouldst be praying in particular for one of My creatures, and that during thy prayer, thou shouldest see in him, for whom thou prayest, a ray of grace, and in another, none at all, both persons being servants of Mine, thou shouldest not judge him who appears to thee to have a confused and darkened mind, to be in a state of grave sin, because often thy judgment would be false; and I wish thee to know that often, when praying for one and the same person, thou wilt sometimes see him full of light, and of a holy desire before Me; (in so good a state will he appear to thee, that thy soul will grow fat therewith, which is the effect of love, by which you all participate in each other’s good); and sometimes thou wilt see the same person, far away in mind from Me, and filled with darkness and temptations, so that it will seem to thee a weariness to pray for him—to hold him before Me. This happens sometimes through the defect of him for whom thou hast prayed, but more often, not through his defect, but because I, the Eternal God, have withdrawn Myself from that soul, as I often do, to bring that soul to greater perfection, according to what I told thee when speaking of the states of the soul. I may have withdrawn, not My grace, but the feeling of it, its sweetness and consolation, deprived of which the mind remains barren, dry, and in grief, which grief I manifest to the soul who is praying, on account of the grace and love which I have to the soul who receives the fruit of the prayer, so that he who is praying may help him to disperse the clouds which are in his mind.

“See then, sweetest and dearest daughter, how ignorant and worthy of reprehension would be the judgment which



thou or another might make at the sight alone of this soul ; thou wouldst judge that vice was there because I showed her to thee full of darkness, whereas thou seest that such a soul is not deprived of grace, but only of the feeling of My sweetness which I have given her. I wish, therefore, thou and My other servants should also wish, that you should give yourselves up to perfect self-knowledge, so that you may perfectly recognise My goodness in you, and leave this and every other judgment to Me, for judgment is Mine and not yours.

“ Abandon judgment, which is Mine, and take up rather compassion, with hunger for My honour and salvation of souls. Preach virtue with yearning desire, and reprove vice in thyself and in others, as I have shown thee. In this way wilt thou come to Me, in truth, and wilt show that thou hast kept in mind, and observed the doctrine, which was given thee by My Truth—namely, to make My will the subject of thy judgments, and not that of man.

“ This must thou do if thou wilt possess virtue in all its purity, and wilt stand in the last and most perfect light, eating at the table of holy desire of the food of souls, to the glory and praise of My Name.”

## CHAPTER CIV.

How penance should not be taken for the foundation or principal end in itself : but rather the affection and love of virtue.

“ I HAVE spoken to thee, dearest daughter, of two lights, and I will now speak to thee of the third, to which I would have thee pay great attention, reprovng thyself, if, at any time, the devil, or thy own low point of view, should have tempted thee to wish to send all My servants along the same road as thyself, for this would be contrary to the doctrine given thee by My Truth. It may often happen that a person, seeing many travelling by the road of severe penance, would wish to send all by that road, and, seeing

that they do not all choose it, he is angered, and takes scandal, thinking that such are acting wrongly. Now, see how such a one deceives himself, for it will often happen that he who is thought evil of because he does less penance, will do better and be more virtuous than he who, doing more penance, murmurs at it.

“Wherefore I said to thee above, that those who feed at the table of penance, unless they do so with true humility, their penance, not being to them an end in itself, but merely an instrument of virtue, will often, by this vice of murmuring, offend against their own perfection. They should therefore not remain in ignorance, but should see that perfection does not consist only in the maceration or slaying of the body, but in the destruction of their own perverse will. It is by this road of the extinguishing and submission of the human will to My sweet will, that I wish thee to desire all to walk. This is the doctrine of that glorious light, in which the soul runs as one enamoured, clothed with My Truth. I do not on that account despise penance, for it is good to macerate the body when it strives to fight against the Spirit, but I do not wish, dearest daughter, that thou shouldst impose penance as a rule to any one, because all bodies are not equal, or of the same strong complexion; because one man may have a stronger nature than another, and also because it often happens, as I have told thee, that penance, when it has been begun, has to be relinquished, on account of many accidents which may occur. And, if the foundation of thy soul was laid in penance, or thou hadst caused others so to lay it, thou wouldst then faint and become imperfect, lacking consolation, for thou wouldst be deprived of the thing which thou didst love, and which had become thy principal object, and so thou wouldst seem to thyself to be deprived of Me, and of My goodness, and wouldst thus fall into weariness, bitterness and confusion. In this way, thou wouldst lose the benefit of the spiritual exercise and the fervent prayer which thou wast wont to make when performing thy penance. Thus, having relinquished thy penance on account of some accident or other, thou wouldst no longer find that savour in prayer

which thou hadst before. This would happen because thy foundation would be laid rather in penance than in yearning desire—desire, that is, for true and real virtues.

“See, then, how much harm would follow from placing thy end solely in penance, how thou wouldst become ignorant, and fall into murmuring judgments against My servants, as has been said, and into weariness and great bitterness, endeavouring to serve, with finite works only, Me, Who am Infinite Good, and therefore demand on your part infinite desire; you should therefore place your foundation in the destruction and extinction of your own will, and, by thus submitting your will to Mine, you will send up before Me a sweet, hungry and infinite desire, seeking My honour and the salvation of souls. And thus will you eat at the table of holy desire, which desire is never scandalised either in itself or in its neighbour, but rejoices in everything, and draws fruit from all the divers and varied circumstances in which I place the soul. The poor wretches who do not follow this sweet doctrine and smooth road, given them by My Truth, do not so. They do, indeed, the contrary, judging according to their blindness and infirm vision. Wherefore they become raving lunatics, and deprive themselves both of the advantages of the world and of heaven. And, in this life, as I have said to thee in another place, they taste the earnest of Hell.”

## CHAPTER CV.

A brief repetition of the above-mentioned things; with an addition concerning the reprehension of the neighbour.

“I HAVE now told thee, dearest daughter, and explained to thee, in satisfaction of thy desire, that which thou didst ask Me—in what way, namely, thou shouldst judge thy neighbour, so as not to be deluded by the Devil, or by thy own low point of view; and I have told thee that thou shouldst reprove in general, and not in particular, unless thou shouldst have had an express revelation from

Me; and that, in that case, thou shouldest, with humility blame thyself and thy neighbour at the same time. I have also told thee, and I repeat it, that, in no case whatever, is it lawful for thee to judge any creature, either in general, or in the particular case of one of My servants, as to whether he be well or badly disposed. And I have given the reason why thou canst not judge, and why, if thou didst do so, thou wouldst be deceived in thy judgment. I have also told thee, that you should all have compassion on each other and leave judgment to Me; and I have given thee the doctrine, and the principal foundation for thee to give to those who should come to thee for counsel, and who should wish to come out of the darkness of mortal sin, and follow the path of virtue, and knowledge of themselves and of My Goodness to them, and the destruction and extinction of their own will, so that it may rebel in nothing against Me. And I have told thee to give them penance as a means and not as an end, and not to each one equally, but according to their capacity and condition; to one less, to another more, shalt thou give these external means. But, because I said to thee that it was not lawful for thee to reprove another, except in general (which is the truth), I do not wish thee to think that, when thou actually seest an open sin, thou canst not privately correct the sinner; this thou canst do, and if he is so obstinate that he will not correct himself, thou canst manifest his sin to two or three others; and if this does not succeed, thou mayest manifest it to the mystical body of the holy Church. What I have said to thee is—that thou canst not lawfully make to thyself any judgment in thy mind, whatever thou mayest appear to see with thine eyes, nor change thy opinions quickly, for, unless thou seest the truth of the matter by My express revelation, thou shouldest not make use of the truth, except in the way I have shown thee. This is the surer way of preventing the Devil deluding thee under the cloak of neighbourly love. I have now, dearest daughter, completed My explanations on this matter, which thou must preserve, and so increase the perfection of thy soul.”

## CHAPTER CVI.

Of the means of knowing when visitations and mental visions come from God or the Devil.

“ I WILL now speak to thee of that which thou didst ask Me, concerning the sign which I give the soul, that she may know whether the visitations which she receives, either by visions or other consolations, are from Me or not. The sign, I told thee, was the joy which remained in the soul after the visitation, and the hunger for virtue, and specially the anointing of true humility, and the enflaming of the soul with divine charity. But since thou askedst me, whether this joy may in any way deceive thee, in order that thou mayest attain to the surer proof, the sign, namely, of virtue which cannot be deceived, I will tell thee a delusion which may occur, by knowing which, thou canst determine if the joy is in My Truth or not. Delusion may occur in this way. Thou must know that, when a rational creature possesses the object which she loves, and has longed to have, the more she loves the object, the less she sees it, and the less she endeavours to prudently examine it, so absorbed is she in the delight and consolation she has received from it. So do those who take great delight in mental consolations, and seek for visions, placing their end rather in the delight of these consolations than in Me, like those of whom I spoke to thee who were still imperfect. Such as these may be deluded in their joy, besides other ways of delusion of which I spoke to thee distinctly in another place. How are they deluded? I will tell thee. Having conceived a great love of consolation, when they receive it either by vision or in some other way, they feel joy, for they see that they possess that which they loved and desired. Often, however, their consolation might come from the Devil, and they would feel that joy of which I spoke to thee, saying that when this visitation of the mind came from the Devil, the mind was at first joyful, but afterwards remained in grief and an uneasy conscience, and

empty of a desire for virtue. I now say to thee that the soul may often have that joy, and on account of it abandon prayer. If this joy exist without a burning desire for virtue, and be not anointed with humility, and on fire with My Divine Love, that visitation, or vision, or consolation, which that soul may have received, comes from the Devil, and not from Me, in spite of the sign of joy. But, inasmuch as the joy is not united with the desire for virtue, thou canst clearly see that it is drawn from the love which that soul had for her own mental consolation, wherefore she rejoices, seeing that she possesses that which she desired, it being the nature of love of every kind to feel joy in the possession of the beloved object. So that thou canst not trust in joy alone, even if the joy last all the time during which thou hast the consolation, and the more so, that love, ignorant and walking imprudently through its very joy, cannot discern the wile of the Devil; but, if the soul walk prudently, she will examine whether or no her joy be united to love of virtue. In this way will she know whether the visitation, which she has received, comes from Me or the Devil. This is that sign of which I spoke to thee, with which I showed thee how thou couldst recognise if thy joy was a sign that thou hadst been visited by Me, namely, if it were united with virtue, as I have truly told thee, for this sign proves to thee what is delusion, and what is not; that is to say, it distinguishes between the joy which thou receivest from Me in truth, and the joy which comes from thy spiritual self-love, from love that is, of thy own consolation. The consolation which comes from Me comes with joy and the love of virtue, and that which comes from the Devil brings joy only, and when thou examinest thy soul thou art in the same condition of virtue as thou wert before, for this joy proceeds from love of one's own consolation, as has been said.

“ But know that not every one is deluded by this joy, but only those imperfect ones who seek for delight and consolation, and look rather to the gift than to Me, the Giver. Those, on the other hand, who in purity, and with regard for themselves, enflamed with love for Me alone, Who gives, and not

for the gift, which they love for My sake, and not for their own consolation, cannot be deluded by this joy. They at once know by this sign when the Devil has wanted, through his deceitfulness, to transform himself into an angel of light and manifest himself to their mind, namely that he arrives suddenly with great joy, but the joy soon passes away, and they find themselves left in darkness. They thus thoroughly recognise his deceitfulness by their prudence, because they are not passionately in love with (or desirous of) mental consolation. Then they humiliate themselves with true self-knowledge, despising all consolation, and embracing and holding fast the doctrine of My Truth. Then the Devil, confused, wheels about, and never comes back again to them in that form. But those who are lovers of their own consolation, will oftentimes receive the Devil, but they will find out the deception in the way I told you, that is, in the feeling of the joy without the virtue, in that they will not find themselves issuing from the experience with humility, true charity, and hunger for My honour, Who am eternal God.

“And thus is My goodness manifested in that I have provided against the deception of the perfect ones, and the imperfect ones, in whatever condition they be, because none of you can be deceived if you will preserve the light of the intellect that I have given you with the pupil of the most holy faith, and not let it be overshadowed by the Devil, and veiled with self-love, “because if you do not take it away from yourself, no one else will take it from you.”

## CHAPTER CVII.

How God is the Fulfiller of the holy desires of His servants; and how they please Him much who ask and knock at the door of His Truth with perseverance.

“Now I have told thee, dearest daughter, and fully explained to thee, illuminating the eye of thy intellect, about the

deceptions the Devil might practise upon thee, and I have satisfied thy desire in that which thou askest Me, because I do not despise the desire of My servants. Also I not only give to all who ask, but I invite you all to ask, and he displeases Me much, who does not knock, in truth, at the door of the wisdom of My only-begotten Son, following His doctrine, the following of which doctrine is a knocking, calling to Me, the eternal Father, with the voice of holy desire, with humble and continual prayers. And I am that Father Who gives you the bread of grace by means of this sweet door, My Truth; and sometimes, to test your desires and your perseverance, I pretend not to understand you, but I really understood you well, and give you that state of mind that you need, because I give you that hunger and the voice with which you cry to Me, and I, seeing your constancy, fulfil your desires when they are ordered and directed to Me. It was to such asking as this that My Truth invited you, when He said, '*Cry out and ye shall be answered, knock and it shall be opened to you, ask and it shall be given to you.*' And so I say to thee that I will that thou shouldest never relax the desire of asking for My help, neither lower thy voice from crying to Me that I may have mercy on the world; nor cease from knocking at the door of My Truth, following in His Footsteps, and delight thyself in the Cross with Him, eating the food of souls to the glory and praise of My Name; and lament, with anxiety of heart, over the death of the human generation, that thou seest led to misery so great, that thy tongue is not sufficient to relate it. On account of this lamenting and crying will I have mercy on the world, and it is this which I demand from My servants, and which will be a sign to Me, that they love Me in truth, and, as I told thee, I will not despise their desires."



## CHAPTER CVIII.

How this soul, rendering thanks to God, humiliates herself; then she prays for the whole world and particularly for the mystical body of the holy Church, and for her spiritual children, and for the two fathers of her soul; and, after these things, she asks to hear something about the defects of the ministers of the holy Church.

THEN that soul, as if, in truth, inebriated, seemed beside herself, as if the feelings of the body were alienated through the union of love which she had made with her Creator, and as if, in elevation of mind, she had gazed into the eternal truth with the eye of her intellect, and, having recognised the truth, had become enamoured of it, and said, "Oh! Supreme and Eternal Goodness of God, who am I, miserable one, that Thou, Supreme and Eternal Father, hast manifested to me Thy truth, and the hidden deceits of the Devil, and the deceitfulness of personal feeling, so that I, and others in this life of pilgrimage, may know how to avoid being deceived by the Devil or ourselves! What moved thee to do it? Love, because thou lovedst me, without my having loved Thee. Oh, Fire of Love! Thanks, thanks be to Thee, Eternal Father! I am imperfect and full of darkness, and Thou, Perfection and Light, hast shown to me perfection, and the resplendent way of the doctrine of Thy only-begotten Son. I was dead, and Thou hast brought me to life. I was sick and Thou hast given me medicine, and not only the medicine of the Blood which Thou gavest for the diseased human race in the person of Thy Son, but also a medicine against a secret infirmity that I knew not of, in this precept that, in no way, can I judge any rational creature, and particularly Thy servants, upon whom oftentimes I, as one blind and sick with this infirmity, passed judgment under the pretext of Thy honour and the salvation of souls. Wherefore, I thank Thee, Supreme and Eternal Good, that, in the manifesting of Thy truth and the deceitfulness of the Devil, and our own passions, Thou hast made me know my infirmity. Wherefore I beseech Thee, through grace and mercy, that,

from to-day henceforward, I may never again wander from the path of Thy doctrine, given by Thy goodness to me and to whoever wishes to follow it, because without Thee is nothing done. To Thee then, Eternal Father, do I have recourse and flee, and I do not beseech Thee for myself alone, Father, but for the whole world, and particularly for the mystical body of the holy Church, that this truth given to me, miserable one, by Thee, Eternal Truth, may shine in Thy ministers; and also I beseech Thee especially for all those whom Thou hast given me, and whom Thou hast made one thing with me, and whom I love with a particular love, because they will be my refreshment to the glory and praise of Thy Name, when I see them running on this sweet and straight road, pure, and dead to their own will and opinion, and without any passing judgment on their neighbour, or causing him any scandal or murmuring. And I pray Thee, Sweetest Love, that not one of them may be taken from me by the hand of the infernal Devil, so that at last they may arrive at Thee, their End, Eternal Father.

“Also I make another petition to Thee for my two fathers, the supports whom Thou hast placed on the earth to guard and instruct me, miserable infirm one, from the beginning of my conversion until now, that Thou unite them, and of two bodies make one soul, and that they attend to nothing else than to complete in themselves, and in the mysteries that Thou hast placed in their hands, the glory and praise of Thy Name, and the salvation of souls, and that I, an unworthy and miserable slave, and no daughter, may behave to them with due reverence and holy fear, for love of Thee, in a way that will be to Thine honour, and their peace and quiet, and to the edification of the neighbour. I now know for certain, Eternal Truth, that Thou wilt not despise the desire of the petitions that I have made to Thee, because I know, from seeing what it has pleased Thee to manifest, and still more from proof, that Thou art the Acceptor, of holy desires. I, Thy unworthy servant, will strive, according as Thou wilt give me grace, to observe Thy commandments and Thy doctrine. Now, O Eternal Father,

I remember a word which thou didst say to me in speaking of the ministers of the holy Church, to the effect that Thou wouldst speak to me more distinctly, in some other place, of the sins which they commit to-day; wherefore if it should please Thy goodness to tell me aught of this matter, I will gladly hear it, so as to have material for increasing my grief, compassion, and anxious desire for their salvation; for I remember that Thou didst say, that, on account of the endurance and tears, the grief, and sweat and prayers of Thy servants, Thou wouldst reform the holy Church, and comfort her with good and holy pastors. I ask Thee this in order that these sentiments may increase in me."

## CHAPTER CIX.

How God renders this soul attentive to prayer, replying to one of the above mentioned petitions.

THEN the Eternal God, turning the eye of His mercy upon this soul, not despising her desire, but granting her requests, proceeded to satisfy the last petition, which she had made concerning His promise, saying, "Oh! best beloved and dearest daughter, I will fulfil thy desire in this request, in order that, on thy side, thou mayest not sin through ignorance or negligence; for a fault of thine would be more serious and worthy of graver reproof now than before, because thou hast learnt more of My truth; wherefore apply thyself attentively to pray for all rational creatures, for the mystical body of the holy Church, and for those friends whom I have given thee, whom thou lovest with particular love, and be careful not to be negligent in giving them the benefit of thy prayers, and the example of thy life, and the teaching of thy words, reprovng vice and encouraging virtue according to thy power.

"Concerning the supports which I have given thee, of whom thou didst speak to Me, know that thou art, in truth, a means by which they may each receive, according to their

needs and fitness. And as I, thy Creator, grant thee the opportunity, for without Me thou canst do nothing, I will fulfil thy desires, but do not thou fail, or they either, in your hope in Me. My Providence will never fail you, and every man, if he be humble, shall receive that which he is fit to receive ; and every minister that which I have given him to administer, each in his own way, according to what he has received and will receive from My goodness."

## CHAPTER CX.

Of the dignity of the priest ; and of the Sacrament of the Body of Christ ; and of worthy and unworthy communicants.

" Now I will reply to that which thou didst ask Me concerning the ministers of the holy Church, and, in order that thou mayest the better understand the truth, open the eye of thy intellect, and look at their excellence and the dignity in which I have placed them. And, since one thing is better known by means of contrast with its contrary, I will show thee the dignity of those who use virtuously the treasure I have placed in their hands ; and, in this way, thou wilt the better see the misery of those who to-day are suckled at the breast of My Spouse." Then this soul obediently contemplated the truth, in which she saw virtue resplendent in those who truly taste it. Then said the Eternal God : " I will first, dearest daughter, speak to thee of the dignity of priests, having placed them where they are through My Goodness, over and above the general love which I have had to My creatures, creating you in My image and similitude and re-creating you all to the life of grace in the Blood of My only-begotten Son, whence you have arrived at such excellence, through the union which I made of My Deity with human nature ; so that in this you have greater dignity and excellence than the angels, for I took your human nature and not that of the angels. Wherefore, as I have said to you, I, God, have become

man, and man has become God by the union of My Divine Nature with your human nature. This greatness is given in general to all rational creatures, but, among these I have especially chosen My ministers for the sake of your salvation, so that, through them, the Blood of the humble and immaculate Lamb, My only-begotten Son, may be administered to you. To them have I given the Sun to administer, giving them the light of science and the heat of Divine Love, united together in the colour of the Body and Blood of My Son, whose Body is a Sun, because He is one thing with Me, the True Sun, in such a way that He cannot be separated or divided from Me, as in the case of the natural sun, in which heat and light cannot be separated, so perfect is their union; for, the sun, never leaving its orbit, lights the whole world and warms whoever wishes to be warmed by it, and is not defiled by any impurity on which it shines, for its light and heat and colour are united.

“So this Word, My Son, with His most sweet Blood, is one Sun, all God and all man, because He is one thing with Me and I with Him. My power is not separated from His wisdom, nor the fiery heat of the Holy Spirit from Me, the Father, or from Him, the Son; for He is one thing with us, the Holy Spirit proceeding from the Father and the Son, and We together forming one and the same Sun; that is to say, I, the Eternal God, am that Sun whence have proceeded the Son and the Holy Spirit. To the Holy Spirit is attributed fire and to the Son wisdom, by which wisdom My ministers receive the light of grace, so that they may administer this light to others, with gratitude for the benefits received from Me, the Eternal Father, following the doctrine of the Eternal Wisdom, My only-begotten Son. This is that Light, which has the colour of your humanity, colour and light being closely united. Thus was the light of My Divinity united to the colour of your humanity, which colour shone brightly when it became perfect through its union with the Divine nature, and, by this means of the Incarnate Word mixed with the Light of My Divine nature and the fiery heat of the Holy Spirit,

have ye received the Light. Whom have I entrusted with its administration ?

“ My ministers in the mystical body of the holy Church, so that you may have life, receiving His Body in food and His Blood in drink. I have said to thee that this Body is, as it were, a Sun. Wherefore, you cannot receive the Body without the Blood, or the Blood or the Body without the soul of the Incarnate Word ; nor the Soul, nor the Body, without the Divinity of Me, the Eternal God, because none of these can be separated from each other, as I said to thee in another place that the Divine nature never left the human nature, either by death or from any other cause. So that you receive the whole Divine Essence in that most Sweet Sacrament concealed under the whiteness of the bread ; for as the sun cannot be divided into light, heat, and colour, the whole of God and the whole of man cannot be separated under the white mantle of the host ; for even if the host should be divided into a million particles (if it were possible) in each particle should I be present, whole God and whole Man. When you break a mirror the reflection to be seen in it is not broken ; similarly, when the host is divided God and man are not divided, but remain in each particle. Nor is the Sacrament diminished in itself, except as far as may be in the following example.

“ If thou hast a light, and the whole world should come to thee in order to take light from it—the light itself does not diminish—and yet each person has it all. It is true that every one participates more or less in this light, according to the substance into which each one receives the fire. I will develop this metaphor further that thou mayest the better understand Me. Suppose that there are many who bring their candles, one weighing an ounce, others two or six ounces, or a pound, or even more, and light them in the flame, in each candle, whether large or small, is the whole light, that is to say, the heat, the colour, and the flame ; nevertheless thou wouldst judge that he whose candle weighs an ounce has less of the light than he whose candle weighs a pound. Now the same thing happens to those who receive this Sacrament. Each one carries his own candle,

that is the holy desire, with which he receives this Sacrament, which of itself is without light, and lights it by receiving this Sacrament. I say without light, because of yourselves you can do nothing, though I have given you the material, with which you can receive this light and feed it. The material is love, for through love I created you, and without love you cannot live.

“Your being, given to you through love, has received the right disposition in holy baptism, which you receive in virtue of the Blood of the Word, for, in no other way, could you participate in this light; you would be like a candle with no wick inside it, which cannot burn or receive light, if you have not received in your souls the wick which catches this Divine Flame, that is to say, the Holy Faith, which you receive, by grace, in baptism, united with the disposition of your soul created by Me, so fitted for love, that, without love, which is her very food, she cannot live. Where does the soul united in this way obtain light? At the fire of My Divine love, loving and fearing Me, and following the Doctrine of My Truth. It is true that the soul becomes more or less lighted according to the material which it brings to the fire; for although you all have one and the same material, in that you are all created to My image and similitude, and, being Christians, possess the light of holy baptism, each of you may grow in love and virtue by the help of My grace, as may please you. Not that you change the form of what I have given you, but that you increase your strength in love, and your free-will, by using it while you have time, for when time is past you can no longer do so. So that you can increase in love, as has been said, coming with love to receive this Sweet and Glorious Light, Which I have given you as Food for your service, through My ministers, and you receive this Light according to the love and fiery desire with which you approach It.

“The Light Itself you receive entire, as I have said (in the example of those, who in spite of the difference in weight of their candles, all receive the entire light), and not divided, because It cannot be divided, as has been said, either on account of any imperfection of yours who receive, or of the

minister ; but you personally participate in this light, that is in the grace which you receive in this Sacrament, according to the holy desire with which you dispose yourselves to receive It. He who should go to this sweet Sacrament in the guilt of mortal sin, will receive no grace therefrom, though he actually receive the whole of God and the whole of Man. Dost thou know the condition of the soul who receives unworthily ? She is like a candle on which water has fallen, which can do nothing but crackle when brought near the flame, for no sooner has the fire touched it, than it is extinguished, and nothing remains but smoke ; so this soul has cast the water of guilt within her mind upon the candle which she received in holy baptism, which has drenched the wick of the grace of baptism, and, not having heated it at the fire of true contrition and confession, goes to the table of the altar to receive this Light with her body, and not with her mind, wherefore the Light, since the soul is not disposed as she should be for so great a mystery, does not remain by grace in that soul, but leaves her, and, in the soul, remains only greater confusion, for her light is extinguished and her sin increased by her darkness. Of the Sacrament she feels nothing but the crackling of a remorseful conscience, not through the defect of the Light Itself, for that can receive no hurt, but on account of the water that was in the soul, which impeded her proper disposition so that she could not receive the Light. See, therefore, that in no way can this Light, united with its heat and its colour, be divided, either by the scanty desire of the soul when she receives the Sacrament, or by any defect which may be in the soul, or by any defect of him who administers it, as I told thee of the sun which is not defiled by shining on anything foul, so the sweet Light of this Sacrament cannot be defiled, divided, or diminished in any way, nor can it be detached from its orbit.

“If all the world should receive in communion the Light and Heat of this Sun, the Word, My only-begotten Son, would not be separated from Me—the True Sun, His Eternal Father—because in His mystical body, the holy Church, He is administered to whoever will receive Him.



He remains wholly with Me, and yet you have Him, whole God and whole man, as I told thee, in the metaphor of the light, that, if all the world came to take light from it, each would have it entire, and yet it would remain whole."

## CHAPTER CXI

How the bodily sentiments are all deceived in the aforesaid Sacrament, but not those of the soul, therefore it is, with the latter, that one must see, taste, and touch It; and of a beautiful vision this soul had upon this subject.

"OH, dearest daughter, open well the eye of thy intellect and gaze into the abyss of My love, for there is no rational creature whose heart would not melt for love in contemplating and considering, among the other benefits she receives from Me, the special Gift that she receives in the Sacrament.

"And with what eye, dearest daughter, shouldest thou and others look at this mystery, and how shouldest thou touch it? Not only with the bodily sight and touch, because in this Sacrament all bodily perceptions fail.

"The eye can only see, and the hand can only touch, the white substance of the bread, and the taste can only taste the savour of the bread, so that the grosser bodily sentiments are deceived; but the soul cannot be deceived in her sentiments unless she wish to be—that is, unless she let the light of the most holy faith be taken away from her by infidelity.

"How is this Sacrament to be truly tasted, seen, and touched? With the sentiment of the soul. With what eye is It to be seen? With the eye of the intellect if within it is the pupil of the most holy faith. This eye sees in that whiteness whole God and whole man, the Divine nature united with the human nature, the Body, the Soul, and the Blood of Christ, the Soul united to the Body, the Body and the Soul united with My Divine nature, not

detached from Me, as I revealed to thee, if thou remember well, almost in the beginning of thy life ; and not so much at first through the eye of thy intellect as through thy bodily eye, although the light being so great thy bodily eyes lost their vision, and only the sight of the eye of thy intellect remained. I showed it to thee for thine enlightenment in the battle that the Devil had been waging against thee in this Sacrament ; and to make thee increase in love in the light of the most holy faith.

“Thou knowest that thou wentest one morning to church at sun-rise to hear Mass, having beforehand been tormented by the Devil, and thou placedst thyself upright at the Altar of the Crucifix, while the priest went to the Altar of Mary ; thou stoodst there to consider thy sin, fearing to have offended Me through the vexation which the Devil had been causing thee, and to consider My love, which had made thee worthy to hear Mass, seeing that thou didst deem thyself unworthy to enter into My holy temple. When the minister came to consecrate, thou raisedst thine eyes above his head while he was saying the words of consecration, and I manifested Myself to thee, and thou didst see issue from My breast a light, like a ray from the sun, which proceeds from the circle of the sun without being separated from it, out of the midst of which light came a dove and hovered over the host, in virtue of the words which the minister was saying. But sight remained alone in the eye of thy intellect, because thy bodily sight was not strong enough to stand the light, and in that place thou didst see and taste the Abyss of the Trinity, whole God and whole man concealed and veiled in that whiteness that thou sawedst in the bread ; and thou perceivedst that the seeing of the Light and the presence of the Word, which thou sawedst intellectually in the whiteness of the bread, did not prevent thee seeing at the same time the actual whiteness of the bread, the one vision did not prevent the other vision, that is to say, the sight of the God-Man revealed in the bread did not prevent the sight of the bread, for neither its whiteness, nor its touch, nor its savour were taken away. This was shown thee by My goodness, as I have said to thee.

The eye of the intellect had the true vision, using the pupil of the holy faith, for this eye should be thy principal means of vision, inasmuch as it cannot be deceived; wherefore, with it thou shouldst look on this Sacrament. How dost thou touch It? By the hand of love. With this hand alone canst thou touch that which the eye of the intellect has recognised in this Sacrament. The soul touches Me with the hand of love, as if to certify to herself that which she has seen and known through faith. How dost thou taste It? With the palate of holy desire. The corporal palate tastes only the savour of the bread; but the palate of the soul, which is holy desire, tastes God and Man. See, therefore, that the perceptions of the body are deluded, but not those of the soul, for she is illuminated and assured in her own perceptions, for she touches with the hand of love that which the eye of her intellect has seen with the pupil of holy faith; and with her palate—that is, with fiery desire—she tastes My Burning Charity, My Ineffable Love, with Which I have made her worthy to receive the tremendous mystery of this Sacrament and the Grace which is contained therein. See, therefore, that thou shouldst receive and look on this Sacrament, not only with bodily perceptions, but rather with thy spiritual perceptions, disposing thy soul in the way that has been said, to receive, and taste, and see this Sacrament.”

## CHAPTER CXII.

Of the excellent state of the soul who receives the sacrament  
in grace.

“SEE, dearest daughter, in what an excellent state is the soul who receives, as she should, this Bread of Life, this Food of the Angels. By receiving this Sacrament she dwells in Me and I in her, as the fish in the sea, and the sea in the fish—thus do I dwell in the soul, and the soul in Me—the

Sea Pacific. In that soul grace dwells, for, since she has received this Bread of Life in a state of grace, My grace remains in her, after the accidents of bread have been consumed. I leave you the imprint of grace, as does a seal, which, when lifted from the hot wax upon which it has been impressed, leaves behind its imprint, so the virtue of this Sacrament remains in the soul, that is to say, the heat of My Divine charity, and the clemency of the Holy Spirit. There also remains to you the wisdom of My only-begotten Son, by which the eye of your intellect has been illuminated to see and to know the doctrine of My Truth, and, together with this wisdom, you participate in My strength and power, which strengthen the soul against her sensual self-love, against the Devil, and against the world. Thou seest then that the imprint remains, when the seal has been taken away, that is, when the material accidents of the bread, having been consumed, this True Sun has returned to Its Centre, not that it was ever really separated from It, but constantly united to Me. The Abyss of My loving desire for your salvation has given you, through my dispensation and Divine Providence, coming to the help of your needs, the sweet Truth as Food in this life, where you are pilgrims and travellers, so that you may have refreshment, and not forget the benefit of the Blood. See then how straitly you are constrained and obliged to render Me love, because I love you so much, and, being the Supreme and Eternal Goodness, deserve you love."

### CHAPTER CXIII.

How the things which have been said about the excellence of this Sacrament, have been said that we might know better the dignity of priests; and how God demands in them greater purity than in other creatures.

"I HAVE told thee all this, dearest daughter, that thou mayest the better recognise the dignity to which I have

called My ministers, so that thy grief at their miseries may be more intense. If they themselves considered their own dignity they would not be in the darkness of mortal sin, or defile the face of their soul. They would not only see their offences against Me, but also, that, if they gave their bodies to be burned, they would not repay the tremendous grace and favour which they have received, inasmuch as no greater dignity exists in this life. They are My anointed ones, and I call them My Christs, because I have given them the office of administering Me to you, and have placed them like fragrant flowers in the mystical body of the holy Church. The angel himself has no such dignity, for I have given it to those men whom I have chosen for My ministers, and whom I have appointed as earthly angels in this life. In all souls I demand purity and charity, that they should love Me and their neighbour, helping him by the ministration of prayer, as I said to thee in another place. But far more do I demand purity in My ministers, and love towards Me, and towards their fellow-creatures, administering to them the Body and Blood of My only-begotten Son, with the fire of charity, and a hunger for the salvation of souls, for the glory and honour of My Name. Even as these ministers require cleanness in the chalice in which this Sacrifice is made, even so do I require the purity and cleanness of their heart and soul and mind. And I wish their body to be preserved, as the instrument of the soul in perfect charity; and I do not wish them to feed upon and wallow in the mire of filth, or to be inflated by pride, seeking great prelacies, or to be cruel to themselves or to their fellow creatures, because they cannot use cruelty to themselves without being cruel to their fellow creatures; for, if by sin they are cruel to themselves, they are cruel to the souls of their neighbours, in that they do not give them an example of life, nor care to draw them out of the hands of the Devil, nor to administer to them the Body and Blood of My only-begotten Son, and Me the True Light, as I told thee, and the other Sacraments of the holy Church. So that, in being cruel to themselves, they are cruel to others."

## CHAPTER CXIV.

How the Sacraments should not be sold or bought, and how they who receive them should succour the ministers in temporal things, which the ministers should dispense in three divisions.

“I WISH My ministers to be liberal and not miserly, or, through cupidity and avarice, to sell the grace of the Holy Spirit. I do not desire this, and they ought not to do it; for even as they, by gift and out of the broadness of My love have received of My goodness, so ought they, by gift and in broadness of heart, through affection of love for My honour and the salvation of souls, to give charitably to every rational creature who humbly asks for it; and they should take nothing as its price, because they have not bought it, but have received it freely from Me to administer to you. But they can and should take alms, and you, who receive the Sacraments, ought on your side, when you can, to give alms; for the ministers should be supported by you in temporal things, and succoured by you in their necessity, and you should be supported and fed by them in grace and spiritual gifts—that is, in the holy Sacraments that I have placed in the holy Church for them to administer to you for your salvation. And I make known to you that, without any comparison, they give more to you than you to them, because comparison cannot be made between the transitory and finite things with which you help them, and Me—God, Who am Infinite, and Whom through My Divine providence and Divine charity they have the right of administering to you. And not only is it so in this mystery, but also in any other spiritual graces which are administered to you by any creature, whether through prayer or through some other means. All your temporal substance would never equal, by any comparison, what you receive spiritually. Now I tell you that the substance which they receive from you they are bound to distribute in three ways—that is, to make of it three parts—one for their living, the other for the poor, and the other should be spent on

the objects which are necessary for the services of the Church, and in no other way. Doing otherwise they offend Me."

## CHAPTER CXV.

Of the dignity of priests; and how the virtue of the Sacraments is not diminished by the faults either of the minister or of the recipient; And how God does not wish seculars to occupy themselves in correcting the clergy.

"THUS did the sweet and glorious ministers of whom I spoke to thee, when I wished thee to see their excellence, over and above the dignity which I had given them in making them My Christs, and who, exercising this dignity in virtue, are clothed in the Light of the Sweet and Glorious Sun, Whom I gave into their hands to administer.

"Look at sweet Gregory and Sylvester, and others, their predecessors or successors who have followed the footsteps of My Chief Pontiff, Peter, to whom I gave the keys of the heavenly kingdom of My Truth, saying: '*Peter, I give thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and what thou loosest on earth shall be loosed in Heaven, and what thou bindest on earth shall be bound in Heaven.*' Now that I have shown thee, dearest daughter, the excellence of their virtue, I will more fully prove to thee the dignity to which I have elected My ministers. They have the key of the Blood of My only-begotten Son, Which unlocks the door of eternal life, which for a long time has remained locked through the sin of Adam.

"For that reason I gave you My Truth; that is to say, My Word—My only-begotten Son, Who, enduring His passion and death, by His death destroyed yours, making you a bath of His Blood. His Blood and Death, in virtue of the union between the Divine and human natures, unlocked the door of eternal life. To whom did He leave the keys of this Blood? To the glorious Apostle Peter,

and to all his successors who are or shall be till the Day of Judgment, all of them having the same authority which Peter had, which is not diminished by any defect of their own, nor is any defect caused thereby to the Blood or to any of the Sacraments, for, as I have already told thee, this Sun does not become defiled by any impurity on which It shines, and does not lose Its light amid the darkness of mortal sin, whether it be in the minister or in the recipient, such sin merely diminishing grace and increasing sin in the unworthy minister or recipient. Thus the Christ on earth holds the keys of the Blood, as, if thou remember, I manifested to thee in this parable, showing thee what reverence seculars ought to have for My ministers, whether they be good or evil, and how much irreverence towards them displeases Me. Thou rememberest that I represented the mystical body of the holy Church to thee under the form of a cellar, in which cellar was the Blood of My only-begotten Son, Which gives efficacy to all the Sacraments. At the door of the cellar was the Christ on earth, who was charged with the administration of the Blood, and with the choice of co-administrators who should help him to administer It throughout the whole body of Christian people. He who was accepted and anointed by him, became the minister of the Blood, and no others. From him issues the whole order of clerks, each of whom is placed in his particular office to administer the glorious Blood; and, as the Christ on earth has chosen them for his helpers, the right of correcting their defects belong to him alone, and so I wish it to be. For I have withdrawn them from service and subjection to temporal masters, on account of the excellence and authority which I have given them. Civil law has got nothing to do with their punishment; that right is placed in him whose office it is to govern under the Divine law, for these are My anointed ones, and inasmuch as I have said in the Scripture: '*Do not touch My Christs,*' no greater ruin can come upon man than to constitute himself their punisher."



## CHAPTER CXVI.

How God considers persecutions directed against the holy Church or her ministers as directed against Himself; and how this sin is graver than any other.

“IF thou shouldst ask Me how it is that the sin of persecution of the holy Church is graver than any other, and why it is that the sins of clerks should not diminish the reverence paid to them, I should reply, ‘Because all reverence which is paid to them is not paid to them, but to Me, in virtue of the Blood Which I have given them to administer.’ For if it were not so, you would owe them no more reverence than to other men of the world; but, on account of their ministry, you are obliged to do them reverence, and come to them, not for their own sakes, but on account of the power which I have given them, if you wish to receive the Sacraments of the holy Church; for, should you neglect receiving them when you could you would die in a state of damnation. So the reverence paid to them is paid to Me and to the glorious Blood, It being one thing with Me, by the union of the Divine nature with the human. And, as the reverence so is the irreverence, as to which I have said to thee that reverence should not be paid to them for their own sakes, but on account of the authority which I have given them; wherefore, no man should offend them, because in offending them he offends Me and not them, for I have forbidden it, and have said that I do not wish My Christs to be touched by their hands. And on this account no one can excuse himself, saying: ‘I do not rebel against the holy Church, but only against the sins of evil pastors.’ Such a man, lifting his mind against his leader and blinded by self-love, does not see the truth, though indeed he really sees it well enough, but pretends not to, in order to deaden the sting of conscience. For he sees that, in truth, he is persecuting the Blood, and not Its servants. The insult is done to Me, just as the reverence was My due. Wherefore every damage, insult, rudeness, contempt, and blame done

to them is directed against Me ; that is to say, that I consider as done to Me whatever is done to them, for I have said and repeat that I do not wish My Christs to be touched by them, it being My business to punish them, and not theirs. Such wicked men only prove their irreverence towards the Blood, and that they do not hold dear the Treasure Which I have given them for the salvation and life of their souls. More I could not give them than the whole of God and the whole of Man for their Food, as I have said. But, inasmuch as they did not reverence Me and My servants, they have diminished their dignity, and persecuted them, seeing in them many sins and defects, as in another place I will narrate to thee. If they had, in truth, revered Me in them, they would not have risen against them for any personal defect, for no such defect can diminish the virtue of this Sacrament. Wherefore they should not diminish their reverence, and doing so they offend Me. This sin is graver than all others for many reasons, of which I will tell thee the three principal ones. One is that what they do to My servants they do to Me ; another is because in this way they disobey My Commandment, since I have forbidden My servants to be touched, so they despise the virtue of the Blood Which they received in holy baptism, disobediently doing that which I have forbidden them, and become rebels against the Blood, having lost their reverence for It, and rising against It with terrible persecutions. They are like putrid members cut off from the mystical body of the holy Church ; wherefore, if they remain obstinate in this rebellion and irreverence, dying in the same, they receive eternal damnation. It is true that, when they are at their last extremity, if they humble themselves and recognise their fault, and wish to reconcile themselves to their leader, even if they cannot actually do so, they receive mercy. They should not, however, put off the time of conversion, because they are not sure of having it. The third reason why their sin is graver than all others is because it is committed with deliberate malice, and because they know that they cannot act in such a way with a good conscience, and must offend Me if they do so. Wherefore, their offence is a perverse

pride without any corporal pleasure, though, on account of it, the body as well as the soul is consumed. The soul is consumed by the privation of grace, and gnawed by the worm of conscience; the temporal substance is consumed in the service of the Devil, and their bodies die like those of the animals. So that this sin is committed directly against Me, without any colour of their own pleasure or profit, but solely through malice and the smoke of pride, which pride is born of sensual self-love and of that perverse fear which Pilate had, when, for fear of losing his post, he slew Christ, My only-begotten Son. These men do the same. All other sins are committed through simplicity, or ignorance, or malice, in that the sinner knows the evil which he does, but on account of the disordinate delight, or some pleasure or profit which he finds in the sin, commits it, and, committing it, offends his own soul, and Me, and his neighbour. Me he offends, because he does not pay glory and praise to My Name; his neighbour, because he does not give him the light of love; but he does not personally attack Me, but offends himself, which offence displeases Me, on account of the loss which he incurs. But this sin is aimed directly at Me without any medium. Other sins are committed with some sort of colour or excuse, and by means of some one else; for, as I have told thee, both sins and virtues are exercised by means of the neighbour; and, since sin deprives the sinner of Me, and of his neighbour—for his neighbour is offended by the lack of love involved in the sin—they offend Me by these indirect means. But, in this case, they offend Me directly, for among all My rational creatures I have chosen these My ministers, who are My anointed ones, as I have said to thee, ministers of the Body and Blood of My only-begotten Son, who, standing at the altar in the person of Christ, My Son, consecrate your human flesh with My Divine nature.

“ Their offence is therefore done to the Word, and being done to Him is done to Me, for He and I are one and the same. These poor wretches persecute the Blood and deprive themselves of Its fruit. This is why grave sin is committed against Me, and not against My ministers, for I

do not attribute to them either the honour or the persecution which they receive for My sake, for they are both directed to Me, that is to say, to the glorious Blood of My Son, Who is one and the same with Me. Wherefore I say to thee, that, if all the other sins of these men were in one scale of the balance, and this one sin in the other, the scale containing their irreverence would outweigh the other, in the manner that has been said. I have manifested this to thee, so that thou mightest have greater matter of grief at the offence done to Me and the damnation of these poor wretches, so that, through your grief and sorrow, and that of My other servants, the darkness that has come on these putrid members, cut off from the mystical body of the holy Church, should be dissolved by My goodness. But I find hardly any who grieve over the persecution directed against this glorious and precious Blood ; though I find many who shoot at Me continually with the arrows of disordinate love and servile fear, and, blinded by their self-esteem, consider that to be an honour which is a disgrace ; and that to be a disgrace which is in truth, an honour ; that is to say, to humble themselves to their leader. On account of these sins they have risen against the Blood to persecute It."

## CHAPTER CXVII.

Here God speaks against those, who persecute the holy Church and His ministers, in various ways.

"I HAVE said that they persecute Me, and it is true that they do so, as far as they can, in intention. But I, personally, can receive no hurt or be in any way injured by them, for I am like a stone which, if it be thrown, does not itself receive the blow, but returns against him who threw it. In this way the blows of their offences, which exhale a stench towards Me, cannot really injure Me, but their arrow returns to them poisoned with their guilt, which deprives them, in this life, of grace, and loses for them the fruit of the Blood.

And at last, if they have not corrected themselves with holy confession and contrition of heart, they arrive at eternal damnation, being cut off from Me and being bound to the Devil, with whom they have leagued together. For, as soon as the soul is deprived of grace, she is bound to sin, with a bond of hatred against virtue and love of vice; with this bond they have placed themselves by their free will in the hands of the Devil, and are bound to him, for in no other way could they be bound. With the same bond are the persecutors of the Blood bound one to another, and bound to the Devil as his members, having taken on themselves the function of devils. The devils strive to pervert My creatures and draw them from grace, and lead them into the guilt of mortal sin, in order to infect My creatures with the same evil which they have in themselves. Such men as these do the same, neither more nor less; for, like members of the Devil, they go about subverting the sons of the spouse of Christ, My only-begotten Son, and loosening them from the bond of charity, binding them, when deprived of the fruit of the Blood, with the miserable bond with which they themselves are bound. This bond is fastened with the knot of pride, and self-esteem, and servile fear; for it is through fear of losing their temporal possessions that they lose their grace, and fall into the greatest confusion into which they can come, being deprived of the dignity of the Blood. This bond is sealed with the seal of darkness; for they do not know into what miseries they have fallen themselves, and make others to fall. Wherefore, in their ignorance, they do not correct themselves, but, like blind men, take glory in the destruction of their soul and body. Let it grieve thee inestimably, dearest daughter, to see such blindness and misery in those who have been washed in the Blood like thee, and nourished and brought up on the same Blood, at the breast of the holy Church, and, having become rebels through fear, and, under colour of correcting the defects of My ministers, whom I have forbidden them to touch, have left their mother's breast. Thou and My other servants should be in terror when you hear this miserable bond spoken of. No tongue can tell

how abominable it is to Me, and it is the worse, because they wish to cloak and hide their own defects with the mantle of the defects of My ministers, and they do not consider that no such mantle can repair their sins to My eyes, which see everything. They might, indeed, well enough hide them from the eyes of My creatures, but not from Me, from Whom nothing can be hidden ; for I loved you and knew you before you were in existence. And this is one of the reasons why the wretched men of the world do not correct themselves, because they do not really believe, with the light of a lively faith, that I see them. For if they really believed that I saw their sins, and that every sin would be punished, as every virtue rewarded, as I said to thee in another place, they would not do so much evil, but would correct themselves of that which they have done, and would humbly implore My mercy, and I would give it them through the Blood of My Son. But they are obstinate and reprobated by My goodness for their sins, and fallen into the final ruin of privation of light, and have become blind persecutors of the Blood, which persecution can find no excuse in any sin which may appear in the ministers of the Blood."

## CHAPTER CXVIII.

A brief repetition of the above things, concerning the holy Church and her ministers.

"I HAVE told thee something, dearest daughter, of the reverence which should be paid to My anointed ones, in spite of their defects ; such reverence being paid to them, not on their own account, but because of the authority which I have given them. And, inasmuch as the mystery of the Sacrament cannot be diminished or divided by their sins, the reverence due to the Treasure of the Blood, and not to them personally, should not be diminished thereby.

"As for those who do the contrary, I have shown thee,

to a small extent, how grave and displeasing to Me is their irreverence and persecution of the Blood, and I have shown thee the league which they have made against Me, bound to the service of the Devil, in order that thy grief might increase. This sin of which I have spoken to thee in detail is that of persecution of the holy Church, and of the Christian religion in general, by sinners who despise the Blood, depriving themselves of the light of grace. This sin is serious, and displeases Me, as I have narrated to thee in detail."

## CHAPTER CXIX.

Of the excellence, virtues, and holy works of virtuous and holy ministers ; and how such are like the sun.

"I WILL now speak to thee, in order to give a little refreshment to thy soul, and to mitigate thy grief at the darkness of these miserable subjects, of the holy life of some of My ministers, of whom I have spoken to thee, who are like the sun, for the odour of their virtues mitigates the stench of the vices of the others, and the light thereof shines in their darkness. And, by means of this light, wilt thou the better be able to understand the darkness and sins of My unworthy ministers. Open then the eye of thy intellect and gaze at the Sun of Justice, and thou wilt see those glorious ministers, who, through ministering the Sun, have become like to It, as I told thee of Peter, the prince of the Apostles, who received the keys of the kingdom of Heaven. I say the same of these others, who have administered, in the garden of the holy Church, the Light, that is to say, the Body and the Blood of My only-begotten Son, Who is Himself the undivided Sun, as has been said, and all the Sacraments of the holy Church, which all give life in virtue of the Blood. Each one, placed in a different rank, has administered, according to his state, the grace of the Holy Spirit. With what have they administered it? With the

light of grace, which they have drawn from this True Light. With light alone ? No ; because the light cannot be separated from the warmth and colour of grace, wherefore a man must either have the light, warmth, and colour of grace, or none at all. A man in mortal sin is deprived of the life of grace, and he who is in grace has illuminated the eye of his intellect to know Me, Who gave him both grace and the virtue which preserves it, and, in that light, he knows the misery and the reason of sin, that is to say, his own self-love, on which account he hates it, and thereby receives the warmth of Divine love into his affection, which follows his intellect, and he receives the colour of this glorious Light, following the doctrine of My sweet Truth, by which his memory is filled with the benefit of the Blood. Thou seest, therefore, that no one can receive the light without receiving the warmth and the colour, for they are united together and are one thing ; wherefore he cannot, as I have said to thee, have one power of his soul so ordered as to receive Me, the True Sun, unless all three powers of his soul are brought together and ordered in My Name. For, as soon as the eye of the intellect lifts itself with the pupil of faith above sensual vision in the contemplation of Me, affection follows it, loving that which the intellect sees and knows, and the memory is filled with that which the affection loves ; and, as soon as these powers are thus disposed, the soul participates in Me, the Sun Who illuminates her with My power, and with the wisdom of My only-begotten Son, and the fiery clemency of the Holy Spirit. See, then, that these have taken on them the condition of the Sun, for, having clothed themselves, and filled the power of their soul with Me, the true Sun, they become like Me. The Sun illuminates them and causes the earth of their souls to germinate with Its heat. Thus do My sweet ministers, elected and anointed and placed in the mystical body of the holy Church, in order to administer Me, the Sun, that is to say, the Body and Blood of My only-begotten Son, together with the other Sacraments, which draw their life from this Blood ; this they do in two ways, actually, in administering the Sacraments, and spiritually, by shedding forth in the



mystical body of the holy Church, the light of supernatural science, together with the colour of an honourable and holy life, following the doctrine of My Truth, which they administer in the ardent love with which they cause barren souls to bear fruit, illuminating them with the light of their science, and driving away the darkness of their mortal sin and infidelity, by the example of their holy and regular life, and reforming the lives of those who live in disorder and darkness of sin, and in coldness, through the privation of charity. So thou seest that they are the Sun, because they have taken the condition of the Sun from Me, the True Sun, because, through affection of love, they are one thing with Me, and I with them, as I narrated to thee in another place, and each one has given light in the holy Church, according to the position to which I have elected him: Peter with preaching and doctrine, and in the end with blood; Gregory with science, and holy scripture, and with the mirror of his life; Sylvester, against the infidels, and with disputation and proving of the most holy faith, which he made in word and in deed, receiving virtue from Me. If thou turnest to Augustine, and to the glorious Thomas and Jerome, and the others, thou wilt see how much light they have thrown over this spouse, extirpating error, like lamps placed upon the candelabra, with true and perfect humility. And, as if famished for such food, they feed upon My honour, and the salvation of souls, upon the table of the most holy Cross. The martyrs, indeed, with blood, which blood cast up sweet perfume before My countenance; and, with the perfume of blood, and of the virtues, and with the light of science, they brought forth fruit in this spouse and extended the faith, and, by their means, the light of the most holy faith was rekindled in the darkened. And prelates, placed in the position of the prelacy of Christ on earth, offered Me the sacrifice of justice with holy and upright lives. The pearl of justice, with true humility, and most ardent love, shone in them, and in their subjects, with the light of discretion. In them, principally because they justly paid Me My due, in rendering glory and praise to My Name, and, to their own sensuality, hatred and displeasure,

despising vice and embracing virtue, with love of Me and of their neighbour. With humility they trampled on pride, and, with purity of heart and of body, came, like angels, to the table of the altar, and, with sincerity of mind, celebrated, burning in the furnace of love. And, because they first had done justice to themselves, they therefore did justice to those under them, wishing to see them live virtuously, and correcting them without any servile fear, because they were not thinking of themselves, but solely of My honour and the salvation of souls, like good shepherds, followers of the Good Shepherd, My Truth, Whom I gave you to lead your sheep, having willed that He should give His life for you. These have followed His footsteps, and therefore did they correct them, and did not let their members become putrid for want of correcting, but they charitably corrected them with the unction of benignity, and with the sharpness of fire, cauterising the wound of sin with reproof and penance, little or much, according to the graveness of the fault. And, in order to correct it and to speak the truth, they did not even fear death. They were true gardeners who, with care and holy tears, took away the thorns of mortal sins, and planted plants odoriferous of virtue. Wherefore, those under them lived in holy, true fear, and grew up like sweet smelling flowers in the mystic body of the holy Church, (because they were not deprived of correction, and so were not guilty of sin), for My gardeners corrected them without any servile fear, being free from it, and without any sin, for they balanced exactly the scales of holy justice, reproof humbly and without human respect. And this justice was and is that pearl which shines in them, and which gave peace and light in the minds of the people and caused holy fear to be with them, and unity of hearts. And I would that thou know that, more darkness and division have come into the world amongst seculars and religious and the clergy and pastors of the holy Church, through the lack of the light of justice, and the advent of the darkness of injustice, than from any other causes.

“Neither the civil law, nor the divine law, can be kept in any degree without holy justice, because he who is not

corrected, and does not correct others, becomes like a limb which putrifies, and corrupts the whole body, because the bad physician, when it had already begun to corrupt, placed ointment immediately upon it, without having first burnt the wound. So, were the prelate, or any other lord having subjects, on seeing one putrifying from the corruption of mortal sin, to apply to him the ointment of soft words of encouragement alone, without reproof, he would never cure him, but the putrefaction would rather spread to the other members, who, with him, form one body under the same pastor. But if he were a physician, good and true to those souls, as were those glorious pastors of old, he would not give salving ointment without the fire of reproof. And, were the member still to remain obstinate in his evil doing, he would cut him off from the congregation in order that he corrupt not the other members with the putrefaction of mortal sin. But they act not so to-day, but, in cases of evil doing, they even pretend not to see. And knowest thou wherefore? The root of self-love is alive in them, wherefore they bear perverted and servile fear. Because they fear to lose their position or their temporal goods, or their prelacy, they do not correct, but act like blind ones, in that they see not the real way by which their position is to be kept. If would they only see that it is by holy justice they would be able to maintain it; but they do not, because they are deprived of light. But, thinking to preserve their position with injustice, they do not reprove the faults of those under them; and they are deluded by their own sensitive self-love, or by their desire for lordship and prelacy, and they correct not the faults they should correct in others, because the same or greater ones are their own. They feel themselves comprehended in the guilt, and they therefore lose all ardour and security, and, fettered by servile fear, they make believe not to see. And, moreover, if they do see they do not correct, but allow themselves to be bound over with flattering words and with many presents, and they themselves find the excuse for the guilty ones not to be punished. In such as these are fulfilled the words spoken by My Truth, saying: *'These are blind and leaders of the*

*blind, and if the blind lead the blind, they both fall into the ditch.*' My sweet ministers, of whom I spoke to thee, who have the properties and condition of the sun, did not, and do not (if there be any now) act so. And they are truly suns, as I have told thee, because in them is no darkness of sin, or of ignorance, because they follow the doctrine of My Truth. They are not tepid, because they burn in the furnace of My love, and because they are despisers of the grandeurs, positions, and delights of the world. They fear not to correct, for he who does not desire lordship or prelacy will not fear to lose it, and will reprove manfully, and he whose conscience does not reprove him of guilt, does not fear.

"And therefore this pearl of justice was not dimmed in My anointed ones, My Christs (of whom I have narrated to thee), but was resplendent in them, wherefore they embraced voluntary poverty, and sought out vileness with profound humility, and cared not for scorn or villainies, or the detractions of men, or insult, or opprobrium, or pain, or torment.

"They were cursed, and they blessed, and, with true patience, they bore themselves like terrestrial angels, not by nature, but by their ministry, and the supernatural grace given to them, of administering the Body and Blood of My only-begotten Son. And they are truly angels. Because, as the angel, which I give thee to be thy guardian, ministers to thee holy and good inspirations, so were these ministers angels, and were given by My goodness to be guardians, and therefore had they their eye continually over those under them, like real guardian angels, inspiring in their hearts holy and good thoughts, and offering up for them before Me, sweet and amorous desires with continual prayer, and the doctrine of words, and with example of life. So thou seest that they are angels, placed by My burning love, like lanterns in the mystic body of the holy Church, to be your guardians, so that ye blind ones may have guides to direct you into the way of truth, giving you good inspirations, with prayers and example of life, and doctrine as I said. With how much humility did they govern those

under them, and converse with them! With how much hope and lively faith, and therefore with liberality, did they distribute to the poor the substance of the holy church, not fearing, or caring if for them and their subjects temporal substance diminished. And they scarcely observed that which they were really bound to do, that is, to distribute the temporal substance to their own necessity being the poor in the church. They saved nothing, and after their death there remained no money at all, and there were some even who, for the sake of the poor, left the church in debt. This was because through the largeness of their charity, and of the hope that they had placed in My Providence, they were without servile fear that aught should diminish to them, either spiritual or temporal.

“The sign that a creature hopes in Me and not in himself, is that he does not fear with a servile fear. They who hope in themselves are the ones who fear, and are afraid of their own shadow, and doubt lest the sky and earth fade away before them. With such fears as these, and a perverted hope in their own small knowledge, they spend so much miserable solicitude in acquiring and preserving temporal things, that they turn their back on the spiritual, caring not for them. But they, miserable, faithless, proud ones consider not that I alone am He who provides all things necessary for the soul and the body, and that with the same measure that My creatures hope in Me, will My providence be measured to them. The miserable presumptuous ones do not regard the fact that I am He who is, and they are they who are not, and that they have received their being, and every other additional grace, from My Goodness. And therefore his labour may be reputed to be in vain, who watches the city if it be not guarded by Me. All his labour will be vain, if he thinks by his labour or solicitude to keep it, because I alone keep it. It is true that I desire you to use your being, and exercise the graces which I have bestowed upon you, in virtue using the free-will which I have given you, with the light of reason, because though I created you without your help I will not save you without it. I loved you before you were, and

those My beloved ones saw and knew this, and therefore they loved Me ineffably, and through their love hoped so greatly in Me that they feared nothing. Sylvester feared not when he stood before the Emperor Constantine disputing with those twelve Jews before the whole crowd, but with lively faith he believed that I being for him, no one could be against him ; and in the same way the others all lost their every fear, because they were not alone but were accompanied, because being in the enjoyment of love, they were in Me, and from Me they acquired the light of the wisdom of My only-begotten Son, and from Me they received the faculty to be strong and powerful against the princes and tyrants of the world, and from Me they had the fire of the Holy Spirit, sharing the clemency and burning love of that Spirit.

“ This love was and is the companion of whosoever desires it, with the light of faith, with hope, with fortitude, true patience and long perseverance even until death. So thou seest that because they were not alone but were accompanied they feared nothing. He only who feels himself to be alone, and hopes in himself, deprived of the affection of love, fears, and is afraid of every little thing, because he alone is without Me Who give supreme security to the soul who possesses Me through the affection of love. And of this did those glorious ones, My beloved, have full experience, for nothing could injure their souls ; but they on the contrary could injure men and the devils, who oftentimes remained bound by the virtue and power that I had given My servants over them. This was because I responded to the love, faith and hope they had placed in Me. Thy tongue would not be sufficient to relate their virtues, neither the eye of thy intellect to see the fruit which they receive in everlasting life, and that all will receive who follow in their footsteps. They are like precious stones, and as such do they stand in My presence, because I have received their labour and poverty and the light which they shed with the odour of virtues in the mystic body of the holy church. And in the life eternal I have placed them in the greatest dignity, and they receive blessing and glory in My sight,

because they gave the example of an honourable and holy life, and with light administered the Light of the Body and Blood of My only-begotten Son, and all the Sacraments. And these My anointed ones and ministers are peculiarly beloved by Me, on account of the dignity which I placed in them, and because this Treasure which I placed in their hands they did not hide through negligence and ignorance, but rather recognised it to be from Me, and exercised it with care and profound humility with true and real virtues ; and because I, for the salvation of souls, having placed them in so much excellency they never rested like good shepherds from putting the sheep into the fold of the holy church, and even out of love and hunger for souls they gave themselves to die, to get them out of the hands of the devil. They made themselves infirm with those who were infirm, so that they might not be overcome with despair, and to give them more courage in exposing their infirmity, they would oftentimes lend countenance to their infirmity and say, 'I too, am infirm with thee.' They wept with those who wept, and rejoiced with those who rejoiced ; and thus sweetly they knew to give every one his nourishment, preserving the good and rejoicing in their virtues, not being gnawed by envy, but expanded with the broadness of love for their neighbours, and those under them. They drew the imperfect ones out of imperfection, themselves becoming imperfect and infirm with them, as I told thee, with true and holy compassion, and correcting them and giving them penance for the sins they committed—they through love endured their penance together with them. For through love, they who gave the penance, bore more pain than they who received it ; and there were even those who actually performed the penance, and especially when they had seen that it had appeared particularly difficult to the penitent. Wherefore by that act the difficulty became changed into sweetness.

“Oh ! My beloved ones, they made themselves subjects, being prelates, they made themselves servants, being lords, they made themselves infirm, being whole, and without infirmity and the leprosy of mortal sin, being strong they

made themselves weak, with the foolish and simple they showed themselves simple, and with the small insignificant. And so with love they knew how to be all things to all men, and to give to each one his nourishment. What caused them to do thus? The hunger and desire for My honour and the salvation of souls which they had conceived in Me. They ran to feed on it at the table of the holy Cross, not fleeing from or refusing any labour, but with zeal for souls and for the good of the holy church and the spread of the faith, they put themselves in the midst of the thorns of tribulation, and exposed themselves to every peril with true patience, offering incense odoriferous with anxious desires, and humble and continual prayers. With tears and sweat they anointed the wounds of their neighbour, that is the wounds of the guilt of mortal sin, which latter were perfectly cured, the ointment so made, being received in humility."

## CHAPTER CXX.

A brief repetition of the preceding chapter; and of the reverence which should be paid to priests, whether they are good or bad.

"I HAVE shown thee, dearest daughter, a sample of the excellence of good priests (for what I have shown thee is only a sample of what that excellence really is), and I have told thee of the dignity in which I have placed them, having elected them for My ministers, on account of which dignity and authority I do not wish them to be punished by the hand of seculars on account of any personal defect, for those who punish them offend Me miserably. But I wish seculars to hold them in due reverence, not for their own sakes, as I have said, but for Mine, by reason of the authority which I have given them. Wherefore this reverence should never diminish in the case of priests whose virtue grows weak, any more than in the case of those virtuous ones of whose goodness I have spoken to thee; for all alike have been appointed ministers of the



Sun—that is of the Body and Blood of My Son, and of the other Sacraments.

“This dignity belongs to good and bad alike—all have the Sun to administer, as has been said, and perfect priests are themselves in a condition of light, that is to say, they illuminate and warm their neighbours through their love. And with this heat they cause virtues to spring up and bear fruit in the souls of their subjects. I have appointed them to be in very truth your guardian angels to protect you; to inspire your hearts with good thoughts by their holy prayers, and to teach you My doctrine reflected in the mirror of their life, and to serve you by administering to you the holy Sacraments, thus serving you, watching over you, and inspiring you with good and holy thoughts as does an angel.

“See then, that besides the dignity to which I have appointed them, how worthy they are of being loved, when they also possess the adornment of virtue, as did those of whom I spoke to thee, which all are bound and obliged to possess, and in what great reverence you should hold them, for they are My beloved children and shine each as a sun in the mystical body of the holy Church by their virtues, for every virtuous man is worthy of love, and these all the more by reason of the ministry which I have placed in their hands. You should love them therefore by reason of the virtue and dignity of the Sacrament, and by reason of that very virtue and dignity you should hate the defects of those who live miserably in sin, but not on that account appoint yourselves their judges, which I forbid, because they are My Christs, and you ought to love and reverence the authority which I have given them. You know well that if a filthy and badly dressed person brought you a great treasure from which you obtained life, you would not hate the bearer, however ragged and filthy he might be, through love of the treasure and of the lord who sent it to you. His state would indeed displease you, and you would be anxious through love of his master that he should be cleansed from his foulness and properly clothed. This, then, is your duty according to the demands of charity, and

thus I wish you to act with regard to such badly ordered priests, who, themselves filthy and clothed in garments ragged with vice through their separation from My love, bring you great Treasures—that is to say, the Sacraments of the holy church—from Which you obtain the life of grace, receiving Them worthily (in spite of the great defects there may be in them) through love of Me, the Eternal God, who send them to you, and through love of that life of grace which you receive from the great treasure, by which they administer to you the whole of God and the whole of Man, that is to say, the Body and Blood of My Son united to My Divine nature. Their sins indeed should displease you, and you should hate them, and strive with love and holy prayer to re-clothe them, washing away their foulness with your tears—that is to say, that you should offer them before Me with tears and great desire, that I may re-clothe them in My goodness, with the garment of charity. Know well that I wish to do them grace, if only they will dispose themselves to receive it, and you to pray for it ; for it is not according to My will that they should administer to you the Sun being themselves in darkness, nor that they should be stripped of the garment of virtue, foully living in dishonour ; on the contrary I have given them to you, and appointed them to be earthly angels and suns, as I have said. It not being My will that they should be in this state, ye should pray for them, and not judge them, leaving their judgment to Me. And I, moved by your prayers, will do them mercy if they will only receive it, but if they do not correct their life, their dignity will be the cause of their ruin. For if they do not accept the breadth of My mercy, I, the Supreme Judge, shall terribly condemn them at their last extremity, and they will be sent to the eternal fire.”

CHAPTER CXXI. 5298

Of the sins and evil life of wicked priests and ministers.

“ Now listen, dearest daughter, so that thou and My other servants may have more reason for offering to Me your humble and continual prayers for them. I will show thee their iniquitous life ; for in whatever direction thou mayest look among secular and religious priests, clerics, and prelates, small and great, young and old, and of every kind, thou wilt see nothing but offences against Me and the stench of mortal sin, which they all exhale ; which stench, indeed, hurts me not at all, but themselves grievously. Up to the present I have told thee of the excellence and virtue of My good ministers in order to refresh thy soul, and that thou mightest the better know the misery of these wretches, and see how grave is the reproof, and how intolerable the punishment of which they are worthy, even as My beloved and chosen priests, on account of having virtuously used the Treasure given to them, are worthy of a greater reward than other men, and of being placed as pearls in My sight. So contrariwise these wretches, who shall receive a terrible punishment.

“ Dost thou perceive, dearest daughter, with grief and bitterness of heart, in what they have placed their principle and foundation ?

“ They have placed it in their own self-love, whence has grown the tree of pride and the offshoot of indiscretion ; for indiscreetly do they seize honour and glory for themselves, seeking great prelacies and ornaments, and delicate treatment for their bodies. To Me they render abuse and offence, attributing to themselves that which is not their own and to Me that which is not Mine. For to Me should glory be given, and to My Name the praise, and to themselves should they render hatred of their own sensuality with true self-knowledge, deeming themselves unworthy of so great a mystery as they have received from Me. But these do the contrary, for, inflated with pride, they cannot

satiate themselves with gnawing the earth of riches and worldly delights, becoming mean, greedy, and avaricious towards the poor, from which miserable pride and avarice, born of their own self-love, they have abandoned the care of souls. They only apply themselves to take care of temporal things and abandon My lambs, whom I have placed in their hands, like sheep without a shepherd, and do not feed them temporally or spiritually.

“ Spiritually, indeed, they administer the Sacraments of the holy Church, which Sacraments cannot be taken away, or their virtue lost through their defect ; but they do not feed you with hearty prayers, with hunger and desire for your salvation, together with a holy and honourable life. Nor do they feed their subjects with temporal things, that is to say, the poor with the substance of the Church, of which I said to thee that three parts should be made : one for the priests’ necessities, another for the poor, and the third for the uses of the Church. These do the contrary, for not only do they not give to the poor the substance which they are obliged to give them, but they even rob their neighbour with simony and lust money, selling the grace of the Holy Spirit ; for often are to be found some of them so wicked as to refuse to give to him who is in need thereof the Mystery Which I have given them freely, and will only dispense It to those who fill their hands and persuade them with many gifts. They love their subjects for what they can get out of them, and nothing more. Their share of the Church they spend entirely on their own garments, loving to go delicately appavelled, not as clerks and religious, but as lords and courtiers. They take pains to have fine horses, and many vessels of gold and silver for the adornment of their dwellings, possessing that which cannot be ultimately retained, with much vanity of heart ; and with this disordinate vanity their heart swells, and they place all their desire in food, making of their belly their god, eating and drinking without restraint, so that they promptly fall into an impure and lascivious life.

“ Woe ! woe to their wretched life ! For they waste with harlots that which My only-begotten Son, the sweet

Word, acquired with such pain on the wood of the holy Cross ; they are devourers of souls bought with the Blood of Christ, devouring them in their great misery in many and diverse ways, and with the substance of the poor do they feed their children. Oh ! temples of the Devil, I have appointed you to be earthly angels in this life ; and you are devils, for you have taken the work of devils. These devils give in return darkness, for what they have received from their flocks, and administering to them cruel torments, drag their souls away from grace, with persecutions and temptations, in order to reduce them to the guilt of mortal sin, striving to do what they can to this end ; although no sin can occur unless the tempted soul herself wish it, yet they do what they can. So these wretches are not worthy of being called My ministers ; they are incarnate devils, for by their sin have they conformed themselves to the will of the Devil, and do his work, at the same time administering Me, the True Sun, in the darkness of mortal sin, casting the darkness of their disordinate and criminal life over their subjects and all other rational creatures. They cause confusion and pain in the minds of creatures, who see them living in disorder ; they are also the cause of confusion of conscience to those whom they often drag from the state of grace and the way of truth, and leading them to sin cause them to go by the way of lies. Not that he who thus follows them is on that account excused for his sin, for no one can be obliged to the guilt of mortal sin, either by invisible devils or by these visible ones ; wherefore, no one should look at their life or imitate what they do, but as My Truth admonished you in the holy Gospel you should rather do what they say—that is, you should follow the doctrine which is given you in the mystical body of the holy Church, by means of the preachers who go about as town-criers, proclaiming My Word in the Holy Scripture. And as for the woes which these wretches deserve, and their evil life, do not imitate the latter or seek to inflict the former, for in doing so you will offend Me ; but leave them their evil life, and take My doctrine, leaving their punishment to Me, for I am the sweet Eternal God Who reward

every virtue and punish every sin. They will not evade their punishment through the dignity of being My ministers, but on the contrary if they do not amend they will be more severely punished than all others, because they have received more than others. Their sin being so terrible they deserve the greater punishment. See therefore that they are in truth devils in the same way as My elect are earthly angels, inasmuch as they do angels' work."

## CHAPTER CXXII.

How injustice reigns in the above-mentioned wicked ministers ; and that particularly in that they do not correct their subjects.

"I HAVE told thee how in My beloved ones there shone the pearl of justice. Now I will tell thee how these miserable wretches wear injustice on their breast as a buckle, which injustice both proceeds from, and is clasped with their own self-love, through which they commit injustice against their own souls and against Me, in the darkness of their indiscretion.

"Me they deprive of glory, and themselves of honour and a holy life, having neither desire for the salvation of souls nor hunger for virtue. For this reason they act unjustly towards their subjects and their neighbour, and do not correct their vices ; rather they are blind and do not know them, and allow their subjects to sleep and lie quiet in their infirmities, from their disordinate fear of offending creatures. But they do not observe that in thus wishing to please creatures, they in reality displease them, and Me, your Creator, as well. Sometimes indeed they do correct their neighbour, in order to cloak themselves in some rag of justice. But they do not go to a great man who is living in great and open sin, for they are afraid if they do that he will interfere with their own state and life, but they turn on some insignificant person, for they see that he can do them no harm. Thus is injustice committed through

miserable self-love, which has poisoned the whole world, and the mystical body of the holy Church, and through which the garden of My Spouse has run to seed and given birth to putrid flowers, which garden was properly cultivated at the time when the true labourers were there, that is to say, My holy ministers, and was adorned with many fragrant flowers, for the subjects led virtuous, honourable and holy lives, through the examples of their good pastors. To-day it is not so, but rather the contrary, for through wicked pastors the subjects have also become wicked. My Spouse is full of the various thorns of many sins, not that she can in herself be infected through the stench of sin, for the virtue of the Sacraments can receive no harm, but those who feed at the breast of this Spouse are infected by the stench in their souls, losing the dignity in which I have placed them, though that dignity is not diminished in itself, but only with regard to them.

“Wherefore through their sins the Blood is held of no account, for seculars lose the due reverence which they ought to pay to them for the Blood’s sake; not that they ought to do so, and their fault, even if I forgive them, is none the less on account of the sins of their pastors, who are wretched mirrors of sin, in that office in which I have placed them in order to be mirrors of virtue.”

### CHAPTER CXXIII.

Of many other defects of the said ministers; and in particular of their frequenting taverns and gambling and harlotry.

“WHENCE comes the stench that so infects their souls? From their own sensuality, which sensuality and self-love have they enthroned as the mistress of their soul, who has become sensuality’s handmaid, whereas I had made her free with the Blood of My Son. I speak of the general manumission when the whole human race was freed from the servitude and lordship of the Devil. Every

rational creature received this grace but, over and above it, I set free My anointed ones from the servitude of the world, and appointed them to serve Me, the eternal God, alone, and to administer the Sacraments of the holy Church, and so free have I made them, that I do not wish any temporal lord to be their judge. Dost thou know, dearest daughter, how they repay Me for so great a benefit? They repay Me in this way by continually persecuting Me with such diverse and terrible sins that thy tongue could not narrate, and thou wouldest faint at hearing them. Certain things, however, I will tell thee of them besides that which I have already said, in order to give thee matter for weeping and compassion. They ought to remain at the table of the Cross with holy desire, feeding on the food of souls for My honour, and although every rational creature should do so, much more ought they whom I have chosen in order to administer to you the Body and Blood of Christ crucified, My only-begotten Son, and to give you the example by their labours, of a good and holy life, and to feed on the food of your souls, following My Truth with great and holy desire. But they have chosen for their table the public tavern, and there, openly cursing and per-juring themselves, full of many miserable sins, like men blinded and without the light of reason, have become animals through their sins, and live lasciviously in word and deed. They do not know if there be any Divine office, and if sometimes they say it, they do so with their tongue only, their heart being far from Me. They are also rogues and cheats, and having played for their soul, and lost it to the Devil, they stake the goods of the Church, and the temporal substance which they receive by virtue of the blood, cheating and gambling it away. Wherefore the poor do not receive their due, and the Church remains unfurnished and deprived of the necessary ornaments; for these men, having become temples of the Devil, take no further care of My Temple. But those ornaments which they ought to place in the church out of reverence of the Blood, they place in their own houses; and what is worse, they do this as bridegrooms adorning their spouses,



for these incarnate demons adorn with church property their she-devils, with whom they live shamelessly in iniquity and impurity, sending them about or keeping them with them, at their own pleasure; so much so that these wretched demons, even when they are celebrating at the altar, are not the least disturbed if their wretched she-devil should come up with the rest of the people to make her offering, leading their children by the hand. Oh! demons, and more than demons! if only your iniquities were more concealed from the eyes of your subjects, doing them in secret, you would indeed offend Me and hurt yourselves, but at least you would not do the harm you now do to your neighbour, laying bare your criminal life before his eyes, so that your example gives him no reason to leave his own sins, but rather causes him to fall into similar and greater ones than you fall into yourselves. Is this the purity that I require from My minister, when he comes to celebrate at My altar? What purity is this that he brings, who rises in the morning with his mind defiled, and his body corrupted with impure mortal sin, and proceeds to celebrate? Oh! tabernacle of the Devil, where are thy matins sung devoutly in solemn choir? Where is thy continual and holy prayer? Where are thy night watches, during which thou disposest thyself for the holy ministry which thou hast to perform in the morning, meditating on thy self-knowledge, and deeming thyself unworthy of so great a mystery, and on thy knowledge of Me, who have made thee worthy, not through thy own merits, but have chosen thee to be My minister, through My goodness, so that thou mayest administer Me to My other creatures?"

#### CHAPTER CXXIV.

How among the said ministers reigns unnatural sin; and of a beautiful vision which this soul had on the subject.

"I WISH thee to know, dearest daughter, that I require in this Sacrament from you and from them as great purity as

it is possible for man to have in this life. On your side you ought to endeavour to acquire it continually. You should think that were it possible that the angelic nature should be purified, such purification would be necessary with regard to this mystery, but this is not possible, for angels need no purification, since the poison of sin cannot infect them. I say this to thee in order that thou mayest see how great a purity I require from you and from them in this Sacrament, and particularly from them. But they act in a contrary way, for they come full of impurity to this mystery, and not only of that impurity to which, through the fragility of your weak nature, you are all naturally inclined (although reason when free-will permits, can quiet the rebellion of nature), but these wretches not only do not bridle this fragility, but do worse, committing that accursed sin against nature, and as blind and fools with the light of their intellect darkened, they do not know the stench and misery in which they are. It is not only that this sin stinks before Me, Who am the Supreme and Eternal Truth, it does indeed displease Me so much and I hold it in such abomination that for it alone I buried five cities by a Divine judgment, My Divine justice being no longer able to endure it. This sin not only displeases Me as I have said, but also the devils whom these wretches have made their masters. Not that the evil displeases them because they like anything good, but because their nature was originally angelic, and their angelic nature causes them to loathe the sight of the actual commission of this enormous sin. They truly enough hurl the arrow poisoned with the venom of concupiscence, but when their victim proceeds to the actual commission of the sin, they depart for the reason and in the manner that I have said. Thou rememberest that I manifested to thee before the plague how displeasing this sin was to Me, and how deeply the world was corrupted by it; so I lifted thee with holy desire and elevation of mind above thyself, and showed thee the whole world and, as it were, the nations thereof, and thou sawest this terrible sin and the devils fleeing as I have told thee, and thou rememberest that so great was the pain that thou didst receive, and the stench

of this sin, that thou didst seem to thyself to see no refuge on this side of death, in which thou and My other servants could hide so as not to be attacked by this leprosy. Thou didst see that thou couldst not remain among men, for neither small nor great, nor old nor young, nor clerics nor religious, nor prelates, nor lords, nor subjects, were uncontaminated in body or mind by this curse.

“I showed thee this in general but not of individuals. If indeed there may be any of My servants preserved among the wicked from its infection on account of their virtue, I retain My just wrath and do not command the rocks to roll down on them, nor the earth to swallow them up, nor the animals to devour them, nor the devils to carry them off body and soul; on the contrary, I seek for ways and methods for doing them mercy, in order that they may correct their life. Wherefore I place in their midst My servants who are healthy and not leprous, so that they may pray to Me for them. Sometimes I show them these miserable sins so that they may be more careful in seeking for the salvation of sinners, offering them to Me with greater compassion and sorrow for their defects and the offence done to Me, interceding with Me for them, as I did to thee in the way which thou knowest; and if thou rememberest well when I caused thee to feel a whiff of this stench, thou didst almost faint, and didst say to Me, ‘Oh! Eternal Father! have mercy on me, and on Thy creatures; either separate my soul from my body (for it does not seem to me that I can survive) or refresh me by showing me where I and Thy other servants can repose, so that this leprosy may not destroy or injure the purity of our souls and bodies.’

“I replied to thee, turning towards thee with the eye of My kindness, and I repeat now—‘Let your repose, My daughter, be to render glory and praise to My Name, and to offer before Me the incense of continual prayer for these poor wretches who are in so miserable a state, having become worthy of the Divine vengeance for their sins. Let your place of refuge be Christ crucified, My only-begotten Son; dwell and hide yourselves in the cavern of His Side,

where you will taste through love for his humanity My Divine nature. In that open Heart you will find love for Me and for your neighbour, for it was for the honour of Me, the Eternal Father, and to fulfil the obedience which I have laid on you for your salvation, that He ran to the shameful death of the Holy Cross. Seeing and tasting this love you will follow His doctrine, feeding at the table of the Holy Cross—that is, enduring through love and true patience your neighbour, and all labours, torments and pains from whatever quarter they come, and in this way you will flee and escape the leprosy. This was the method which I gave thee and others, but in spite of all this the feeling of the stench did not leave thy soul, nor the darkness the eye of thy intellect. But My Providence provided for this, for at the moment when thou didst receive in communion the Body and Blood of My Son, wholly God and wholly man, the stench left thee on account of the fragrance, and the darkness left thee on account of the light which thou didst receive in this Sacrament, and by an admirable effect of My goodness the odour and taste of the Blood remained for several days in thy mouth and palate, as thou knowest.

“ See, therefore, dearest daughter, how abominable this sin is to Me in every creature. Think, then, how much more so it is among those whom I have drawn out of the world and who live in a state of continence, among whom some have left the world to enter religion, and others are planted like flowers in the mystical body of the holy Church among whom are My ministers. Thou couldest never understand how much more this sin displeases Me in them than in men of the world and private persons practising continence, of whom I have spoken to you. For these as lights placed on the candlestick are the administrators of Me, the True Sun in the light of virtue and of their holy and honourable life, and yet they minister in darkness and are so darkened that they do not understand My Holy Scripture, which itself is illuminated because written by My elect with the supernatural help of Me, the True Light, as I explained to thee in another place. I say

to thee that on account of their inflated pride and lasciviousness they see and understand nothing but the shell of the letter, and that they receive without any profit, because the taste of their soul is not rightly ordered, but rather corrupted with self-love and pride, and their reins are full of impurity; for they desire to fulfil their disordinate delights, committing their sins publicly and without shame; and in addition to all this, so full are they of greed and avarice that they also commit usury which I have forbidden. Miserable indeed will those be who commit it."

## CHAPTER CXXV.

How, through the above-mentioned defects, subjects do not receive correction; and of the defects of religious; and how, from these evils not being corrected, many others follow.

"How can these men full of such terrible sins do justice to, or reprove the sins of their subjects? They cannot, because their sins take from them the ardent zeal of holy justice. And if on some occasion they should do so, their subjects, who are their companions in sin, can reply, 'Physician, first heal thyself, and then heal me, then I will take the medicine which thou givest me. This man is in a worse state than I am, and yet he blames me.' He does badly who reproveth only with words and not with a good and well-ordered life. Not that he should not, whether he be good or evil in himself, reprove what is wrong in his subject, but he does wrong in not also correcting him with a holy and honourable example. And much worse does he who does not receive the reproof humbly, however it be given him, whether by a good or an evil pastor; he injures himself and no one else, for he alone will be punished for his own sins. All these evils, dearest daughter, arrive because my pastors do not correct their flocks with a good and holy example. Why do they not? Because they are blinded by self-love, in which are founded all their iniquities,

and subjects, pastors, clerics and religious alike, think of nothing else, than how they may accomplish their disordinate delights and pleasures. Alas! sweet daughter, where is the obedience of religious who have been placed in holy religion like angels, and are become worse than devils? I have placed them there to announce My word in doctrine and in truth, and they cry out with the sound of words alone, and so produce no fruit in the hearts of their hearers. Their preaching is made rather for the pleasure of men, and to tickle their ears, than to My honour. Wherefore, they do not make it their study to preach goodness of life, but rather to discourse with polished wit. Such as these do not truly sow My seed, because they take no pains to root out vices and plant virtues. For not having uprooted the thorns out of their own garden, they take no pains to do so out of their neighbour's. All their delight is in adorning their bodies and their cells, and in hurrying to and fro about the city. And the same thing happens to them as to a fish which dies when taken out of water. So die these religious who leave their cell of which they should make a heaven, and wander with their useless and dishonourable life through the wards of the city, seeking out the houses of their relations, and of other seculars, according to the pleasure of their wretched subjects and wicked superiors who hold them in so loose a leash. And since these miserable pastors do not mind seeing their religious subject in the hands of she-devils, they often themselves give him up to them. And sometimes when they know that they are incarnate devils they will send them to the monasteries to those who are incarnate she-devils, and thus one ruins the other with many subtle devices and frauds. And the principle of their life the Devil conceals under the cover of devotion, but the fruits of their devotions appear very soon. First are seen stinking flowers of dishonourable thoughts, and the leaves of corrupt words, and then they fulfil their miserable desires, and thou knowest well what fruits follow, namely, children. And often they carry it so far that both one and the other leave their religion, and become public rogues and harlots.

“All these and many other evils are caused by worthless superiors, who have not kept their eye on their subjects, but have rather let them go loose, and themselves pushed them into sin, and have made as if they did not see their miseries, or that their subject was wearied with his cell; and so through their double fault the subject dies. Thy tongue could not narrate with what terrible sins and in what miserable ways they offend Me. They have become the arms of the Devil, and with their stench they poison everything within, that is, in their monastery, and without among seculars. They are deprived of fraternal charity, and each one wishes to be the greater. Each one desires to possess something, acting contrary to obedience and the vow which they have taken. They have promised to observe the rule of their order, and they break it, and not only do they not observe the rule themselves but they fall like hungry wolves upon the lambs, who wish to observe it, mocking them and jeering at them. These wretches think to cover their own sins with the persecutions, mockery and insult that they deal out to good religious who observe the rule, but in doing so they expose themselves much more.

“To such a state have come the gardens of holy religious orders; for holy they are in themselves, having been founded by the Holy Spirit, and indeed the order in itself cannot be spoilt or corrupted through the sins of subject or superior. Wherefore he who wishes to enter a religious order should not be astonished at its evil members, but should continue on his way reposing in the arms of the order, which is not, and cannot become weak in itself, observing his rule to the day of his death. I have said to thee that the gardens of the holy religious orders have come to such a state, through evil directors and wicked subjects, that they do not keep or observe their rule in purity but break it, neither observing their customs or their ceremonies, which they rather ordain and observe for the pleasure of seculars wishing to please them in order to cloak their own sins.

“See therefore that they do not fulfil their first vow of obedience to observe their rule, of which obedience I will speak to thee in another place. They also take the vow of

voluntary poverty and of continence. How do they observe these? Marvel at the private possessions and sums of money which each one keeps in private, far from the universal love with which he should share his temporal and spiritual substance with his brethren, according to the commands of charity, and of the rule of his order. But these men wish only to fatten themselves and their cattle (one beast feeding the other) while their poor brother dies of cold and hunger, so that their garments may be comfortably lined, and they may have good food. Do not think to find such a one at the poor table of the refectory; his delight is to be where he can fill himself with meat, and satisfy his greediness. He of course finds it impossible to observe the third vow of continence, for a full belly makes an unchaste mind; being heated and disordered he becomes lascivious, and so goes from bad to worse. Much harm also comes from the evil of their possessions, for if they had nothing to spend, they could not live in such disorder, and would not have these dangerous friendships, for not having the wherewithal to make presents, they would not retain these friendships, which are based on the love of gifts or some delight or pleasure which the one person receives from the other, and not on perfect charity. Oh! wretched ones, who have come to such misery through their sins, having been placed by Me in such high dignity, they flee from the choir as if it were poison, and if they are there sing with their voice alone, their heart being far from Me. As to the table of the altar, they have made it their habit to approach it without any proper dispositions, as if it were a table for corporal food. All these evils and many others of which I will not speak further to thee, so that thy ears may not itch, follow from the sinfulness of wicked pastors who do not correct or punish the sins of their subjects, and are not careful or zealous that the rule of their order should be observed, because they themselves do not observe it. They will even stone, for their great obedience, those who wish to observe the rule, punishing them for the faults which they have not committed. And all this they do, because the pearl of



justice does not shine in them, but rather injustice. Wherefore they unjustly give to him who deserves grace and kindness, penance and hatred, and to those who are members of the Devil like themselves they give love, pleasure, and position, placing in their hands the dignities of the order. Like blind men they live, and like blind men they distribute dignities, and govern their subjects. And if they do not correct themselves of this blindness, they eventually arrive at the darkness of eternal damnation, and have to give account to Me, the supreme Judge of the souls of their subjects. A bad account is all that they can render, and therefore they receive justly from Me that which they have deserved."

## CHAPTER CXXVI.

How among these wicked ministers reigns the sin of lustfulness.

"I HAVE given thee, dearest daughter, a slight idea of the life of those who live in holy religion, I have shown thee how miserably they live in their order, clothed like sheep, but being in reality rapacious wolves. I now return to the clerics and ministers of the holy Church, to lament with thee over their sins, over and above what I have narrated to thee, founded on three columns of vice, Impurity, inflated Pride, and Cupidity, through which cupidity they sell the grace of the Holy Spirit. As I have already told thee, concerning these three vices, one depends on the other, and the foundation of these three columns is self-love. As long as these three columns stand erect and do not fall to the earth, by force of the love of virtue they are sufficient to keep the mind firm and obstinate in every other vice, for as I have told thee, all the vices grow out of self-love, because from self-love is born the principal vice of pride, and a proud man is deprived of charity. And from pride he goes on to impurity and avarice, and so enchains himself with the Devil's fetters. Now observe, dearest daughter, with what pride and filthiness they defile their minds and bodies of

which I have already told thee somewhat. But there is another thing that I would tell thee, in order that thou mayest know better the fountain of My mercy, and have greater compassion on these wretches when thou meetest them. Some of them are such devils that they not only do not reverence the sacrament, or hold dear the excellent state in which I have placed them by My goodness, but as if out of their minds with guilty love for some creature, being unable to obtain what they desire, will use devilish incantations, and will make enchantments with the very sacrament that is given you for the food of life, in order to fulfil their wretched and dishonourable thoughts, and make their will take effect. And those lambs whose souls and bodies they should feed so carefully they torment in such ways as these and many others, which I will pass over in order not to give thee more pain ; for as thou knowest they cause them to lose their senses, their will being forced to do that which they do not wish, through the spell which this incarnate devil has cast over them ; sometimes also their bodies suffer very gravely through the resistance which they make to themselves. What is the cause of this, and many other miserable evils, of which as they knowest them I need not tell thee ? Their dishonourable and wretched life. It is the flesh, dearest daughter, that flesh which is exalted above all the choirs of the angels in My divine Nature united to your humanity, which these men give up to such misery. Oh, abominable and wretched men, no man, but a brute beast, that thou givest thy flesh, anointed and consecrated to Me, to harlots and worse. From thy flesh as from that of the whole human race was taken away the wound which Adam had made by his sin, on the wood of the most holy Cross, by the wounded body of My only begotten Son ! Oh, wretched man, He has done thee honour, and thou putttest Him to shame. He has healed thy wounds with His blood, and has further made thee His minister, and thou persecutest Him with lascivious and dishonourable sins. The Good Shepherd has washed His lambs in His blood, and thou defilest those who are pure, and doest all thou canst to cast them on to the dung-

hill. It is thy duty to be a mirror of honour, and thou art a mirror of shame. Thou hast directed all the members of thy body to work wickedness, and doest the contrary of that which My truth did for thee. I endured that His eyes should be veiled, for thy better illumination, and with thy lascivious eyes thou aimest poisoned arrows at thy own soul, and the heart of those on whom thou gazest with such miserable passion.

“I endured that My Son should drink gall and vinegar, and thou, like a disordered animal, delightest thyself in delicate viands, making of thy belly thy god ; the foolish language of dishonour dwells on thy tongue, with which thou art bound to counsel thy neighbour, to announce My word, and heartily recite the divine office. Yet I perceive nothing but the stench of thy profanity, of thy constant blasphemy, for thou swearest and perjurest thyself like an auctioneer. I endured that My Son’s hands should be bound, in order to set thee and the whole race of man free from the bonds of sin, and thy hands which have been anointed and consecrated, and administer the most holy sacrament, are hideously occupied in loathsome touches.

“All thy actions, of which thy hands are a true type, are directed to the service of the Devil. Oh, wretched man, and I have placed thee in such dignity to serve Me only and every rational creature ! I was willing that My Son’s feet, should be fastened to the cross, so as to make for thee a staircase of His body, and that His side should be opened that thou mightest see the secret of His heart, which I gave you as a hostelry always open that you might see and taste the ineffable love which I had for you, finding My divine nature there united to your humanity. See then that the blood of which thou art the minister has become a bath to cleanse your iniquities, and thou of thy heart hast made a devils’ temple, and thy love, signified by thy feet, offers to Me nothing but the stench of thy wickedness and thy insults, for the feet of thy affection conduct thy soul nowhere but into devils’ houses. Thus with the whole of thy body thou persecutest the body of My Son, doing the contrary of what He did, and of what thou and all My creatures are

bound to do. The instruments of thy body give out a false harmony, for the three powers of thy soul are assembled in the name of the Devil, while it is thy duty to assemble them in My name. Thy memory, which should be full of the benefits which thou hast received from Me, is filled with dishonour and many other evils. The eye of thy intellect, which thou shouldst fix with the light of faith on the object of Christ crucified, My only begotten Son, whose minister thou art, is rather fixed on the vain and miserable delights, dignities, and riches of the world. Thy affection, which should love Me alone without any medium, thou hast miserably placed in the love of creatures, and of thy own body, and even thy very cattle thou lovest more than Me. What proves this to Me? Thy impatience towards Me, when I take from thee something thou lovest much, and thy displeasure toward thy neighbour, for when thou thinkest to have received some temporal loss from him, hating him and cursing him, thou leavest My love and his. Oh, unhappy man that thou art! Thou art the minister of the fire of My divine love, and for the sake of thy disordinate delights, and the trifling loss which may be caused thee by thy neighbour, thou lovest it. This, dearest daughter, is one of those three miserable columns of which I spoke to thee."

## CHAPTER CXXVII.

How avarice reigns among the said ministers, who not only lend money with usury, but also sell and buy benefices and prelacies; and of the evils which have been brought about in Holy Church by this cupidity.

"Now I will speak to thee of the second column, that is Avarice, through which what My Son gave, with such boundless generosity, is kept in narrow limits through greed. For thou seest His body all open on the wood of the Cross, pouring forth blood from every part, and that He has not redeemed you with gold or silver, but with His

Blood, through the greatness of His love. Not a part only of the world, but the whole human race, past, present, and to come, was contained in the satisfaction of that sacrifice. And to none of you would the Blood be administered, or the fire of divine love given, had He not first administered and given them. Which He did by virtue of My divine Nature perfectly united to your humanity, and of this Blood so united to Me by the greatness of My love, I have made thee, oh wretched man, a minister. And so great are thy avarice and cupidity that that which My Son acquired on the Cross, namely, the souls redeemed with such love, and that which My Son has given thee, in making thee a minister of the Blood, thou, wretched man that thou art, hast confined in such narrow limits, that in thy avarice thou puttest up the grace of the Holy Spirit to be sold, obliging thy subjects, when they beg it of thee, to buy from thee what thou hast received as a free gift. Thou hast not directed thy appetite to eat souls for My honour, but to devour money, and so closely hast thou fastened up that which thou hast received with such generosity that neither I nor thy neighbour receive anything from thee by free grace or love. The temporal substance which thou receivest for the sake of this Blood, thou acceptest with great generosity, but, wretched miser that thou art, thou art kind only to thyself, and like a thief and a robber worthy of eternal death, thou dost embezzle the property of the poor, and of holy Church, and dost spend it in luxurious delights with shameless men and women, and on thy relations and the education of thy children. Oh! wretches, where are your real children, the sweet and royal virtues which you ought to have? Where is the fiery charity with which you should minister? Where is the yearning desire for My honour, and the salvation of souls? Where is the heart-breaking sorrow with which you should see the infernal wolf carrying off your lambs? You have none of these things, for in your narrow hearts there is no love for Me, or for them. You only love yourselves with sensual self-love, with which you poison yourselves and others. You yourselves are the devils from hell, who swallow up souls with disordinate love; nothing

else gives zest to your appetites. Wherefore it is no cause of trouble to you, that the invisible devil should carry them off, you yourselves being visible devils, and the means by which they are sent to hell. You clothe and fatten yourselves, and the other devils with you, with the property of the church, and also your fine horses which you keep for your disordinate delight, and not for any real necessity, for which indeed you might justly keep them. These are the proper delights of men of the world, but your joys should consist in visiting the poor and sick, helping them in their spiritual and temporal needs ; for this and nothing else have I made you My ministers and placed you in such dignity. But having become brute beasts yourselves, you place your delight in other animals. If you could but see the torments which are prepared for you, if you do not amend, you would not do so ; you would rather repent of what you have done in the past, and would reform your present conduct. See then, dearest daughter, what right I have to lament over these wretches, and how generously I have behaved to them, and how meanly they treat Me. Is there anything more ? Yes ! As I have said to thee, there are some who lend money with usury ; not that they put out an awning like public usurers, but in many subtle ways will they sell time to their neighbour in their cupidity, which thing is in no way lawful. If he should receive some small present in payment over and above the value of the service which he has rendered, in lending money to his neighbour (it being received as part of the value), this also is usury, and so would be everything else that he should receive in payment for waiting, as has been said. And I have appointed this wretched man to forbid seculars to do so, but he himself does the same and more also. How then should any one go to him for counsel on this matter ? when he is himself in like fault, and has lost the light of reason, on which account the counsel which he gives is darkened by the passion dwelling in his soul. These and many other sins are born in his narrow greedy heart ; and the words said by My truth when he entered the temple may be repeated here. He found men selling and buying, and, driving

them out with a lash of cords, said : *'Of my Father's House, which is a House of Prayer, ye have made a den of thieves.'* Thou seest well, sweetest daughter, that they who act thus do indeed turn My church, which is a place of prayer, into a den of robbers. They buy and sell and make merchandise of the grace of the Holy Spirit. For thou seest that those who desire prelacies and benefices in the holy Church, buy them with many presents, offering whatever commodities or moneys they happen to possess. And the wretched sellers do not consider whether the buyer is good or evil, but, out of complaisance and love of the gift which they have received, strive to place this putrid plant in the garden of the holy Church ; and to this end these wretches will give a good account of him to the Christ on earth, so that both of them use falseness and cheating towards the Christ on earth on a point on which they should approach him with the whole simple truth. But if the vicar of My Son should perceive their sins, he ought to punish them, and from the one take away his dignity if he do not amend his evil life ; and as for the other who buys, it would be well that he should be sent to prison, as his part of the bargain, so that he may be corrected for his sin, and that others may take warning and be afraid, so that no one else may imitate him. If the Christ on earth do this, he does his duty, and if he does not, his sin will not be unpunished when he has to give an account before Me of his flock. Believe Me, My daughter, to-day this is not done, and it is on this account that My Church has fallen into such sins and abominations. They do not seek to know, or try to investigate, the good or evil life of those to whom they give prelacies, and if they do seek at all to find out, they ask questions of those who are as bad as themselves, who give nothing but good testimony, because they themselves have similar defects, and think of nothing else except dignity of position, and gentility and riches and polished conversation. Worse than all, it will sometimes be alleged as a motive to the Consistory that the person in question is beautiful. What devilish doings ! They should seek the ornament and beauty of virtue, and they rather look at the beauty of the body. They should

seek poor and humble persons who avoid prelacies in their humility, and they choose those who seek them in vanity and inflated pride. They admire knowledge. Knowledge in itself is good and perfect when a learned person is also good, honourable, and humble in life. But if knowledge be joined with a proud, dishonourable, and wicked life it is a poison, and the Holy Scripture does not mean otherwise in its spiritual sense. To one in darkness it seems to me so, because he has lost the light of reason and has obscured the eye of his intellect, with which supernatural light the Holy Scripture was originally written, and should be understood, as I said to thee, more clearly in another place. See then that science, good in itself, is not so in him who does not use it aright; it rather lights for him a penal fire if he will not amend his life. They should therefore rather seek out men of good and holy life than learned men who live evilly, but they do the contrary. Those who, besides being good and virtuous, are great in learning, they despise as fools, and the poor they avoid, because they have nothing wherewith to pay them. See, therefore, that in My house, which ought to be a house of prayer, and where the pearl of justice ought to shine, together with the light of learning, honour, and holiness, and the odour of truth, lies abound.

“These men should practise voluntary poverty, and watch over souls with true solicitude, snatching them from the hands of devils; but they, on the contrary, seek for riches and take such care of temporal things that they have altogether abandoned spiritual things, and pay no attention to anything but gambling and laughter and the increase of their temporal substance. The wretched fools do not perceive that this is the way to lose it, whereas if they abounded in virtue, and applied themselves to the care of spiritual matters as they ought to do, they would abound in temporalities. And My spouse has had many rebellions to suffer on account of temporalities, which she ought not to have had. My servants should leave the dead to bury the dead, and follow the doctrine of My Truth, and carry out in themselves My will; that is to say, they should



perform the duty I have given them, whereas these men do the contrary, for they bury these dead and transitory things with disordinate affection and solicitude, taking from men of the world their proper occupation. This is displeasing to Me and hurtful to holy Church ; to worldly men, therefore, they should leave these things, and let one corpse bury the other—that is to say, let those whose duty it is take charge of temporal things.

“ Why did I say, let the dead bury the dead ? The word dead should here be understood in two ways : in one way, when he who administers temporal things does so in the guilt of mortal sin, by the disordinate affection and care which he has for them. The administration of temporal affairs may also be called dead, because it belongs to the body, which is a dead thing, having no life in itself except in so far as it participates in the life of the soul while the latter is with the body, and no more. My anointed ones, therefore, who ought to live like angels, should leave these dead things to the dead, and should themselves govern souls who are living, and never die as regards their essence, administering to them the sacraments and gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, and feeding them with the spiritual food of a good and holy example. In this way My house would be indeed a house of prayer, abounding in their graces and virtues. But since they do not act thus, but the contrary, I can truly say that My house has become a den of thieves, for they have become merchants with their avaricious bargaining ; and My church has also become a cattle shed, for they live in their dishonour like brute beasts. They have made My church into a stable, and lie there in the filth of their impurity, for they keep their she-devils in the church as a bridegroom his spouse in his own house. See, then, how much evil (and there is much more beyond comparison with what I have told thee) grows from these two fœtid and stinking columns—impurity and cupidity.”

## CHAPTER CXXVIII.

How pride reigns among these ministers, by which they lose their knowledge; and how, having lost their knowledge, they fall into the sin of seeming to consecrate, while they do not really do so.

“I WILL now speak to thee of the third column—that of pride—which I have placed last, for it is both last and first, for all the vices are flavoured with pride, as the virtues all receive life from charity. Pride is born and nourished from sensual self-love, of which I said to thee, that it was the foundation of these three columns, and of all the evils which are committed by creatures, for he who loves himself with disordinate love, is deprived of My love. and not loving Me he offends Me, because he does not observe the commandment of the law, which is to love Me above everything, and one’s neighbour as one’s self. This is the reason why those who love themselves with a sensual love neither serve nor love Me, but the world; for neither sensual love nor the world have conformity with Me. There being no conformity between Me and the world, it must needs be that he who loves and serves the world with sensual love, should hate Me; while he who loves Me truly hates the world. For this reason My Truth said: *‘No one can serve two masters, for if he serve the one, he will not content the other.’* See then how self-love deprives the soul of My love, and clothes it with the vice of pride, whence through the principle of self-love is borne every kind of sin. I grieve over this in all My rational creatures, but particularly in My anointed ones, who ought to be humble, not only because every one should possess the virtue of humility, which nourishes charity, but also because they have become the ministers of the humble and immaculate Lamb, My only-begotten Son. Are they not ashamed, and for that matter should not the whole human race be ashamed, when they see Me, God, humbled to man, giving you the Word, My Son, in your own flesh? They see My Word eagerly humbling Himself to the shameful

death of the cross, in obedience to My commands. His head is bent to salute you, His crown is for your adornment, His arms are open to embrace you, His feet are nailed, so that He may never leave you, and thou, oh! wretched man, who art the minister of this generosity and humility, shouldest embrace the cross; but thou fliest it, and embracest instead impure women. Thou shouldest stand firm and stable, following the doctrine of My Word, nailing thy heart and mind to Him, and thou swayest about for every cause like a leaf before the wind; if the wind be prosperous thou movest with disordinate joy, and if it be adverse thou movest with impatience, thus drawing forth the marrow of pride, which is impatience, for whereas the marrow of charity is patience, the marrow of pride is impatience, wherefore proud and angry people are disturbed and scandalised at everything. Pride is so displeasing to Me, that it fell from Heaven when an angel became proud; pride did not rise in Heaven, but fell to the depths of Hell, wherefore My Truth said 'that he who should exalt himself (that is, by pride) should be humbled, and that he who humbled himself should be exalted.' In all people pride is displeasing to Me, but more so in My ministers, as I have said to thee, for I have placed them in a humble position to administer the humble lamb; while they do just the contrary. How is such a wretched priest not ashamed to be proud, when he sees Me humble to you, giving you My Word, My only begotten Son, to be humbled, through obedience to Me, to the shameful death of the Cross, of which Word He has been made the minister. My Son bows His head, and this wretch lifts his head against Me and his neighbour, and from the humble lamb that he should be, he has become a ram with the horns of pride, butting against every one he meets. Oh! unhappy man, thou dost not reflect, thou canst not escape Me. Is this, then, the duty that I have laid upon thee, to butt against Me with the horn of thy pride, injuring Me and thy neighbour, turning against him with ignorant injuries? Is this the mildness with which thou shouldest celebrate the body and blood of Christ, My Son? Thou hast become as it

were a wild animal without fear of Me. Thou devourest thy neighbour and livest in quarrels and hast become an acceptor of creatures, accepting those who serve thee and are useful to thee, or others who please thee, because their life is the same as thine, whom on the contrary thou shouldest correct, despising their sins, but thou rather givest them the example of doing what they do and worse also. If thou wert good, thou wouldest correct them, but inasmuch as thou art evil, thy neighbour's defects do not displease thee, and thou lettest him be ; it is the humble and virtuous poor whom thou despisest. Thou fleest them and reasonably, though indeed thou shouldest not do so ; thou avoidest them because the stench of thy vice cannot endure the odour of their virtue ; thou deemest thyself insulted if thou seest My poor ones at thy door ; thou eludest their need of thy visitation, seeing them die of hunger rather than help them. And all this is caused by the horns of pride which will not bend themselves to a little humility. Why will they not bend ? Because thou hast in no way cast from thyself self-love which nourishes pride, and therefore wilt not condescend to administer to the poor either thy temporal or spiritual substance without receiving something in return. Oh ! cursed pride, based on self-love, how hast thou blinded the eye of their intellect, that while they seem to love themselves and be tender to themselves, they are in truth cruel, that while they seem to gain, they are losing, and while they seem to enjoy delights and riches and great dignities, they are really in the greatest poverty and misery, for they are deprived of the riches of virtue and have fallen from the heights of grace into the depths of mortal sin. They seem to see, but are blind, for they know neither themselves nor Me. They do not know their own condition nor the dignity in which I have placed them, nor the fragility of the world, for if they did they would not make gods of themselves. What has deprived them of knowledge ? Pride—and they have thus become devils, having been chosen by Me to be earthly angels in this life. And they fall from the height of heaven into the depths of darkness, and their darkness and iniquity are multiplied to such

an extent that they sometimes fall into a sin of which I will speak to thee. Some of them are such incarnate devils that they often appear to consecrate, when they do not in reality, through fear of My judgment, and to free themselves from any bridle and fear of sin. Such a man rises in the morning from impurity, having passed the preceding evening in disordinate banqueting, he is obliged to satisfy the people, and considering his own iniquities, sees that he cannot celebrate with a good conscience ; wherefore he fears My judgment, not through hatred of vice, but through self-love. See, dearest daughter, how blind he is ; he does not have recourse to contrition, with hatred of sin and a firm purpose of amendment ; he takes the alternative remedy of not consecrating. And the blind man does not see that his error and sin is greater than before, for he makes the congregation commit idolatry, causing them to adore an unconsecrated host, as if it were the body and blood of Christ, My only-begotten Son, wholly God and wholly man. No ; the Host is indeed this when it is consecrated, but otherwise it is only bread.

“ See, now, how great is this abomination, and how great the patience with which I endure it. But if they do not correct themselves, every grace of their state will turn to their perdition. What should the congregation do in order not to fall into such a snare ? They should pray under condition in this wise : ‘ If this minister has said that which he ought to say, I truly believe that Thou art Christ the Son of the living God, given to me as food by the fire of Thine inestimable charity ; and in memory of Thy most sweet passion, and the great benefit of the blood which Thou didst shed with such fire of love to wash away our iniquities.’ By this means the blindness of the priest will not bring them into darkness, causing them to adore one thing for another, the guilt will attach to the miserable minister alone, the congregation will only commit a material mistake. Oh ! sweetest daughter, what prevents the earth from swallowing them up ? What prevents My power from turning them into immovable statues before all the people for their greater confusion ? My mercy. And I restrain Myself—that is

to say, I conquer and restrain My divine justice by the force of My mercy. But these obstinate devils neither know nor see My mercy, but being blinded by pride think that their office is given them of their due, whereas in reality they have it only by My free grace."

## CHAPTER CXXIX

Of many other sins which are committed through pride and self-love.

"I HAVE told thee all this in order to give the more matter for bitter grief and weeping over their blindness in that they remain in a state of damnation, and that thou mayest the better know My mercy to place by faith the greatest security in it, offering them, that is, the ministers of the Holy Church and all the world, before Me, praying to Me to have mercy upon them. And the more thou offerest to Me for them, sorrowful and amorous desires, the more wilt thou show the love which thou hast for Me. Because that service which neither thou nor My other servants can fulfil to Me you must do and show by means of them, and then will I let Myself be constrained by the desire, prayers, and tears of My servants; and I will have mercy on My spouse, reforming her with good and holy pastors. The good pastors will reform her, correcting by force those under them, because nearly all the evils which are done by the subjects are the fault of bad pastors, because had they corrected, and had the pearl of justice shone in them with an honourable and holy life, those evils would not have been. And dost thou know what results come from these perverse methods? It is because the one followed in the footsteps of the other that the subjects are not obedient, because when the prelate was subject he was not obedient to his prelate; wherefore, he receives from his subject that which he rendered, and because he was a bad subject he is a bad pastor.

“Pride founded in self-love is the cause of this and of every other sin.

“Ignorant and proud as he was when he was a subject, he is more so now that he is a prelate. And his ignorance is so great that, as if he were blind, he will give the office of priest to a man so unlearned that he can scarcely read and does not know his office ; and oftentimes, through his ignorance, not knowing well the sacramental words, he will not consecrate, and in this way he commits the same sin of not consecrating that those committed who, through malice, pretended to consecrate without doing so. They ought to choose men experienced and founded in virtue, who know and understand what they say ; but they do quite the contrary, and do not seek them for their knowledge and experience, but for the affection they bear them, and it appears that they select children and not mature men. And they do not aim at having men of honourable and holy life who recognise the dignity to which they are called and the great mystery that they have to celebrate, but they aim solely at multiplying persons, but without regard to virtue.

“They are blind and gatherers together of the blind, and they see not that I shall require from them an account for this, and for the other things in the last extremity of death, and they will see that after they have thus made the priests dark, and given to them the care of souls that they knew not how to take care of themselves.

“For how could such as these who do not recognise their own sin, correct and recognise it in others ? They could not and would not act against themselves. And the sheep who have not a shepherd who cares for them easily stray and are oftentimes torn in pieces and devoured by wolves. And because the shepherd is a bad one he takes no care to keep a dog who barks when he sees the wolf coming, but he keeps such a one as he is himself. And so these ministers and pastors having no solicitude, and not holding in their hand the stick of justice wherewith to correct the dog of conscience, he does not bark, and so they do not with care reprove themselves, and do not endeavour to bring back to the way of Truth and Justice those sheep who have strayed

from it in not observing My commandments, and so prevent them from being devoured by the infernal wolf. Did this dog bark, and were their sins laid upon them with the rod of holy justice, their sheep would be delivered and would return to the fold. But because he is a shepherd without a rod, and without the dog of conscience, the sheep perish, and he does not trouble himself, because the dog of his conscience is enfeebled, and therefore does not bark, because he has not been given any food.

“The food that should be given to this dog is the food of the Lamb, My Son, because in so far as the memory, as the vessel of the soul, is full of the Blood, so does the conscience feed on it, that is to say, that through the memory of the Blood the soul is enflamed with hatred of vice and the love of virtue, the which hatred and love purify the soul from the stain of mortal sin, and give so much vigour to the conscience that it watches over the soul so that if any enemy—that is to say sin—should wish to enter, not only the affection but even the mind, like a watch-dog, warns with its prick at the dictation of reason, and on this account the man does not commit the sin, for he who possesses conscience, possesses justice. But such wicked men as these, not worthy to be called My ministers or even rational creatures, having become animals through their sins, are without a watch-dog through their weakness, and are also without the rod of holy justice, having been made so timid by their sins that a mere shadow frightens them, not with holy but with servile fear. They ought to be ready to die in order to snatch souls from the hand of the Devil, but on the contrary they place them there themselves, depriving them of the doctrine of a good and holy life, and being unable to endure an unkind word for their salvation. Often the soul of a subject will be entangled in very grave sins, and he will have to make satisfaction to his neighbour, and in order not to deprive his family through the disordinate love which he bears to them, he will not pay his debt; his life will be known to a great number of people and also to his wretched priest, who will have been particularly informed, so that, like the physician which he



should be, he may heal that soul. The wretched minister will go to do his duty, and for one rough word said to him, or for one evil glance directed at him, he will be afraid to have anything more to do with the affair. And sometimes a present will be made to him, so that between the bribe and his servile fear he will leave that soul in the hands of the devils, and will give him the Sacrament of the Body of Christ, My only-begotten Son, while he knows all the time that the communicant is involved in the darkness of mortal sin. Nevertheless, to please worldly men, and through his disordinate fear and the gift which he has received from them, he has administered the Sacraments and buried a man with great honour in the Church, when he should have cast him forth as an animal and a corrupt member cut off from the body.

“What is the reason of this? Self-love and the horns of pride. For if he had really loved Me above everything and that poor wretch’s soul, he would have been humble and without fear would have sought his salvation.

“See, then, what evil follows these three vices which I have presented to thee under the form of three columns, from which proceed all other sins—pride, avarice and impurity of mind and body. Thy ears would not be strong enough to hear how great are the evils which issue from these columns like wings of the Devil. And through their pride, dishonour, and greed it sometimes happens (and thou hast seen such cases) that they will make simple women of good faith like to themselves, for the poor creatures, fearing in their minds on account of their defects that they are possessed by the Devil, come to the wretched priest believing that he can liberate them, but in reality they are merely applying to one devil to drive out another. And he in his greed receives their offering, and like a dishonourable, lascivious brute will say to these poor souls ‘The defect which you have can only be removed in one way’—and thus will he cause them miserably to sin with him. Oh! demon, and more than a demon! For in everything hast thou become worse than a devil. For there are many devils who hold this sin in horror, wherefore thou hast become worse than them, for thou rollest thyself therein with

delight like the pig in his sty. Oh ! foul animal, is this what I require of thee by virtue of the blood of which I have made thee My minister ? That instead of driving the Devil out of souls, thou should put him within them ?

“Dost thou not see that the axe of Divine justice is already laid to the root of thy tree ? And I say to thee that thy iniquities shall be punished in due season with usury, if thou do not punish them with penance and contrition of heart.

“No respect will be paid thee, because thou art a priest, and thou wilt rather be miserably punished and suffer, not only for thyself but for them also, for thou wilt be more cruelly punished than others, and perhaps thou wilt then remember how thou wast wont to drive out the Devil with the demon of concupiscence.

“And so will it be with that other wretch, who goes to absolve a fellow-creature in mortal sin, and binds her instead with another and greater sin, sinning himself afresh with her. If thou remember, thou hast seen with thine own eyes such a case, on whom an evil man laid hands. Truly is such a man without the dog of conscience, indeed, he stifles others' consciences as well as his own.

“I have appointed them to chant and sing psalms during the night, reciting the divine office, and they occupy themselves in making charms and invoking the demon of midnight in order to cause those whom they sinfully love to come to them through their devilish incantations. It will seem to them that they come, but they do not really do so.

“Wretched man ! I have appointed to thee to pass the vigils of the night in prayer and watching, so that on the morrow thou mayest go rightly disposed to the altar, and give forth the odour of virtue to the people and not the stench of vice. Thou hast been placed in an angelic state to converse by holy meditation with the angels in this life, and at last with them to enjoy Me ; but thou delightest in being one of the devils and in conversing with them even before thy death. The horns of thy pride have pierced the pupil of holy faith in the eye of thy intellect. Thou hast lost the light, and therefore seest not in what misery thou art ; and

thou believest not truly that every sin is punished and every virtue rewarded, for if thou didst truly believe it thou wouldest not act so ; thou wouldest not seek or desire such conversation as the devil's ; rather wouldest thou flee in terror at the mention of his name ; but because thou obeyest his will and takest delight in his actions thou seekest him, one blind man seeking another.

“ I would have thee ask the Devil what reward he can give thee for the service thou payest him. He would reply that he will give thee the reward that he himself has obtained, for he can give thee nothing else than the cruel torments of the fire in which he continually burns since he fell from the height of heaven in his pride.

“ And thou, an earthly angel, fallest by thy pride from the height of the dignity of the priesthood and from the treasure of virtue, into the poverty of thy many miseries ; and if thou do not correct thyself thou wilt fall further into the depths of hell.

“ Thou hast made the world and thyself thy god and thy lord. Tell the world to answer for thee before Me, the supreme Judge, with all its delights which thou hast enjoyed in this life, and tell thy own sensuality to answer for thee—for it is thy sensuality which has caused thee to enjoy the things of the world—when I had placed you in the state of the priesthood in order to despise both thyself and the world. They will reply that they cannot help thee ; they will make mock of thee, saying that success is thy own affair, and thou wilt remain confounded and guilty before Me and the world.

“ All this loss of thine thou seest not actually, because, as I have said, the horns of thy pride have blinded thee ; but thou wilt see it at the extremity of death, when thou canst seek no remedy in any virtue of thine own, except only in My mercy if thou hopest in that sweet Blood of which thou wast made the minister. This hope, indeed, will never be taken from thee, or from any one, as long as you are still willing to hope in the Blood and in My mercy, although no one should be such a fool, nor thou so blind, as to go on up till the last moment without conversion.

“Remember that at that last extremity the man who has lived wickedly is accused by the Devil and the world and his own fragility, and they do not deceive him or show him pleasure where is bitterness, or perfection where is imperfection, or light for darkness, as they used to do during his life; they show him things as they are in truth. The watch-dog of conscience, so enfeebled, begins now to bark so loudly that he leads the soul, as it were, to despair; but all should lay hold with hope on the Blood, in spite of the sins which they have committed, because My mercy which ye receive in the Blood is without any comparison greater than all the sins that are committed in the world.

“But let no one put off his repentance, for it is a terrible thing for a man to find himself disarmed on the field of battle in the presence of many enemies.”

## CHAPTER CXXX.

Of many other sins which the said wretched ministers commit.

“THESE wretches, oh! dearest daughter, of whom I have spoken to thee, take no thought for themselves, for if they did they would not come to such a pass, neither they nor others.

“But they would be like those who live in virtue, and who would prefer to die rather than sin and defile the face of their soul, and diminish the dignity in which I have placed them; they rather increase the dignity and beauty of their souls, not that the priestly dignity in itself can increase through virtue, or diminish through sin, as I have said, but virtue is an ornament and a dignity with which such men adorn their souls over and above its natural beauty which it had from the beginning; when I created it to My image and likeness such as these would know the truth of My goodness and their own beauty and dignity, because pride and self-love would not have darkened them or deprived them of the light of reason, and they would love Me, and the

salvation of souls. But these poor wretches, being entirely deprived of the light, and heedlessly going from vice to vice, so that at last they fall into the ditch, have made of the temple of their soul and of the holy church which should be a garden—a stable full of animals.

“How abominable it is to Me, oh! dearest daughter, that their houses, which ought to be the homes of My servants, and of the poor, and where they should keep the breviary for their spouse, and the books of Holy Scripture for their children, and should take delight in teaching their neighbour and in living a holy life, should have become the homes of impurity and wicked persons. Their spouse is no breviary (they treat the breviary as an adulteress) but a miserable she-devil who lives with them in impurity. Their holy scriptures are a regiment of children, and with these children whom they have obtained in such foul misery they shamelessly take pleasure. The festivals and solemnities on which they should render praise and glory to My name, with divine office, offering Me the incense of devout and humble prayers, they pass at play, and in taking solace with their she-devils, and they go off with companies of seculars, hunting beasts and birds as if themselves were seculars and fine court gentlemen. Oh! wretched man to what hast thou come? Thou shouldst hunt and snare souls to the glory and praise of My name in the garden of the holy church, instead of wandering round the woods; but because thou hast become an animal, thy soul being filled with the animals of many mortal sins, hast thou made thyself a hunter and a snarer of animals; because the garden of thy soul has grown wild and full of thorns, thou takest delight in wandering through desert places hunting wild beasts. Look on thy sins and be ashamed, oh! man, for thou hast matter for shame on every side, but thou art without shame, having lost My true and holy fear. Shameless as a harlot, thou art proud of keeping great station in the world, and having a fine household, and a regiment of many children, and if thou hast none thou seekest to have them, so that they may inherit thy property; but thou art a robber and a thief, because thou knowest well that thou

hast nothing to leave them, for thine heirs are the poor of the holy church.

“Oh! incarnate devil, deprived of light, thou seekest that which thou oughtest not to seek, thou praisest and vauntest thyself of that which should cause thee the greatest confusion and shame before Me who see the interior of thy heart, and before creatures. But the horns of thy pride do not let thee see thy shame. I have placed him, dearest daughter, on the bridge of My doctrine and My truth to administer to you pilgrims the sacraments of the holy Church, and he remains in the river of misery under the Bridge, and administers My sacraments standing in the river of the delights and miseries of the world, and he does not see that the tide of death is gaining on him, and that he travels in company with his masters the devils whom he has served and allowed to direct his journey through the river without any restraint. And if he do not correct himself he will reach eternal damnation, and such punishment and reprobation that thy tongue would not be able to narrate it, and indeed far more than a secular. For the same fault is more severely punished in him than in a secular, and with graver reprobation do his enemies rise up before him on the bridge of death to accuse him, as I said to thee.”

## CHAPTER CXXXI.

Of the difference between the death of a just man and that of a sinner, and first of the death of the just man.

“H<sup>A</sup>VING told thee how the world and the devils accuse these wretches, which is indeed the truth, I wish to speak to thee in more detail on this point (so that thou mayest have greater compassion on these poor wretches), telling thee how different are the struggles of the soul of a just man to those of a sinner, and how different are their deaths, and how the peace of the just man's death is

greater or less according to the perfection of his soul. For I wish thee to know that all the sufferings which rational creatures endure depend on their will, because if their will were in accordance with mine they would endure no suffering, not that they would have no labours on that account, but because labours cause no suffering to a will which gladly endures them, seeing that they are ordained by My will. Such men as these wage war with the world, the Devil, and their own sensuality through holy hatred of themselves. Wherefore when they come to the point of death, they die peacefully, because they have vanquished their enemies during their life. The world cannot accuse such a man, because he saw through its deceptions and therefore renounced it with all its delights. His sensual fragility and his body do not accuse him, because he bound sensuality like a slave with the rein of reason, macerating his flesh with penance, with watchings, and humble and continual prayer. The will of his senses he slew with hatred and dislike of vice, and with love of virtue. He has entirely lost all tenderness for his body, which tenderness and love between the soul and the body makes death seem difficult, and on account of it man naturally fears death; but since the virtue of a just and perfect man transcends nature, extinguishing his natural fear and overcoming it with holy hatred of himself and desire of arriving at his last end, his natural tenderness cannot make war on him, and his conscience remains in peace; for during his life his conscience kept a good guard, warning him when enemies were coming to attack the city of his soul, like a watch-dog which stands at the door, and when it sees enemies warns the guards by its barking, for in this way the dog of conscience warns the sentry of reason, and the reason together with the free-will know by the light of the intellect whether the stranger be friend or enemy. To a friend, that is to say, to virtue and holy thoughts, he gave his delighted love, receiving and using these with great solicitude; to an enemy, that is to say, to vice and wicked thoughts, he gave hatred and displeasure. And with the knife of hatred of self, and love of Me, and

with the light of reason, and the hand of free-will he struck his enemies ; so that at the point of death his conscience, having been a faithful guardian, does not gnaw but remains in peace.

“ It is true that a just soul, through humility, and because at the moment of death she realizes better the value of time and of the jewels of virtue, reproves herself, seeming to herself to have used her time but little ; but this is not an afflictive pain, but rather profitable, for the soul recollected in herself, is caused by it to throw herself before the Blood of the humble and immaculate Lamb My Son. The just man does not turn his head to admire his past virtues, because he neither can nor will hope in his own virtues, but only in the Blood in which he has found mercy ; and as he lived in the memory of that Blood, so in death he is inebriated and drowned in the same. How is it that the devils cannot reprove him of sin ? Because during his life he conquered their malice with wisdom, yet they come round him to see if they can acquire anything, and appear in horrible shapes in order to frighten him with hideous aspect, and many diverse phantasms, but the poison of sin not being in his soul, their aspect causes him no terror or fear, as it would do to another who had lived wickedly in the world. Wherefore the devils, seeing that the soul has entered into the Blood with ardent love, cannot endure the sight, but stand afar off shooting their arrows. But their war and their shouts cannot hurt that soul, who already is beginning to taste eternal life, as I said to thee in another place, for with the eye of the intellect illuminated by the pupil of the holy faith, she sees Me, the Infinite and Eternal Good, whom she hopes to obtain by grace, not as her due, but by virtue of Jesus Christ My Son.

“ Wherefore opening the arms of hope and seizing Him with the hands of love, she seems to enter into His possession before she actually does so, in the way which I have narrated to thee in another place. Passing suddenly, drowned in the Blood, by the narrow door of the Word she reaches Me, the Sea Pacific. For sea and door are united together. I and the Truth, My only-begotten Son



being one and the same thing. What joy such a soul receives who sees herself so sweetly arrived at this pass, for in Truth she tastes the happiness of the angelic nature! This joy is received by all those who pass in this sweet manner, but to a far greater extent by My ministers, of whom I spoke to thee, who have lived like angels, for in this life have they lived with greater knowledge, and with greater hunger for the salvation of souls. I do not speak only of the light of virtue which all can have in general, but of the supernatural light which these men possessed over and above the light of virtuous living, the light, that is, of holy science, by which science they knew more of My Truth, and he who knows more loves Me more, and he who loves Me more receives more. Your reward is measured according to the measure of your love, and if thou shouldst ask Me, whether one who has no science can attain to this love, I should reply, yes it is possible that he may attain to it, but an individual case does not make a general law and I always discourse to thee in general.

“They also receive greater dignity on account of their priesthood, because they have personally received the office of eating souls in My honour. For just as every one has the office of remaining in charity with his neighbour, to them is given the office of administering the Blood, and of governing souls.

“Wherefore if they do this solicitously and with love of virtue they receive, as has been said, more than others. Oh! how happy are their souls when they come to the extremity of death! For they have been the defenders and preachers of the faith to their neighbour. This faith they have incarnated in their very marrow, and with it they see their place of repose in Me. The hope with which they have lived, confiding in My providence and losing all trust in themselves, in that they did not hope in their own knowledge, and having lost hope in themselves, placed no inordinate love in any fellow-creature or in any created thing; having lived in voluntary poverty, causes them now with great delight to lift their confidence towards Me.

Their heart, which was a vessel of love, inscribed by their ardent charity with My name, they showed forth with the example of their good and holy life and by the doctrine of their words to their neighbour. This heart then arises and seizes Me, Who am its End, with ineffable love, restoring to Me the pearl of justice which it always carried before it, doing justice to all and discreetly rendering to each his due. Wherefore this man renders to Me justice with true humility, and renders glory and praise to My Name, because he refers to Me the grace of having been able to run his course with a pure and holy conscience, and with himself he is indignant, deeming himself unworthy of receiving such grace.

“His conscience gives good testimony of him to Me, and I justly give him the crown of justice, adorned with the pearls of the virtues—that is, of the fruit which love has drawn from the virtues. Oh, earthly angel! happy thou art in that thou hast not been ungrateful for the benefits received from Me, and hast not been negligent or ignorant, but hast solicitously opened thine eye by the true light, and kept it on thy subjects, and hast faithfully and manfully followed the doctrine of the Good Shepherd, sweet Christ Jesus, My only begotten Son, wherefore thou art really now passing through Him, the Door, bathed and drowned in His blood, with thy troop of lambs of whom thou hast brought many by thy holy doctrine and example to eternal life, and hast left many behind thee in a state of grace.

“Oh, dearest daughter! to such as these the vision of the devils can do no harm, because of the vision which they have of Me, which they see by faith and hold by love; the darkness and the terrible aspect of the demons do not give them trouble or any fear, because in them is not the poison of sin. There is no servile fear in them, but holy fear. Wherefore they do not fear the demon’s deception, because with supernatural light and with the light of Holy Scripture they know them, so that they do not cause them darkness or disquietude. So thus they gloriously pass, bathed in the blood, with hunger for the salvation of souls, all on fire with love for the neighbour, having passed through the door of

the word and entered into Me ; and by My goodness each one is arranged in his place, and to each one is measured of the affection of love according as he has measured to Me."

## CHAPTER CXXXII.

Of the death of sinners, and of their pains in the hour of death.

"Not so excellent, dearest daughter, is the end of these other poor wretches who are in great misery as I have related to thee. How terrible and dark is their death ! Because in the moment of death, as I told thee, the Devil accuses them with great terror and darkness, showing his face, which thou knowest is so horrible that the creature would rather choose any pain that can be suffered in this world than see it ; and so greatly does he freshen the sting of conscience that it gnaws him horribly. The disordinate delights and sensuality of which he made lords over his reason, accuse him miserably, because then he knows the truth of that which at first he knew not, and his error brings him to great confusion.

"In his life he lived unfaithfully to Me—self-love having veiled the pupil of the most holy faith—wherefore the Devil torments him with infidelity in order to bring him to despair. Oh ! how hard for them is this battle, because it finds them disarmed, without the armour of affection and charity ; because, as members of the Devil, they have been deprived of it all. Wherefore they have not the supernatural light, neither the light of science, because they did not understand it, the horns of their pride not letting them understand the sweetness of its marrow. Wherefore now in the great battle they know not what to do. They are not nourished in hope, because they have not hoped in Me, neither in the Blood of which I made them ministers, but in themselves alone, and in the dignities and delights of the world. And the incarnate wretch did not see that all was counted to him with interest, and that as a debtor

he would have to render an account to Me; now he finds himself denuded and without any virtue, and on whichever side he turns he hears nothing but reproaches with great confusion. His injustice which he practised in his life accuses him to his conscience, wherefore he dares not ask other than justice.

“And I tell thee that so great is that shame and confusion that unless in their life they have taken the habit of hoping in My mercy, that is, have taken the milk of mercy (although on account of their sins this is great presumption, for you cannot truly say that he who strikes Me with the arm of My mercy has a hope in mercy, but rather has presumption), there is not one who would not despair, and with despair they would arrive with the Devil in eternal damnation.

“But arriving at the extremity of death, and recognising his sin, his conscience unloaded by holy confession, and presumption taken away, so that he offends no more, there remains mercy, and with this mercy he can, if he will, take hold on hope. This is the effect of My mercy to cause them to hope therein during their life, although I do not grant them this, so that they should offend Me by means of My mercy, but rather that they should dilate themselves in charity, and in the consideration of My goodness. But they act in a contrary way, because they offend Me in the hope which they have in My mercy. And nevertheless, I keep them in this hope so that at the last moment they may have something which they may lay hold of, and by so doing not faint away with the condemnation which they receive, and thus arrive at despair; for this final sin of despair is much more displeasing to Me and injures them much more than all the other sins which they have committed. And this is the reason why this sin is more dangerous to them and displeasing to Me, because they commit other sins through some delight of their own sensuality, and they sometimes grieve for them, and if they grieve in the right way their grief will procure them mercy. But it is no fragility of your nature which moves you to despair, for there is no pleasure and nothing but intolerable

suffering in it. One who despairs despises My mercy, making his sin to be greater than My mercy and goodness, Wherefore, if a man fall into this sin, he does not repent. and does not truly grieve for his offence against me as he should, grieving indeed for his own loss, but not for the offence done to Me, and therefore he receives eternal damnation. See, therefore, that this sin alone leads him to hell, where he is punished for this and all the other sins which he has committed; whereas had he grieved and repented for the offence done to Me, and hoped in My mercy he would have found mercy, for, as I have said to thee, My mercy is greater without any comparison than all the sins which any creature can commit; wherefore it greatly displeases Me that they should consider their sins to be greater.

“Despair is that sin which is pardoned neither here nor hereafter, and it is because despair displeases Me so much that I wish them to hope in My mercy at the point of death, even if their life have been disordered and wicked. This is why during their life I use this sweet trick with them, making them hope greatly in My mercy, for when, having fed themselves with this hope, they arrive at death, they are not so inclined to abandon it, on account of the severe condemnation they receive, as if they had not so nourished themselves.

“All this is given them by the fire and abyss of My inestimable love, but because they have used it in the darkness of self-love, from which has proceeded their every sin, they have not known it in truth, but in so far as they have turned their affections towards the sweetness of My mercy they have thought of it with great presumption. And this is another cause of reproof which their conscience gives them in the likeness of the Devil, reproving them in that they should have used the time and the breadth of My mercy in which they hoped, in charity and love of virtue, and that the time which I gave them through love should have been spent in holiness, whereas with all their time and great hope of My mercy they did nothing but offend Me miserably. Oh! blinder than the blind! Thou hast

hidden thy pearl and thy talent which I placed in thy hands in order that thou mightest gain more with it, but thou in thy presumption wouldst not do My will, rather thou didst hide it under the ground of disordinate self-love, which now renders thee the fruit of death.

“Thy miseries are not hid from thee now, for the worm of conscience sleeps no longer, but is gnawing thee, the devils shout and render to thee the reward which they are accustomed to give their servants, that is to say, confusion and condemnation; they wish to bring thee to despair, so that at the moment of death thou mayest not escape from their hands, and therefore they try to confuse thee, so that afterwards when thou art with them they may render to thee of the part which is theirs. Oh, wretch! the dignity in which I placed thee, thou now seest shining as it really is, and thou knowest to thy shame that thou hast held and used in such guilty darkness the substance of the holy Church, that thou seest thyself to be a thief, a debtor, who ought to pay his debt to the poor and the holy Church. Then thy conscience represents to thee that thou hast spent the money on public harlots, and hast brought up thy children and enriched thy relations, and hast thrown it away on gluttony and on many silver vessels and other adornments for thy house. Whereas thou shouldst have lived in voluntary poverty.

“Thy conscience represents to thee the divine office which thou didst neglect, by which thou didst fall into the guilt of mortal sin, and how even when thou didst recite it with thy mouth thy heart was far from Me. Conscience also shows thee thy subjects, that is to say, the love and hunger which thou shouldest have felt towards nourishing them in virtue, giving them the example of thy life and striking them with the hand of mercy and the rod of justice, and because thou didst the contrary thy conscience and the horrible likeness of the Devil reproves thee.

“And if as a prelate thou hast given prelaties or any charge of souls unjustly to one of thy subjects, that is, that thou hast not considered to whom and how thou wert giving it, the Devil puts this also before thy conscience, because

thou oughtest to have given it, not on account of pleasant words, nor in order to please creatures, nor for the sake of gifts, but solely with regard to virtue, My honour and the salvation of souls. And since thou hast not done so thou art reprov'd, and for thy greater pain and confusion thou hast before thy conscience and the light of thine intellect that which thou hast done and ought not to have done, and that which thou oughtest to have done and hast not done.

“I wish thee to know, dearest daughter, that whiteness is better seen when placed on a black ground, and blackness on a white, than when they are separated. So it happens to these wretches, to these in particular and to all others in general, for at death when the soul begins to see its woes, and the just man his beatitude, his evil life is represented to a wicked man, and there is no reason that any one should remind him of the sins that he has committed, for his conscience places them before him, together with the virtues which he ought to have practised. Why the virtues? For his greater shame. For vice being placed on a ground of virtue is known better on account of the virtue, and the better he knows his sin, the greater his shame, and by comparison with his sin he knows better the perfection of virtue, wherefore he grieves the more, for he sees that his own life was devoid of any; and I wish thee to know that in this knowledge which dying sinners have of virtue and vice they see only too clearly the good which follows the virtue of a just man, and the pain that comes on him who has lain in the darkness of mortal sin. I do not give him this knowledge so that he may despair, but so that he may come to a perfect self-knowledge and shame for his sins, with hope, so that with that pain and knowledge he may pay for his sins, and appease My anger, humbly begging My mercy. The virtuous man increases thereby in joy and in knowledge of My love, for he attributes the grace of having followed virtue in the doctrine of My truth to Me and not to himself, wherefore he exalts in Me, with this truly illuminated knowledge, and tastes and receives the sweet end of his being in the way which I have related to thee in another place. So that the one, that is to say, the just man, who has lived in

ardent charity, exalts in joy, while the wicked man is darkened and confounded in sorrow.

“To the just man the appearance and vision of the Devil causes no harm or fear, for fear and harm can only be caused to him by sin; but those who have passed their lives lasciviously and in many sins, receive both harm and fear from the appearance of the devils, not indeed the harm of despair if they do not wish it, but the suffering of condemnation, of the refreshing of the worm of conscience, and of fear and terror at their horrible aspect. See now, dearest daughter, how different are the sufferings and the battle of death to a just man and to a sinner, and how different is their end.

“I have shown to the eye of thy intellect a very small part of what happens, and so small is what I have shown thee with regard to what it really is, to the suffering, that is, of the one, and the happiness of the other, that it is but a trifle. See how great is the blindness of man, and in particular of these ministers, for the more they have received of Me, and the more they are enlightened by the Holy Scripture, the greater are their obligations and more intolerable confusion do they receive for not fulfilling them; the more they knew of Holy Scripture during their life, the better do they know at their death the great sins they have committed, and their torments are greater than those of others, just as good men are placed in a higher degree of excellence. Theirs is the fate of the false Christian, who is placed in Hell in greater torment than a pagan, because he had the light of faith and renounced it, while the pagan never had it.

“So these wretches will be punished more than other Christians for the same sin, on account of the ministry which I entrusted to them, appointing them to administer the sun of the holy Sacrament, and because they had the light of science, in order to discern the truth both for themselves and others had they wished to; wherefore they justly receive the greater pains. But the wretches do not know this, for did they consider their state at all, they would not come to such misery, but would be that which they ought to be and are not. For the whole world has thus become corrupt,



they being much more guilty than seculars, according to their state; for with their stench they defile the face of their soul, and corrupt their subjects, and suck the blood from My spouse, that is, the holy Church, wherefore through these sins they make her grow pale, because they divert to themselves the love and charity which they should have to this divine spouse, and think of nothing but stripping her for their own advantage, seizing prelacies, and great properties, when they ought to be seeking souls. Wherefore through their evil life, seculars become irreverent and disobedient to the holy Church, not that they ought on that account to do so, or that their sins are excused through the sins of My ministers."

### CHAPTER CXXXIII.

A brief repetition of many things said above, and how GOD altogether forbids that priests should be touched by the hand of seculars: and how He invites this soul to weep over these wretched priests.

"THERE are many other sins of which I might speak to thee, but I do not wish to make thine ears itch any longer. I have told thee so much in order to satisfy thy desire, and so that thou mayest be more solicitous to offer before Me thy sweet, amorous, and bitter longings. And I have told thee that the excellence to which I have appointed them, and of the treasure which is administered to you by their hands, that is, of the holy Sacrament, wholly God and wholly man, illustrating this truth to thee by the figure of the sun in order that thou mightest see that the virtue of the Sacrament is not diminished by their sins, and that therefore it is My will that your reverence towards them should not diminish on that account. And I have shown thee the excellence of My virtuous ministers in whom shines the pearl of holy justice and the other virtues. I have also shown thee how displeasing to Me is the offence committed

by persecutors of the holy Church, and also the irreverence in which they hold the Blood. For the persecutions directed against My ministers I consider as directed against the Blood and not against them, for I have forbidden My Christs to be touched. I have also related to thee somewhat of the shameful life of My ministers, how wretchedly they live, and what pain and confusion they receive at their death, and how much more cruelly than others they are punished after death. I have now fulfilled My promise to thee, which was to tell thee something of their life and, having consented to fulfil My promise, have satisfied thy demand.

“I now repeat to thee what I said at first, that however great their sins might be, even if they were greater than I have mentioned, I do not wish any secular to occupy himself in punishing them ; and if they do so their sin will not remain unpunished unless they punish it themselves, amending their lives with contrition of heart. For both secular and priest are incarnate devils, and through the divine justice one devil punishes another, and both sin, so that the secular is not excused through the sin of the prelate, nor the prelate through the sin of the secular.

“I now invite thee, dearest daughter, and all My other servants, to weep over these corpses, and to remain like lambs in the garden of the holy Church, feeding there with holy desire and continued prayers, offering them before Me for their sakes, for I wish to do mercy to the world ; and do not leave this food of yours either, through injuries or through prosperity, for I do not wish My servants to lift their heads with impatience or disordinate joy, but humbly to devote yourselves to My honour and the salvation of souls, and to the reformation of the holy Church. And this will be a proof to Me that thou and My other servants love Me in truth. Thou knowest well that I showed thee how I wished thee and My other servants to be lambs ever feeding in the garden of the holy Church, enduring with fatigue up to the last moment of their lives, and if in truth thou doest so I will fulfil thy desires.”

## CHAPTER CXXXIV.

How this devout soul, praising and thanking GOD, made a prayer for the Holy Church.

THEN this soul, as if inebriated, tormented, and on fire with love, her heart wounded with great bitterness, turned herself to the Supreme and Eternal Goodness, saying: "Oh! Eternal God! oh! Light above every other light, from whom issues all light! Oh! Fire above every fire, because Thou art the only Fire who burnest without consuming, and consumest all sin and self-love found in the soul, not afflicting her, but fattening her with insatiable love, and though the soul is filled she is not sated, but ever desires Thee, and the more of Thee she has, the more she seeks—and the more she desires, the more she finds and tastes of Thee—Supreme and Eternal Fire, Abyss of Charity. Oh! Supreme and Eternal Good, who has moved Thee, Infinite God, to illuminate me, Thy finite creature with the light of Thy Truth? Thou, the same Fire of Love art the cause, because it is always love which constrained and constrains Thee to create us in Thine image and similitude, and to do us mercy, giving immeasurable and infinite graces to Thy rational creatures. Oh! Goodness above all goodness! Thou alone art He who is Supremely Good, and nevertheless Thou gavest the Word, Thy only-begotten Son, to converse with us filthy ones and filled with darkness. What was the cause of this? Love. Because Thou lovedst us before we were. Oh! Good! oh! Eternal Greatness! Thou madest Thyself low and small to make man great. On which ever side I turn I find nothing but the abyss and fire of Thy charity. And can a wretch like me pay back to Thee the graces and the burning charity that Thou hast shown and showest with so much burning love in particular to me beyond common charity, and the love that Thou showest to all Thy creatures? No, but Thou alone, most sweet and amorous Father, art He who will be thankful and grateful for me,

that is, that the affection of Thy charity itself will render Thee thanks, because I am she who is not, and if I spoke as being anything of myself, I should be lying by my own head, and should be a lying daughter of the Devil, who is the father of lies, because Thou alone art He who is. And my being and every further grace that Thou hast bestowed upon me, I have from Thee, who givest them to me through love, and not as my due.

“Oh! sweetest Father, when the human race lay sick through the sin of Adam, Thou didst send it a Physician, the sweet and amorous Word—Thy Son; and now, when I was lying infirm with the sickness of negligence and much ignorance, Thou, most soothing and sweet Physician, Eternal God, hast given a soothing, sweet, and bitter medicine, that I may be cured and rise from my infirmity. Thou hast soothed me because with Thy love and gentleness Thou hast manifested Thyself to me, Sweet above all sweetness, and hast illuminated the eye of my intellect with the light of most holy faith, with which light, according as it has pleased Thee to manifest it to me, I have known the excellence of grace which Thou hast given to the human race, administering to it the entire God-Man in the mystic body of the holy Church. And I have known the dignity of Thy ministers whom Thou hast appointed to administer Thee to us. I desired that Thou wouldest fulfil the promise that Thou madest to me, and Thou gavest much more, more even than I knew how to ask for. Wherefore I know in truth that the heart of man knows not how to ask or desire as much as thou canst give, and thus I see that Thou art He Who is the Supreme and Eternal Good, and that we are they who are not. And because Thou art infinite, and we are finite, Thou givest that which Thy rational creature cannot desire enough; for she cannot desire it in itself, nor in the way in which Thou canst and wilt satisfy the soul, filling her with things for which she does not ask Thee. Moreover, I have received light from Thy Greatness and Charity, through the love which Thou hast for the whole human race, and in particular for Thy anointed ones, who ought to be earthly angels in this life. Thou hast

shown me the virtue and beatitude of these Thy anointed ones who have lived like burning lamps, shining with the Pearl of Justice in the holy Church. And by comparison with these I have better understood the sins of those who live wretchedly. Wherefore I have conceived a very great sorrow at Thy offence and the harm done to the whole world, for they do harm to the world, being mirrors of sin when they ought to be mirrors of virtue. And because Thou hast manifested and grieved over their iniquities to me—a wretch who am the cause and instrument of many sins—I am plunged in intolerable grief.

“Thou, oh! inestimable love, hast manifested this to me, giving me a sweet and bitter medicine that I might wholly arise out of the infirmity of my ignorance and negligence, and have recourse to Thee with anxious and solicitous desire, knowing myself and Thy goodness and the offences which are committed against Thee by all sorts of people, so that I might shed a river of tears, drawn from the knowledge of Thy infinite goodness, over my wretched self and over those who are dead in that they live miserably. Wherefore I do not wish, oh! eternal Father, ineffable Fire of Love, that my heart should ever grow weary, or my eyes fail through tears, in desiring Thy honour and the salvation of souls, but I beg of Thee, by Thy grace, that they may be as two streams of water issuing from Thee, the Sea Pacific. Thanks, thanks to Thee, oh! Father, for having granted me that which I asked Thee and that which I neither knew nor asked, for by Thus giving me matter for grief Thou hast invited me to offer before Thee sweet, loving, and yearning desires, with humble and continual prayer. Now I beg of Thee that Thou wilt do mercy to the world and to the holy Church. I pray Thee to fulfil that which Thou didst cause me to ask Thee. Alas! what a wretched and sorrowful soul is mine, the cause of all these evils. Do not put off any longer Thy merciful designs towards the world, but descend and fulfil the desire of Thy servants.

“Ah me! Thou causest them to cry in order to hear their voices! Thy truth told us to cry out, and we should be

answered ; to knock, and it would be opened to us ; to beg, and it would be given to us. Oh ! eternal Father, Thy servants do cry out to Thy mercy ; do Thou then reply.

“ I know well that mercy is Thine own attribute, wherefore Thou canst not destroy it or refuse it to him who asks for it. Thy servants knock at the door of Thy truth, because in the truth of Thy only-begotten Son they know the ineffable love which Thou hast for man, wherefore the fire of Thy love ought not and cannot refrain from opening to him who knocks with perseverance. Wherefore open, unlock, and break the hardened hearts of Thy creatures, not for their sakes who do not knock, but on account of Thy infinite goodness, and through love of Thy servants who knock at Thee for their sakes. Grant the prayer of those, Eternal Father, who, as Thou seest, stand at the door of Thy truth and pray. For what do they pray ? For with the Blood of this door—Thy truth—hast Thou washed our iniquities and destroyed the stain of Adam’s sin. The Blood is ours, for Thou hast made it our bath, wherefore Thou canst not deny it to any one who truly asks for it. Give, then, the fruit of Thy Blood to Thy creatures. Place in the balance the price of the blood of Thy Son, so that the infernal devils may not carry off Thy lambs. Thou art the Good Shepherd who, to fulfil Thy obedience, laid down His life for Thy lambs, and made for us a bath of His Blood.

“ That Blood is what Thy hungry servants beg of Thee at this door, begging Thee through it to do mercy to the world, and to cause Thy holy Church to bloom with the fragrant flowers of good and holy pastors, who by their sweet odour shall extinguish the stench of the putrid flowers of sin. Thou hast said, eternal Father, that through the love which Thou hast for Thy rational creatures, and the prayers and the many virtues and labours of Thy servants, Thou wouldest do mercy to the world, and reform the Church, and thus give us refreshment ; wherefore do not delay, but turn the eye of Thy mercy towards us, for Thou must first reply to us before we can cry out with the voice of Thy mercy. Open the door of Thy inestimable love which Thou

hast given us through the door of Thy Word. I know indeed that Thou openest before even we can knock, for it is with the affection of love which Thou hast given to Thy servants, that they knock and cry to Thee, seeking Thy honour and the salvation of souls. Give them then the bread of life, that is to say, the fruit of the Blood of Thy only begotten Son, which they ask of Thee for the praise and glory of My name and the salvation of souls. For more glory and praise will be Thine in saving so many creatures, than in leaving them obstinate in their hardness of heart. To Thee, Eternal Father, everything is possible, and even though Thou hast created us without our own help, Thou wilt not save us without it. I beg of Thee to force their wills, and dispose them to wish for that for which they do not wish ; and this I ask Thee through Thy infinite mercy. Thou hast created us from nothing, now, therefore, that we are in existence, do mercy to us, and remake the vessels which Thou hast created to Thy image and likeness. Re-create them to Grace in Thy mercy and the Blood of Thy Son sweet Christ Jesus."

## CHAPTER CXXXV.

## A TREATISE OF OBEDIENCE

Here begins the treatise of obedience, and first of where obedience may be found, and what it is that destroys it, and what is the sign of a man's possessing it, and what accompanies and nourishes obedience.

THE Supreme and Eternal Father, kindly turning the eye of His mercy and clemency towards her, replied : " Thy holy desire and righteous request, oh ! dearest daughter, have a right to be heard, and inasmuch as I am the Supreme Truth, I will keep My word, fulfilling the promise which I made to thee, and satisfying thy desire. And if thou ask Me where obedience is to be found, and what is the cause of its loss, and the sign of its possession, I reply that thou wilt find it

in its completeness in the sweet and amorous Word, My only-begotten Son. So prompt in Him was this virtue, that, in order to fulfil it, He hastened to the shameful death of the Cross. What destroys obedience? Look at the first man and thou wilt see the cause which destroyed the obedience imposed on him by Me, the eternal Father. It was pride, which was produced by self-love, and desire to please his companion. This was the cause that deprived him of the perfection of obedience, giving him instead disobedience, depriving him of the life of grace, and slaying his innocence, wherefore he fell into impurity and great misery, and not only he, but the whole human race, as I said to thee. The sign that thou hast this virtue is patience, and impatience the sign that you have it not, and thou wilt find that this is indeed so, when I speak to thee further concerning this virtue. But observe that obedience may be kept in two ways, of which one is more perfect than the other, not that they are on that account separated, but united as I explained to thee of the precepts and counsels. The one way is the most perfect, the other is also good and perfect; for no one at all can reach eternal life if he be not obedient, for the door was unlocked by the key of obedience, which had been fastened by the disobedience of Adam. I, then, being constrained by My infinite goodness, since I saw that man whom I so much loved, did not return to Me, his End, took the keys of obedience and placed them in the hands of My sweet and amorous Word—the Truth—and He becoming the porter of that door, opened it, and no one can enter except by means of that door and that Porter. Wherefore He said in the Holy Gospel that *'no one could come to Me, the Father, if not by Him.'* When He returned to Me, rising to Heaven from the conversation of men at the Ascension, He left you this sweet key of obedience; for as thou knowest He left His vicar, the Christ on earth, whom you are all obliged to obey until death, and whoever is outside his obedience is in a state of damnation, as I have already told thee in another place. Now I wish thee to see and know this most excellent virtue in that humble and immaculate Lamb, and the source whence it proceeds.



What caused the great obedience of the Word? The love which He had for My honour and your salvation. Whence proceeded this love? From the clear vision with which His soul saw the divine essence and the eternal Trinity, thus always looking on Me, the eternal God. His fidelity obtained this vision most perfectly for Him, which vision you imperfectly enjoy by the light of holy faith. He was faithful to Me, His eternal Father, and therefore hastened as one enamoured along the road of obedience, lit up with the light of glory. And inasmuch as love cannot be alone, but is accompanied by all the true and royal virtues, because all the virtues draw their life from love. He possessed them all, but in a different way from that in which you do. Among the others he possessed patience, which is the marrow of obedience, and a demonstrative sign, whether a soul be in a state of grace and truly love or not. Wherefore charity, the mother of patience, has given her as a sister to obedience, and so closely united them together that one cannot be lost without the other. Either thou hast them both or thou hast neither. This virtue has a nurse who feeds her, that is, true humility; therefore a soul is obedient in proportion to her humility, and humble in proportion to her obedience. This humility is the foster-mother and nurse of charity, and with the same milk she feeds the virtue of obedience. Her raiment given her by this nurse is self-contempt, and insult, desire to displease herself, and to please Me. Where does she find this? In sweet Christ Jesus, My only-begotten Son. For who abased himself more than He did! He was sated with insults, jibes, and mockings. He caused pain to Himself in His bodily life, in order to please Me. And who was more patient than He? for His cry was never heard in murmuring, but He patiently embraced His injuries like one enamoured, fulfilling the obedience imposed on Him by Me, His Eternal Father. Wherefore in Him thou wilt find obedience perfectly accomplished. He left you this rule and this doctrine, which gives you life, for it is the straight way, having first observed them Himself. He is the way, wherefore He said, '*He was the Way, the Truth, and the Life.*' For he who travels by that way, travels in

the light, and being enlightened cannot stumble, or be caused to fall, without perceiving it. For He has cast from Himself the darkness of self-love, by which he fell into disobedience; for as I spoke to thee of a companion virtue proceeding from obedience and humility, so I tell you that disobedience comes from pride, which issues from self-love depriving the soul of humility. The sister given by self-love to disobedience is impatience, and pride, her foster-mother, feeds her with the darkness of infidelity, so she hastens along the way of darkness, which leads her to eternal death. All this you should read in that glorious book, where you find described this and every other virtue."

#### CHAPTER CXXXVI.

How obedience is the key with which Heaven is opened, and how the soul should fasten it by means of a cord to her girdle, and of the excellences of obedience.

"Now that I have shown thee where obedience is to be found, and whence she comes, and who is her companion, and who her foster-mother, I will continue to speak of the obedient and of the disobedient together, and of obedience in general, which is the obedience of the precepts; and in particular, which is that of the counsels. The whole of your faith is founded upon obedience, for by it you prove your fidelity. You are all in general by My truth to obey the commandments of the law, the chief of which is to love Me above everything, and your neighbour as yourself, and the commandments are so bound up together, that you cannot observe or transgress one without observing or transgressing all. He who observes this principal commandment observes all the others; he is faithful to Me and his neighbour, for he loves Me and My creature, and is therefore obedient, becoming subject to the commandments of the law, and to creatures for My

sake, and with humble patience he endures every labour, and even his neighbour's detraction of him. This obedience is of such excellence that ye all derive grace from it, just as from disobedience you all derive death. Wherefore it is not enough that it should be only in word, and not practised by you. I have already told you that this word is the key which opens heaven, which key My Son placed in the hands of His vicar. This vicar placed it in the hands of every one who receives holy baptism, promising therein to renounce the world and all its pomps and delights, and to obey. So that each man has in his own person that very same key which the Word had, and if a man does not unlock in the light of faith, and with the hand of love the gate of heaven by means of this key, he never will enter there, in spite of its having been opened by the Word; for though I created you without yourselves, I will not save you without yourselves. Wherefore you must take the key in your hand and walk by the doctrine of My Word, and not remain seated that is to say, placing your love in finite things, as do foolish men who follow the first man, their first father, following his example, and casting the key of obedience into the mud of impurity, breaking it with the hammer of pride, rusting it with self-love. It would have been entirely destroyed had not My only begotten Son, the Word, come and taken this key of obedience in His hands and purified it in the fire of divine love, having drawn it out of the mud, and cleansed it with His blood, and straightened it with the knife of justice, and hammered your iniquities into shape on the anvil of His own body. So perfectly did He repair it that no matter how much a man may have spoilt his key by his free-will, by the self-same free-will, assisted by My grace, he can repair it with the same instruments that were used by My Word. Oh! blinder than the blind, for, having spoilt the key of obedience, thou dost not think of mending it! Dost thou think forsooth that the disobedience which closed the door of Heaven will open it? that the pride which fell can rise? Dost thou think to be admitted to the marriage feast in foul and disordered garments? Dost thou think that

sitting down and binding thyself with the chain of mortal sin, thou canst walk? or that without a key thou canst open the door? Do not imagine that thou canst, for it is a fantastical delusion; thou must be firm, thou must leave mortal sin by a holy confession, contrition of heart, satisfaction, and purpose of amendment. Then thou wilt throw off that hideous and defiled garment and, clothed in the shining nuptial robe, wilt hasten, the key of obedience in thy hand, to open the door. But bind this key with the cord of self-contempt, and hatred of thyself and of the world, and fasten it to the love of pleasing Me, Thy creator, of which thou shouldest make a girdle to thyself to bind thy loins with it, for fear thou lose it. Know, My daughter, there are many who take up this key of obedience, having seen by the light of faith that in no other way can they escape eternal damnation; but they hold it in their hand without wearing this girdle, or fastening the key to it with the cord of self-contempt, that is to say that, they are not perfectly clothed with My pleasure, but still seek to please themselves; they do not wear the cord of self-contempt, for they do not desire to be despised, but rather take delight in the praise of men. Such as these are apt to lose their key; for if they suffer a little extra fatigue, or mental or corporal tribulation, and if, as often happens, the hand of holy desire loosens its grasp, they will lose it. They can indeed find it again if they wish to while they live, but if they do not wish they will never find it, and what will prove to them, that they have lost it? Impatience, for patience was united to obedience, and their impatience proves that obedience does not dwell in their soul. Oh! how sweet and glorious is this virtue, which contains all the rest, for she is conceived and born of charity, on her is founded the rock of the holy faith. She is a queen whose consort will feel no trouble, but only peace and quiet; the waves of the stormy sea cannot hurt her, nor can any tempest reach the interior of the soul in whom she dwells. Such a one feels no hatred when injured, because he wishes to obey the precept of forgiveness, he suffers not when his appetites are not satisfied,

because obedience has ordered him to desire Me alone, who can and will satisfy all his desires, if he strip himself of worldly riches. And so in all things which would be too long to relate, he who has chosen as spouse Queen Obedience, the appointed key of heaven, finds peace and quiet. Oh! blessed obedience! thou voyagest without fatigue, and reachest without danger the port of salvation, thou art conformed to My only begotten Son, the Word, thou boardest the ship of the holy cross, forcing thyself to endure, so as not to transgress the obedience of the Word, nor abandon His doctrine, of which thou makest a table when thou eatest the food of souls, dwelling in the love of thy neighbour, being anointed with true humility, which saves thee from coveting, contrary to My will, his possessions, thou walkest erect, without bending, for thy heart is sincere and not false, loving generously and truly My creatures, thou art a sunrise drawing after thee the light of divine grace, thou art a sun which makes the earth, that is to say, the organs of the soul, to germinate with the heat of charity, all of which as well as those of the body produce life-giving fruit for thyself and thy neighbour. Thou art even cheerful, for thy face is never wrinkled with impatience, but smooth and pleasant with the happiness of patience, and even in its fortitude thou art great by thy long endurance, so long that it reaches from earth to heaven and unlocks the celestial door. Thou art a hidden pearl, trampled by the world, abasing thyself, submitting to all creatures. Yet thy kingdom is so great that no one can rule thee, for thou hast come out of the mortal servitude of thy own sensuality, which destroyed thy dignity, and having slain this enemy with hatred and dislike of thy own pleasure hast re-obtained thy liberty."

## CHAPTER CXXXVII.

Here both the misery of the disobedient and the excellence of the obedient are spoken of.

“ALL this, dearest daughter, has been done by My goodness and providence as I have told thee, for by My providence the Word repaired the key of obedience, but worldly men devoid of every virtue do the contrary, they, like unbridled horses, without the bit of obedience, go from bad to worse, from sin to sin, from misery to misery, from darkness to darkness, from death to death, until they finally reach the edge of the ditch of death, gnawed by the worm of their conscience, and though it is true that they can obey the precepts of the law if they will, and have the time repenting of their disobedience, it is very hard for them to do so, on account of their long habit of sin. Therefore let no man trust to this, putting off his finding of the key of obedience to the moment of his death, for although every one may and should hope as long as he has life, he should not put such trust in this hope as to delay repentance. What is the reason of all this, and of such blindness that prevents them recognising this treasure. The cloud of self-love and wretched pride, through which they abandoned obedience, and fell into disobedience. Being disobedient they are impatient, as has been said, and in their impatience endure intolerable pain, for it has seduced them from the way of Truth, leading them along a way of lies, making them slaves and friends of the devils with whom, unless indeed they amend themselves with patience, they will go to the eternal torments. Contrariwise, My beloved sons, obedient and observers of the law rejoice and exult in My eternal vision with the Immaculate and humble Lamb, the Maker, Fulfiller, and Giver of this law of obedience. Observing this law in this life they taste peace without any disturbance, they receive and clothe themselves in the most perfect peace, for there they possess every good without any evil, safety without any

fear, riches without any poverty, satiety without disgust, hunger without pain, light without darkness, one supreme infinite good, shared by all those who taste it truly. What has placed them in so blessed a state? The blood of the Lamb, by virtue of which the key of obedience has lost its rust, so that, by the virtue of the blood, it has been able to unlock the door. Oh! fools and madmen, delay no longer to come out of the mud of impurity, for you seem like pigs to wallow in the mire of your own lust. Abandon the injustice, murders, hatreds, rancours, detractions, murmurings, false judgments, and cruelty, with which you use your neighbours, your thefts and treacheries, and the disordinate pleasures and delights of the world; cut off the horns of pride, by which amputation you will extinguish the hatred which is in your heart against your neighbours. Compare the injuries which you do to Me and to your neighbour with those done to you, and you will see that those done to you are but trifles. You will see that remaining in hatred you injure Me by transgressing My precept, and you also injure the object of your hate for you deprive him of your love, whereas you have been commanded to love Me above everything, and your neighbour as yourself. No gloss has been put upon these words as if it should have been said, if your neighbour injures you do not love him; but they are to be taken naturally and simply, as they were said to you by My Truth, who Himself literally observed this rule. Literally also should you observe it, and if you do not you will injure your own soul, depriving it of the life of grace. Take, oh! take then, the key of obedience with the light of faith, walk no longer in such darkness or cold, but observe obedience in the fire of love, so that ye may taste eternal life together with the other observers of the law."

## CHAPTER CXXXVIII.

Of those who have such love for obedience that they do not remain content with the general obedience of precepts, but take on themselves a particular obedience.

“THERE are some, My dearest daughter, in whom the sweet and amorous fire of love towards obedience burns so high (which fire of love cannot exist without hatred of self-love, so that when the fire increases so does this self-hatred), that they are not content to observe the precepts of the Law with a general obedience as you are all obliged to do if you will have life and not death, but take upon themselves a particular obedience, following the greatest perfection, so that they become observers of the counsels both in deed and in thought. Such as these wish to bind themselves more tightly through self-hatred, and in order to restrain in everything their own will. They either place themselves under the yoke of obedience in holy religion, or, without entering religion, they bind themselves to some creature, submitting their will to his, so as more expeditiously to unlock the door of Heaven. These are they, as I have told thee, who have chosen the most perfect obedience. I have already spoken to thee of obedience in general, and as I know it to be thy will that I should speak to thee of this particular and most perfect obedience, I will now relate to thee somewhat of this second kind, which is not divided from the first, but is more perfect, for, as I have already told thee, these two kinds of obedience are so closely united together that they cannot be separated. I have told thee where general obedience is to be found and whence it proceeds, and the cause of its loss. Now I will speak to thee of this particular obedience, not altering, however, the fundamental principle of the virtue.”



## CHAPTER CXXXIX.

How a soul advances from general to particular obedience; and of the excellence of the religious orders.

“THE soul who with love has submitted to the yoke of obedience, to the Commandments, following the doctrine of My truth virtuously exercising herself, as has been said, in this general kind of obedience will advance to the second kind by means of the same light which brought her to the first, for by the light of the most holy faith she would have learnt, in the blood of the humble Lamb, My truth—the ineffable love which I have for her, and her own fragility, which cannot respond to Me with due perfection. So she wanders, seeking by that light in what place and in what way she can pay her debt, trampling on her own fragility, and restraining her own will. Enlightened in her search by faith, she finds the place—namely, holy religion—which has been founded by the Holy Spirit, appointed as the ship to receive souls who wish to hasten to perfection, and to bring them to the port of salvation. The Captain of this ship is the Holy Spirit, who never fails in Himself through the defects of any of His religious subjects who may transgress the rule of the order. The ship itself cannot be damaged, but only the offender. It is true that the mistake of the steersman may send her down into the billows, and these are wicked pastors and prelates appointed by the Master of the ship. The ship herself is so delightful that thy tongue could not narrate it. I say, then, that the soul, on fire with desire and a holy self-hatred, having found her place by the light of faith, enters there as one dead, if she is truly obedient; that is to say, if she have perfectly observed general obedience. And even if she should be imperfect when she enters, it does not follow that she cannot attain perfection. On the contrary, she attains it by exercising herself in the virtue of obedience; indeed, most of those who enter are imperfect. There are some who enter already in perfection, others in the child-

hood of virtue, others through fear, others through penance, others through allurements, everything depends on whether after they have entered they exercise themselves in virtue, and persevere till death, for no true judgment can be made on a person's entrance into religion, but only on their perseverance, for many have appeared to be perfect who have afterwards turned back, or remained in the order with much imperfection, so that, as I have said, the act of entrance into this ship ordained by Me, who call men in different ways, does not supply material for a real judgment, but only the love of those who persevere therein with true obedience. This ship is rich, so that there is no need for the subject to think about his necessities either temporal or spiritual, for if he is truly obedient, and observes his order, he will be provided for by his Master, who is the Holy Spirit, as I told thee when I spoke to thee of My providence, saying that though thy servants might be poor, they were never beggars. No more are these, for they find everything they need, and those who observe this order find this to be indeed true. Wherefore, see that in the days when the religious orders lived virtuously, blossoming with true poverty and fraternal charity, their temporal substance never failed them, but they had more than their needs demanded. But because the stench of self-love has entered and caused each to keep his private possessions and to fail in obedience, their temporal substance has failed, and the more they possess to the greater destitution do they come. It is just that even in the smallest matters they should experience the fruit of disobedience, for had they been obedient and observed the vow of poverty, each would not have taken his own, and lived privately. See the riches of these holy rules, so thoughtfully and luminously appointed by those who were temples of the Holy Spirit. See with what judgment Benedict ordered his ship; see with what perfection and order of poverty Francis ordered his ship, decked with the pearls of virtue, steering it in the way of lofty perfection, being the first to give his order for spouse, true and holy poverty, whom he had chosen for himself, embracing self-

contempt and self-hatred, not desiring to please any creature but only thy will ; desiring rather to be thought vile by the world, macerating his body and slaying his will, clothing himself in insults, sufferings, and jibes, for love of the humble Lamb, with Whom he was fastened and nailed to the cross by love, so that by a singular grace there appeared in his body the very wounds of thy Truth, showing in the vessel of his body that which was in the love of his soul, so he prepared the way.

“ But thou wilt say, ‘Are not all the other religious orders equally founded on this point?’ Yes, but though they are all founded on it, in no other is this the principal foundation ; as with the virtues, though all the virtues draw their life from charity, nevertheless, as I explained to thee in another place, one virtue belongs especially to one man, and another to another, and yet they all remain in charity, so with the principal foundation of the religious orders. Poverty belonged especially to My poor man Francis, who placed the principal foundation of his order in love for this poverty, and made it very strict for those who were perfect, for the few and the good, not for the majority. I say few because they are not many who choose this perfection, though now through their sins they are multiplied in numbers and deficient in virtue, not through defect of the ship, but through disobedient subjects and wicked rulers. Now look at the ship of thy father Dominic, My beloved son : he ordered it most perfectly, wishing that his sons should apply themselves only to My honour and the salvation of souls, with the light of science, which light he laid as his principal foundation, not, however, on that account, being deprived of true and voluntary poverty, but having it also. And as a sign that he had it truly, and that the contrary displeased him, he left as an heirloom to his sons his curse and Mine, if they should hold any possessions, either privately or in community, as a sign that he had chosen for his spouse Queen Poverty. But for his more immediate and personal object he took the light of science in order to extirpate the errors which had arisen in his time, thus taking on him the office of My only-begotten Son, the

Word. Rightly he appeared as an apostle in the world, and sowed the seed of My Word with much truth and light, dissipating darkness and giving light. He was a light which I gave the world by means of Mary, placed in the mystical body of the Holy Church as an extirpator of heresies. Why do I say by means of Mary? Because Mary gave him his habit—this office was committed to her by My goodness. At what table does he feed his sons with the light of science? At the table of the cross, which is the table of holy desire, when souls are eaten for My honour. Dominic does not wish his sons to apply themselves to anything, but remaining at this table, there to seek with the light of science, the glory and praise of My name alone, and the salvation of souls. And in order that they might do nothing else, he chose poverty for them, so that they might not have the care of temporal things. It is true that some failed in faith, fearing that they would not be provided for, but he never. Being clothed in faith, and hoping with firm confidence in My providence. He wishes his sons to observe obedience and do their duty, and since impure living obscures the eye of the intellect, and not only the eye of the intellect, but also of the body, he does not wish them to obscure their physical light with which they may more perfectly obtain the light of science; wherefore he imposed on them the third vow of continence, and wishes that all should observe it, with true and perfect obedience, although to-day it is badly observed. They also prevent the light of science with the darkness of pride, not that this light can be darkened in itself, but only in their souls, for there, where pride is, can be no obedience. I have already told thee that a man's humility is in proportion to his obedience, and his obedience to his humility, and similarly, when he transgresses the vow of obedience, it rarely happens that he does not also transgress the vow of continence, either in thought or deed; so that he has rigged his ship with the three ropes of obedience, continence, and true poverty; he made it a royal ship, not obliging his subjects under pain of mortal sin, and illuminated by Me the true light, he provided for those who should be less

perfect, for though all who observe the order are perfect in kind, yet one possesses a higher degree of perfection than another, yet all perfect or imperfect live well in this ship. He allied himself with My truth, showing that he did *not desire the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live*. Wherefore his religion is a delightful garden, broad and joyous and fragrant, but the wretches who do not observe the order, but transgress its vows, have turned it into a desert and defiled it with their scanty virtue and light of science, though they are nourished at its breast. I do not say that the order itself is in this condition, for it still possesses every delight, but in the beginning its subjects were not as they are now, but blooming flowers, and men of great perfection. Each seemed to be another St. Paul, their eyes so illuminated that the darkness of error was dissipated by their glance. Look at My glorious Thomas, who gazed with the gentle eye of his intellect at My Truth, whereby he acquired supernatural light and science infused by grace, for he obtained it rather by means of prayer than by human study. He was a brilliant light, illuminating his order and the mystical body of the Holy Church, dissipating the clouds of heresy. Look at My Peter, virgin and martyr, who by his blood gave light among the darkness of many heresies, and the heretics hated him so that at last they took his life; yet while he lived he applied himself to nothing but prayer, preaching, and disputation with heretics, hearing confessions, announcing the truth, and spreading the faith without any fear, to such an extent that he not only confessed it in his life but even at the moment of his death, for when he was at the last extremity, having neither voice nor ink left, having received his death-blow, he dipped his finger in his blood, and this glorious martyr, having not paper on which to write, leaned over, confessing the faith, and wrote the Credo on the ground. His heart burnt in the furnace of My charity, so that he never slackened his pace nor turned his head back, though he knew that he was to die, for I had revealed to him his death, but like a true knight he fearlessly came forth on to the battle-field; and I could tell thee the same of many

others, who though they did not actually experience martyrdom, were martyrs in will like Dominic ; great labourers were these sent by My Father to labour in His vineyard to extirpate the thorns of vice, planting the virtues in their stead. Of a truth Dominic and Francis were two columns of the holy Church. Francis with the poverty which was specially his own, as has been said, and Dominic with his learning."

## CHAPTER CXL.

Of the excellence of the obedient, and of the misery of the disobedient members of the religious orders.

" Now that places suitable for obedience have been found, namely, these ships commanded by the Holy Spirit through the medium of their superiors, for, as I told thee, the Holy Spirit is the true Master of these ships, which are built in the light of the most holy faith by those who have the light to know that My clemency, the Holy Spirit, will steer them, and having thus shown thee the place of obedience and its perfection, I will speak to thee of the obedience and of the disobedience of those who travel in such a ship, speaking of all together and not of one ship—that is, one order—in particular, showing thee the sin of the disobedient and the virtue of the obedient, so that a man may better know the one by contrast with the other, and how he should walk if he would enter the ship of a religious order. How should he walk who wishes to enter this state of perfect and particular obedience ? With the light of holy faith, by which he will know that he must slay his self-will with the knife of hatred of every sensual passion, taking the spouse which charity gives him, together with her sister. The spouse is true and prompt obedience, and the sister, patience ; and he must also take the nurse of humility, for without this nurse obedience would perish of hunger, for obedience soon dies in a soul deprived of this little virtue of humility.

“Humility is not alone but has the handmaid of contempt of self and of the world, which causes the soul to hold herself vile, and not to desire honour but shame. Thus dead to himself, should he who is old enough enter the ship of a religious order, but however he may enter it (for I have told thee that I call souls in diverse ways), he should acquire and preserve this affection, hurrying generously to seize the key of the obedience of his order, which will open the little door which is in the panel of the door of Heaven. Such as these have undertaken to open the little door, doing without the great key of general obedience, which opens the door of Heaven, as I have said to thee. They have taken a little key, passing through a low and narrow opening in the great door. This small door is part of the great door, as thou mayest see in any real door. They should keep this key when they have got it, and not throw it away. And because the truly obedient have seen with the light of faith that they will never be able to pass through this little door with the load of their riches and the weight of their own will without great fatigue and without losing their life, and that they cannot walk with head erect without breaking their neck, whether they wish to or not, they cast from them the load of their riches, and of their own will observing the vow of voluntary poverty, refusing to possess anything, for they see by the light of faith to what ruin they would come if they transgressed obedience, and the vow of poverty which they promised to keep. The disobedient walk in pride, holding their heads erect, and if sometimes it suits their convenience to obey they do not incline their heads with humility, but proudly do so, because they must, which force breaks the neck of their will, for they fulfil their obedience with hatred of their order and of their superior. Little by little they are ruined on another point, for they transgress the vow of continence, for he who does not constrain his appetite or strip himself of temporal substance makes many relations and finds plenty of friends who love him for their own profit. From these relations they go on to close intimacies, their body they tend luxuriously, for being without either

the nurse of humility or her sister, self-contempt, they live in their own pleasure richly and delicately, not like religious but like nobles, without watching or prayer. This and many other things happen to them because they have money to spend, for if they had it not they could not spend it. They fall into mental and physical impurity, for if sometimes from shame or through lack of means they abstain physically, they indulge themselves mentally, for it is impossible for a man with many worldly relations, of delicate habits and disordinate greediness, who watches not nor prays, to preserve his mind pure. Wherefore the perfectly obedient man sees from afar with the light of holy faith the evil and the loss which would come to him from temporal possessions and from walking weighed down by his own will; he also sees that he is obliged to pass by this narrow door, and that in such a state he would die before he would be able to pass it, having no key of obedience wherewith to open it, for as I said to thee, he is obliged to pass through it. Wherefore it is that whether he will or no he should not leave the ship of the order, but should walk the narrow path of obedience to his superior.

“Wherefore the perfectly obedient man rises above himself and his own sensuality, and rising above his own feelings with living faith, places self-hatred as servant in the house of his soul to drive out the enemy of self-love, for he does not wish that his spouse, Obedience, given him with the light of faith by her mother, Charity, should be offended; so he drives out the enemy and puts in his place the nurse and companions of his spouse.

“The love of obedience places in the house of his soul the lovers of his spouse, Obedience, who are the true and royal virtues, the customs and observances of his order, so that this sweet spouse enters his soul with her sister, Patience, and her nurse, Humility, together with Self-contempt and Self-hatred, and when she has entered she possesses peace and quiet, for her enemies have been exiled. She dwells in the garden of true continence, with the sun of intellectual light shining in, the eye of holy faith



fixed on the object of My truth, for her object is My truth, and the fire of love with which she observes the rules of the order, warms all her servants and companions.

“Who are her enemies who have been expelled? The chief is self-love, producing pride, the enemy of humility and charity. Impatience is the enemy of patience, disobedience of true obedience, infidelity of faith, presumption and self-confidence do not accord with the true hope which the soul should have in Me; injustice cannot be conformed to justice, nor imprudence to prudence, nor intemperance to temperance, nor the transgression of the commandments of the order to perfect observance of them, nor the wicked conversation of those who live in sin to the good conversation of My servants. These are a man's enemies, causing him to leave the good customs and traditions of his order. He has also those other cruel enemies, anger, which wars against his benevolence; cruelty, against his kindness; wrath, against his benignity; hatred of virtue, against the love of virtue; impurity, against chastity; negligence, against solicitude; ignorance, against knowledge, and sloth against watchfulness and continued prayer.

“And since he knew by the light of faith that all these were his enemies who would defile his spouse, holy obedience, he appointed hatred to drive them out, and love to replace them with her friends. Wherefore with the knife of hatred he slew his perverse self-will, who, nourished by self-love, gave life to all these enemies of true obedience, and having cut off the source by which all the others are preserved in life, he remains free and in peace without any war, for there is no one to make war on him, for the soul has cut of from herself that which kept her in bitterness and in sadness. What makes war on obedience? Injuries? No, for the obedient man is patient, patience being the sister of obedience. The weight of the observances of the order? No, for obedience causes him to fulfil them. Does the weight of obedience give him pain? No, for he has trampled on his own will, and does not care to examine or judge the will of his

superior, for with the light of faith he sees My will in him, believing truly that My clemency causes him to command according to the needs of his subject's salvation. Is he disgusted and angry at having to perform the humble duties of the order or to endure the mockeries, reproofs, jibes, and insults which are often cast at him, or to be held at little worth? No, for he has conceived love for self-contempt and self-hatred. Wherefore he rejoices with patience, exulting with delight and joy in the company of his spouse true obedience, for the only thing which saddens him is to see Me, his Creator, offended. His conversation is with those who truly fear Me, and if he should converse with those who are separated from My Will, it is not in order to conform himself to their sins, but to draw them out of their misery, for through the brotherly love which he has in his heart towards them he would like to give them the good which he possesses, seeing that more glory and praise would be given to My name by many observing aright their order than by him doing so alone. Wherefore he endeavours to convert religious and seculars by his words and by prayer, and by every means by which he can draw them out of the darkness of mortal sin. Thus the conversations of a truly obedient man are good and perfect, whether they be with just men or with sinners, through his rightly ordered love and the breadth of his charity. Of his cell he makes a heaven, delighting there to converse with Me, his supreme and eternal Father, with the affection of love, flying idleness with humble and continual prayer, and when, through the illusion of the Devil, thoughts come crowding into his cell, he does not sit down on the bed of negligence embracing idleness, nor care to examine by reason the thoughts or opinions of his heart, but he flies sloth, rising above himself and his senses with hatred and true humility, patiently enduring the weariness which he feels in his mind, and resisting by watching and humble prayer, fixing the eye of his intellect on Me, and seeing with the light of faith that I am his helper, and both can and will help him, and open to him the eyes of My kindness, and that it is I who permit this suffering in order

that he may be more eager to fly himself and come to Me. And if it should seem to him that on account of his great weariness and the darkness of his mind, mental prayer is impossible, he recites vocal prayers, or busies himself with some corporal exercises, so that by these means he may avoid idleness. He looks at Me with the light which I give him through love, which draws forth true humility, for he deems himself unworthy of the peace and quiet of mind of My other servants, but rather worthy of pain, for he despises himself in his own mind with hatred and self-reproach, thinking that he can never endure enough pain, for neither his hope nor My providence fail him, but with faith and the key of obedience he passes over this stormy sea in the ship of his order, dwelling thus in his cell as has been said, and avoiding idleness.

“The obedient man wishes to be the first to enter choir and the last to leave it, and when he sees a brother more obedient than himself he regards him in his eagerness with a holy envy, stealing from him the virtue in which he excels, not wishing, however, that his brother should have less thereof, for if he wished this he would be separated from brotherly love. The obedient man does not leave the refectory, but visits it continually and delights at being at table with the poor. And as a sign that he delights therein, and so as to have no reason to remain without, he has abandoned his temporal substance, observing so perfectly the vow of poverty that he blames himself for considering even the necessities of his body. His cell is full of the odour of poverty, and not of clothes; he has no fear that thieves will come to rob him, or that rust or moths will corrupt his garments; and if anything is given to him, he does not think of laying it by for his own use, but freely shares it with his brethren, not thinking of the morrow, but rather depriving himself to-day of what he needs, thinking only of the kingdom of heaven and how he may best observe true obedience.

“And in order that he may better keep to the path of humility, he submits to small and great, to poor and rich, and becomes the servant of all, never refusing labour, but

serving all with charity. The obedient man does not wish to fulfil his obedience in his own way, or to choose his time or place, but prefers the way of his order and of his superior. All this the truly and perfectly obedient man does without pain and weariness of mind. He passes with this key in his hand through the narrow door of the order, easily and without violence, because he observes the vows of poverty, true obedience, and continence, having abandoned the heights of pride, and bowed his head to obedience through humility. He does not break his neck through impatience, but is patient with fortitude and enduring perseverance, the friends of obedience. Thus he passes by the assaults of the devils, mortifying and macerating his flesh, stripping it bare of all pleasures and delights and clothing it with the labours of the order in a faith which despises nothing, for as a child who does not remember the blows and injuries inflicted on him by his father, so this child of the spirit does not remember the injuries, pains, or blows inflicted on him by his superior in the order, but calling him humbly, turns to him without anger, hatred, or rancour, but with meekness and benevolence.

“These are those little ones of whom My Truth spoke to the disciples, who were contending among themselves which of them should be the greater, for calling a child, He said: *‘Allow the little ones to come to Me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven to be; whoever will not humble himself like this child (that is, who will not keep this childlike condition), shall not enter the kingdom of heaven. For he who humbles himself, dearest daughter, will be exalted, and he who exalts himself will be humbled,’* which also was said to you by My Truth. Justly, therefore, are these humble little ones, humiliated and subjected through love, with true and holy obedience, who do not kick against the pricks of their order or superior, exalted by Me, the supreme and eternal Father, with the true citizens of the blessed life, when they are rewarded for all their labours, and in this life also do they taste eternal life.”

## CHAPTER CXLI.

How the truly obedient receive a hundredfold for one, and also eternal life; and what is meant by this one, and this hundredfold.

“ IN them is fulfilled the saying of the sweet and amorous Word, My only-begotten Son, in the gospel when He replied to Peter’s demand, ‘*Master, we have left everything for thy love’s sake, and have followed Thee, what wilt Thou give us?*’ My truth replied, ‘*I will give you a hundredfold for one, and you shall possess eternal life?*’ As if My Truth had wished to say, “Thou hast done well, Peter, for in no other way couldest thou follow Me. And I, in this life, will give thee a hundredfold for one. And what is this hundredfold, beloved daughter, besides which the apostle obtained eternal life? To what did My Truth refer? To temporal substance?”

“ Properly speaking, no. Do I not, however often cause one who gives alms to multiply in temporal goods? In return for what do I this? In return for the gift of his own will. This is the one for which I repay him a hundredfold. What is the meaning of the number a hundred? A hundred is a perfect number, and cannot be added to except by recommencing from the first. So charity is the most perfect of all the virtues, so perfect that no higher virtue can be attained, except by recommencing at the beginning of self-knowledge, and thus increasing many hundredfold in merit; but you always necessarily arrive at the number one hundred. This is that hundredfold which is given to those who have given Me the unit of their own will, both in general obedience, and in the particular obedience of the religious life. And in addition to this hundred you also possess eternal life, for charity alone enters into eternal life, like a mistress bringing with her the fruit of all the other virtues, while they remain outside, bringing their fruit, I say, into Me, the eternal life, in whom the obedient taste eternal life. It is

not by faith that they taste eternal life, for they experience in its essence that which they have believed through faith ; nor by hope, for they possess that for which they had hoped, and so with all the other virtues, Queen Charity alone enters and possesses Me, her possessor. See, therefore, that these little ones receive a hundredfold for one, and also eternal life, for here they receive the fire of divine charity figured by the number a hundred (as has been said). And because they have received this hundredfold from Me, they possess a wonderful and hearty joy, for there is no sadness in charity, but the joy of it makes the heart large and generous, not narrow or double. A soul wounded by this sweet arrow does not appear one thing in face and tongue while her heart is different. She does not serve, or act towards her neighbour with dissembling and ambition, because charity is an open book to be read by all. Wherefore the soul who possesses charity never falls into trouble, or the affliction of sadness, or jars with obedience, but remains obedient until death."

## CHAPTER CXLII.

Of the perversities, miseries, and labours of the disobedient man ; and of the miserable fruits which proceed from disobedience.

"CONTRARIWISE, a wicked disobedient man dwells in the ship of a religious order with so much pain to himself and others, that in this life he tastes the earnest of hell, he remains always in sadness and confusion of mind, tormented by the sting of conscience, with hatred of his order and superior, insupportable to himself. What a terrible thing it is, My daughter, to see one who has once taken the key of obedience of a religious order, living in disobedience, to which he has made himself a slave, for of disobedience he has made his mistress with her companion impatience, nourished by pride, and his own pleasure, which pride (as has been said) issues from self-love. For

him everything is the contrary to what it would be for the obedient man. For how can this wretch be in any other state than suffering, for he is deprived of charity, he is obliged by force to incline the neck of his own will, and pride keeps it erect, all his desires are in discord with the will of the order. The order commands obedience, and he loves disobedience; the order commands voluntary poverty, and he avoids it, possessing and acquiring riches; the order commands continence and purity, and he desires lewdness. By transgressing these three vows, My daughter, a religious comes to ruin, and falls into so many miseries, that his aspect is no longer that of a religious but of an incarnate devil, as in another place I related to thee at greater length. I will, however, tell thee something now of their delusion, and of the fruit which they obtained by disobedience to the commendation and exhortation of obedience. This wretched man is deluded by his self-love, because the eye of his intellect is fixed, with a dead faith, on pleasing his self-will, and on things of the world. He left the world in body, but remained there in his affections, and because obedience seems wearisome to him he wishes to disobey in order to avoid weariness; whereby he arrives at the greatest weariness of all, for he is obliged to obey either by force or by love, and it would have been better and less wearisome to have obeyed by love than without it. Oh! how deluded he is, and no one else deceives him but himself. Wishing to please himself he only gives himself displeasure, for the actions which he will have to do, through the obedience imposed on him, do not please him. He wishes to enjoy delights and make this life his eternity, but the order wishes him to be a pilgrim, and continually proves it to him; for when he is in a nice pleasant resting place, where he would like to remain for the pleasures and delights he finds there, he is transferred elsewhere, and the change gives him pain, for his will was active against his obedience, and yet he is obliged to endure the discipline and labours of the order, and thus remains in continual torment. See, therefore, how he deludes himself; for, wishing to fly pain, he on the contrary falls into it, for his

blindness does not let him know the road of true obedience, which is a road of truth founded by the obedient Lamb, My only-begotten Son, who removed pain from it, so that he walks by the road of lies, believing that he will find delight there, but finding on the contrary pain and bitterness. Who is his guide? Self-love, that is his own passion for disobedience. Such a man thinks like a fool to navigate this tempestuous sea, with the strength of his own arms, trusting in his own miserable knowledge, and will not navigate it in the arms of his order, and of his superior. Such a one is indeed in the ship of the order in body, and not in mind; he has quitted it in desire, not observing the regulations or customs of the order, nor the three vows which he promised to observe at the time of his profession; he swims in the tempestuous sea, tossed to and fro by contrary winds, fastened only to the ship by his clothes, wearing the religious habit on his body but not on his heart. Such a one is no friar, but a masquerader, a man only in appearance. His life is lower than an animal's, and he does not see that he labours more swimming with his arms, than the good religious in the ship, or that he is in danger of eternal death; for if his clothes should be suddenly torn from the ship, which will happen at the moment of death, he will have no remedy. No, he does not see, for he has darkened his light with the cloud of self-love, whence has come his disobedience, which prevents him seeing his misery, wherefore he miserably deceives himself. What fruit is produced by this wretched tree?

“The fruit of death, because the root of his affection is planted in pride, which he has drawn from self-love. Wherefore everything that issues from this root—flowers, leaves, and fruit—is corrupt, and the three boughs of this tree, which are obedience, poverty, and continence, which spring from the foot of the tree; that is, his affections are corrupted. The leaves produced by this tree, which are his words, are so corrupt that they would be out of place in the mouth of a ribald secular; and if he have to preach My doctrine, he does so in polished terms, not simply, as



one who should feed souls with the seed of My Word, but with eloquent language. Look at the stinking flowers of this tree, which are his diverse and various thoughts, which he voluntarily welcomes with delight and pleasure, not flying the occasions of them, but rather seeking them in order to be able to accomplish a sinful act, the which is the fruit which kills him, depriving him of the light of grace, and giving him eternal death. And what stench comes from this fruit, sprung from the flowers of the tree? The stench of disobedience, for, in the secret of his heart, he wishes to examine and judge unfaithfully his superior's will; a stench of impurity, for he takes delight in many foul conversations, wretchedly tempting his penitents.

“Wretch that thou art, dost thou not see that under the colour of devotion thou concealest a troop of children? This comes from thy disobedience. Thou hast not chosen the virtues for thy children as does the truly obedient religious; thou strivest to deceive thy superior when thou seest that he denies thee something which thy perverse will desires, using the leaves of smooth or rough words, speaking irreverently and reproving him. Thou canst not endure thy brother, nor even the smallest word and reproof which he may make to thee, but in such a case thou immediately bringest forth the poisoned fruit of anger and hatred against him, judging that to be done to thy hurt which was done for thy good, and thus taking scandal, thy soul and body living in pain. Why has thy brother displeased thee? Because thou livest for thy own sensual pleasure, thou fliest thy cell as if it were a prison, for thou hast abandoned the cell of self-knowledge, and thus fallen into disobedience, wherefore thou canst not remain in thy material cell. Thou wilt not appear in the refectory against thy will whilst thou hast anything to spend; when thou hast nothing left necessity takes thee there.

“Therefore the obedient have done well, who have chosen to observe their vow of poverty, so that they have nothing to spend, and therefore are not led away from the sweet table of the refectory, where obedience nourishes both body and soul in peace and quiet. The obedient religious does

not think of laying a table, or of providing food for himself like this wretched man, to whose taste it is painful to eat in the refectory, wherefore he avoids it ; he is always the last to enter the choir, and the first to leave it ; with his lips he approaches Me, with his heart he is far from Me. He gladly escapes from the chapter-house when he can through fear of penance. When he is obliged to be there, he is covered with shame and confusion for the faults which he felt it no shame to commit. What is the cause of this ? Disobedience. He does not watch in prayer, and not only does he omit mental prayer, but even the Divine office to which he is obliged. He has no fraternal charity, because he loves no one but himself, and that not with a reasonable but with a bestial love. So great are the evils which fall on the disobedient ; so many are the fruits of sorrow which he produces, that thy tongue could not relate them. Oh ! disobedience, which deprives the soul of the light of obedience, destroying peace, and giving war ! Disobedience destroys life and gives death, drawing the religious out of the ship of the observance of his order, to drown him in the sea, making him swim in the strength of his own arms, and not repose on those of the order. Disobedience clothes him with every misery, causes him to die of hunger, taking away from him the food of the merit of obedience, it gives him continual bitterness, depriving him of every sweetness and good, causing him to dwell with every evil. In this life it gives him the earnest of cruel torments to endure, and if he do not amend before his clothes are loosened from the ship at death, disobedience will lead the soul to eternal damnation, together with the devils who fell from heaven, because they rebelled against Me. In the same way hast thou, oh ! disobedient man, having rebelled against obedience and cast from thee the key which would have opened the door of heaven, opened instead the door of hell with the key of disobedience."

## CHAPTER CXLIII.

Of the imperfection of those who live tepidly in religion, because they guard against mortal sin only ; and of the remedy by which they can be cured of their tepidity.

“ How many are these, dearest daughter, who live thus to-day in this ship ?

“ Many, for there are but few of the opposite sort, that is to say, who are truly obedient. There are, however, between those who are perfect and these wretches, a goodly number of those who live in an ordinary way in their order, neither perfectly as they ought, nor wickedly ; preserving, that is to say, their conscience in that they do not sin mortally, but living in tepidity and coldness of heart. Wherefore, if these do not exercise themselves a little in the observance of the order, they are in great danger, and stand in need of much watchfulness, and of being roused from their tepidity, for if they remain as they are they are very apt to fall, and even if they do not fall, they live according to their own choice and human pleasure, under colour of a religious life, studying rather to observe the ceremonies of the order, than the order itself—so that often through their scanty light they will be disposed to judge those who observe the order more perfectly than they do, though fulfilling the ceremonies to which they are so devoted with less perfection. Wherefore, in every way it is dangerous for them to remain in this commonplace obedience ; for they coldly fulfil their obediences with much labour and pain, because to a cold heart it is wearisome to endure anything, and however much they may endure, they have but little fruit of it. They offend against their own perfection on which they have entered, and which they are bound to observe, and although they do less evil than those others of whom I have spoken to thee, they yet do evil. For they did not leave the world to content themselves with the key of obedience in general, but in order to unlock the door of Heaven with the special key of the obedience of

their order, which should be fastened with the cord of self-contempt to the girdle of humility, as has been said, and held tightly in the hand of burning love. Thou must know, dearest daughter, that these are indeed fit to reach great perfection if they choose, because they are nearer to it than those other wretches, but in another sense it is harder to raise them from their imperfections, than the wicked man from his sin. Dost thou know why? Because the sinner knows clearly that he does evil, and his conscience shows it him, and self-love which has weakened him is the reason why he does not struggle to abandon the sin which he sees to be evil, with a natural light. Wherefore if you ask such a one—‘Dost thou not know it to be evil to do this?’ He will reply—‘Yes, but so great is my fragility that I do not seem able to escape from it.’ It is not indeed true, for with My help he can escape if he wish; nevertheless, he knows that he is doing wrong, which knowledge renders it easy for him to abandon his sin, if he really wills to do so. But these tepid ones who neither do much harm nor much good do not recognise their state of obedience, nor how uncertain is their position; not knowing it they take no pains to rise from it nor do they care to have it pointed out to them, and indeed, even when it is shown them, they remain bound by the chain of habit and custom through the coldness of their heart. How shall they be made to rise from their condition? Let them take self-knowledge and hatred of their own pleasure and reputation and place them as fuel on the fire of My divine charity, betrothing themselves afresh, as they did when they entered the order, to the spouse of true obedience with the ring of holy faith, and let them no longer sleep in that state which is very displeasing to Me and dangerous to them. Rightly can the word be said to them, *Be accursed, ye who are lukewarm; if only ye were altogether cold; if ye do not amend, I will vomit you out of My mouth.* And how will this happen? In the way which I have told thee, for if they do not rise they are apt to fall, and if they fall they will be reprobated by Me. I would prefer that they should be as ice, that is to say, that they should have remained in the world under

general obedience, which is, as it were, a block of ice, compared with the fire of the truly obedient. Wherefore I said, *If only you were cold.* I have explained the words to thee in order that thou mightest not fall into the error of thinking that I would rather that a man should be in the ice of mortal sin, than in the tepidity of imperfection. No, it is not possible for Me to wish any man to be in sin, for the poison of sin has no place in Me; on the contrary, sin displeased Me so much in man, that I did not let it pass without punishment, and since man was not sufficient to endure the pain due to his sin—I rent the Word—My only begotten Son, and He obediently worked out this pain in His own body. Let them arise therefore and exercise themselves in watching and humble and continual prayer—let them look at their order, and on their founders who were men as they are, fed by the same food, bound in the same way, and having the same God then as now. My Power has not grown weak; My will desires your salvation no less than theirs; My wisdom has not grown dim, but still illuminates you, so that you may know My truth. Therefore they can rise if they will—if, that is to say—they will place their state before the eye of their intellect, piercing the cloud of self-love, and running in the light with those who are perfectly obedient. In this way they will join them, but in no other—so this is their remedy.”

#### CHAPTER CXLIV.

Of the excellence of obedience, and of the advantages which it brings to him who truly lays hold of it.

“THIS is the true remedy, possessed by the really obedient man, who renews it every day, increasing the virtue of obedience with the light of faith, longing for insults and mockery, that heavy labours should be imposed on him by his superior for the virtue of obedience, and of her sister patience not to grow rusty. So that when the time comes

that they are needed, they never fail or become difficult to exercise, wherefore the obedient man is continually sounding the instrument of his desire, and lets no opportunity pass, so great is his appetite for obedience. Obedience is an eager spouse who does not wish to remain idle. Oh! delightful obedience! Oh! pleasant! Oh! sweet! Oh! illuminative! For thou hast scattered the darkness of self-love. Thou, oh! vivifying obedience, givest the life of grace to the soul, who has chosen thee for spouse, slaying his own will, which brings war and death to the soul. Thou art so generous that thou subjectest thyself to every rational creature. Thou art benignant and kind, and meekly bearest the greatest weights, for thou art accompanied by fortitude and true patience. Thou art crowned with true perseverance, thou dost not fail through the importunity of thy superior on account of the heavy loads which he indiscreetly may impose upon thee, but with the light of faith endurest everything. Thou art so closely bound to humility that no creature can snatch thee from the hand of the soul (which is holy desire) who possesses thee.

“What more can we say, dearest and beloved daughter, of this most excellent virtue? We will say that it is a good without any admixture of evil—that it remains hidden in the ship—so that no contrary wind may hurt it, that it causes the soul to advance leaning on the arms of the order and of her superior, and not on her own, because the truly obedient man has not to give an account of himself to Me—his superior has that responsibility.

“Become enamoured, oh beloved daughter, of this glorious virtue. Dost thou wish to show gratitude for the benefits which thou hast received from Me, thy Eternal Father? Be obedient, for obedience proceeding from charity shows gratitude. It will prove to thee thy own gratitude, if thou art not ignorant, because it proceeds from knowledge of My truth. It is a good which can be seen in the example of the word, who as your model taught you the way of obedience, being obedient Himself unto the shameful death of the Cross, with which obedience He unlocked the Gate of Heaven, and established both general obedience and the

particular obedience of religion, as I related to thee at the beginning of this treatise of obedience. This obedience gives a light in the soul, which shows whether she is faithful to Me and her order and superior, in which light of holy faith she forgets herself; for, by the obedience which she has acquired through the light of faith, she shows that her will is dead to its own feeling, and seeks the advantage of others and not her own. Just as the disobedient man who examines the will of his superior, and judges it according to his own low opinion and darkened knowledge instead of judging his own perverse will, which gives him death, the truly obedient man, illuminated by faith, judges the will of his superior to be good, and therefore does not examine it, but inclines his head and nourishes his soul with the odour of true and holy obedience. And this virtue increases in the soul in proportion to the shining of the light of faith, with which the soul knows herself, and Me, whom she loves, and humbles herself; and the more she loves Me and humbles herself, the more obedient she becomes, for obedience and her sister patience prove whether the soul is in truth clothed with the nuptial garment of charity, which is necessary to enter into eternal life. In this way their obedience opens the door of Heaven, while Charity, who gave this key to the soul, enters with the fruit of obedience. I have told thee that Charity alone enters, while every other virtue remains without. But obedience is rightly the key which opens the door, because the disobedience of the first man closed it, and it was the obedience of the humble, faithful, immaculate Lamb, My only-begotten Son, that opened the door of eternal life, which had so long remained closed.

## CHAPTER CXLV.

A distinction between two kinds of obedience ; the one that of religious, and the other that paid to any secular person.

“As I have said to thee, He left this sweet obedience as His rule and doctrine, giving it to you as the key to open the door by which you reach your end. He left it by command in the case of general obedience, and by counsel for those of you who should wish to advance to great perfection and pass through the narrow door of religious life. And there are also those who belong to no religious order, and yet are in the ship of perfection. Such as these observe the perfection of the counsels, outside religion, having renounced the riches and pomps of the world, both in fact and in thought, and observing continence, some in the virginal state and some without virginity. They observe obedience, submitting, as I told thee in another place, to some creature whom they strive to obey perfectly until death. And if thou shouldest ask Me whether these or they who dwell in a religious order have greater merit, I should reply that the merit of obedience is not measured according to the act or place, as being greater when performed by a good man than by a bad man, or by a secular than by a religious, but according to the measure of love of him who obeys ; for to a truly obedient man the imperfection of a wicked superior does no harm ; rather it sometimes profits him, because through the persecutions and unwisely-given weight of a too heavy obedience he may acquire both the virtue of obedience and her sister patience. Nor does the imperfection of the place hurt him. I say “imperfection,” for religion is more perfect, firm, and stable than any other condition of life. Wherefore the place of those who hold the little key of obedience, observing the counsels outside a religious order, I indeed call imperfect, but not so their obedience, which is of no less merit ; because all obedience, as has been said, and every other virtue, is measured by the degree of love. It is indeed true that in many other



ways, both by the vow which is made to the superior, and also because a religious has more to endure, obedience is better proved in religion than in the world, because in religion every action of the body is bound to this yoke, from which a man cannot free himself when he wishes without mortal sin, because of his vow and the sanction of the holy Church. But these others are not in the same condition. They are bound voluntarily by the love which they have for obedience, but not with a solemn vow. Wherefore they can leave the obedience of any mortal creature without mortal sin, if they have legitimate reasons, though their own defects are not such; for if they leave their obedience through their own defects, they would not do so without a grave fault, though they would not incur mortal sin in the strict sense of the word. Dost thou know the difference between these two?

“This man is like one who should take back what he has given his neighbour through love without any intention of asking for it again, but without having made an agreement to that effect; while the religious gives himself and draws up the agreement of his profession, abandoning himself to the hands of his superior and promising to observe obedience, continence, and voluntary poverty, and the superior on his side promises him eternal life if he observe his vow until his death. In observance, place, and manner, religion is more perfect, and obedience in the world less perfect. In the former a man is safer, and if he fall is more likely to rise, because he has more help; and the latter is more doubtful and less secure, and a man is more likely if he fall to turn his face backwards, because he does not feel himself bound by a vow, like a religious before he is professed; for until profession he can leave the order, though afterwards he cannot. But merit, as I said and repeat to thee, is given to the truly obedient man according to the measure of his love; and he may obtain perfect merit in any state, for it is founded on love alone. One man I call to one state, and another to another, according to the fitness of each; but all are filled with love according to their measure; so that if a particular secular loves more than a

particular religious he receives more, and the same—a particular religious if he love more than a particular secular—and this is true for all other men.”

## CHAPTER CLXVI.

How God does not reward merit according to the labour of the obedient, nor according to the length of time which it takes, but according to the love and promptitude of the truly obedient; and of the miracles which God has performed by means of this virtue; and of discretion in obedience, and of the works and reward of the truly obedient man.

“ I HAVE appointed you all to labour in the vineyard of obedience in different ways, and every man will receive a price, according to the measure of his love, and not according to the work he does, or the length of time for which he works, that is to say, that he who comes early will not have more than he who comes late, as My Truth told you in the holy gospel by the example of those who were standing idle and were sent by the lord of the vineyard to labour; for he gave as much to those who went at dawn, as to those who went at prime or at tierce, and those who went at sext, at none, and even at vespers, received as much as the first. My Truth showing you in this way that you are rewarded not according to time or work, but according to the measure of your love. Many are placed in their childhood to work in the vineyard; some enter later in life, and others in old age; sometimes these latter labour with such fire of love, seeing the shortness of the time, that they rejoin those who entered in their childhood, because they have advanced but slowly. By love of obedience then, does the soul receive her merit, filling the vessel of her heart in Me, the Sea Pacific. There are many whose obedience is so prompt, and has become, as it were, so incarnate in them, that not only do they wish to see reason in what is ordered them by their superior, but they hardly wait until the word is out of his mouth, for with the light of faith

they understand his intention. Wherefore the truly obedient man obeys rather the intention than the word, judging that the will of his superior is fixed in My will, and that therefore his command comes from My dispensation, and from My will, wherefore I say to thee that he rather obeys the intention than the word. He also obeys the word, having first spiritually obeyed in affection his superior's will, seeing and judging it by the light of faith to be Mine. This is well shown in the lives of the fathers, where you read of a religious, who at once obeyed in his affection the command of his superior, commencing to write the letter o, though he had not space to finish it ; wherefore to show how pleasing his prompt obedience was to Me, My clemency gave him a proof by writing the other half of the letter in gold. This glorious virtue is so pleasing to Me, that to no other have I given so many miraculous signs and testimonies, for it proceeds from the height of faith.

“In order to show how pleasing it is to Me, the earth obeys this virtue, the animals obey it—water grows solid under the feet of the obedient man. And as for the obedience of the earth, thou rememberest having read of that disciple who, being given a dry stick by his abbot, and being ordered by obedience to plant it in the earth and water it every day, did not proceed to ask how could it possibly do any good, but, without inquiring about possibilities, he fulfilled his obedience in such virtue of faith that the dry wood brought forth leaves and fruits, as a sign that that soul had risen from the dryness of disobedience, and, covered by the green leaves of virtue, had brought forth the fruit of obedience, wherefore the fruit of this tree was called by the holy fathers the fruit of obedience. Thou wilt also find that animals obey the obedient man ; for a certain disciple, commanded by obedience, through his purity and virtue caught a dragon and brought it to his abbot, but the abbot, like a true physician of the soul, in order that he might not be tossed about by the wind of vain-glory, and to prove his patience, sent him away with harsh words, saying : ‘Beast that thou art, thou hast brought along another beast with thyself.’ And as to fire,

thou hast read in the holy scripture that many were placed in the fire, rather than transgress My obedience, and, at My command were not hurt by it. This was the case of the three children, who remained happily in the furnace—and of many others of whom I could tell thee. The water bore up Maurus who had been sent by obedience to save a drowning disciple; he did not think of himself, but thought only with the light of faith of how to fulfil the command of his superior, and so walked upon the water as if he had been on dry land, and so saved the disciple. In everything, if thou openest the eye of the intellect, thou wilt find shown forth the excellence of this virtue. Everything else should be abandoned for the sake of obedience. If thou wert lifted up in such contemplation and union of mind with Me, that thy body was raised from the earth, and an obedience were imposed on thee (speaking generally, and not in a particular case, which cannot give a law), thou oughtest, if possible, to force thyself to arise, to fulfil the obedience imposed on thee, though thou shouldest never leave prayer, except for necessity, charity, or obedience. I say this in order that thou mayest see how prompt I wish the obedience of My servants to be, and how pleasing it is to Me. Everything that the obedient man does is a source of merit to him. If he eats, obedience is his food, if he sleeps, his dreams are obedience; if he walks, if he remains still, if he fasts, if he watches—everything that he does is obedience; if he serve his neighbour, it is obedience that he serves. How is he guided in the choir, in the refectory, or his cell? By obedience, with the light of the most holy faith, with which light he has slain and cast from him his humbled self-will, and abandoned himself with self-hatred to the arms of his order and superior. Reposing with obedience in the ship, allowing himself to be guided by his superior, he has navigated the tempestuous sea of this life, with calm and serene mind and tranquillity of heart, because obedience and faith have taken all darkness from him; he remains strong and firm, having lost all weakness and fear, having destroyed his own will, from which comes all febleness and disordinate fear. And what is the food

of this spouse obedience? She eats knowledge of self, and of Me, knowing her own non-existence and sinfulness, and knowing that I am He who is, thus eating and knowing My truth in the Incarnate Word. What does she drink? The Blood, in which the Word has shown her, My Truth, and the ineffable love which I have for her, and the obedience imposed on Him by Me, His Eternal Father, so she becomes inebriated with the love and obedience of the Word, losing herself and her own opinions and knowledge, and possessing Me by grace, tasting Me by love, with the light of faith in holy obedience.

“The obedient man speaks words of peace all his life, and at his death receives that which was promised him at his death by his superior, that is to say eternal life, the vision of peace, and of supreme and eternal tranquillity and rest, the inestimable good which no one can value or understand, for, being the infinite good, it cannot be understood by anything smaller than itself, like a vessel, which, dipped into the sea, does not comprehend the whole sea, but only that quantity which it contains. The sea alone contains itself. So I, the Sea Pacific, am He who alone can comprehend and value Myself truly. And in My own estimate and comprehension of Myself I rejoice, and this joy, the good which I have in Myself, I share with you, and with all, according to the measure of each. I do not leave you empty, but fill you, giving you perfect beatitude; each man comprehends and knows My goodness in the measure in which it is given to him. Thus, then, the obedient man, with the light of faith in the truth burning in the furnace of charity, anointed with humility, inebriated with the Blood, in company with his sister patience, and with self-contempt, fortitude, and enduring perseverance, and all the other virtues (that is, with the fruit of the virtues), receives his end from Me, his Creator.”

## CHAPTER CXLVII.

This is a brief repetition of the entire book.

“ I HAVE now, oh dearest and best beloved daughter, satisfied from the beginning to the end thy desire concerning obedience.

“ If thou rememberest well, thou didst make four petitions of Me with anxious desire, or rather I caused thee to make them in order to increase the fire of My love in thy soul : one for thyself, which I have satisfied, illuminating thee with My truth, and showing thee how thou mayest know this truth which thou didst desire to know ; explaining to thee how thou mightest come to the knowledge of it through the knowledge of thyself and Me, through the light of faith. The second request thou didst make of Me was that I should do mercy to the world. In the third thou didst pray for the mystical body of the holy Church, that I would remove darkness and persecutions from it, punishing its iniquities at own desire in thy person. As to this I explained that no penalty inflicted in finite time can satisfy for a sin committed against Me, the Infinite Good, unless it is united with the desire of the soul and contrition of the heart. How this is to be done I have explained to thee. I have also told thee that I wish to do mercy to the world, proving to thee that mercy is My special attribute, for through the mercy and the inestimable love which I had for man, I sent to the earth the Word, My only-begotten Son, whom, that thou mightest understand things quite clearly, I represented to thee under the figure of a Bridge, reaching from earth to heaven, through the union of My divinity with your human nature.

“ I also showed thee, to give thee further light concerning My truth, how this Bridge is built on three steps ; that is, on the three powers of the soul. These three steps I also represented to thee, as thou knowest, under figures of thy body—the feet, the side, and the mouth—by which I also figured three states of soul—the imperfect state, the perfect

state, and the most perfect state, in which the soul arrives at the excellence of unitive love. I have shown thee clearly in each state the means of cutting away imperfection and reaching perfection, and how the soul may know by which road she is walking and of the hidden delusions of the devil and of spiritual self-love. Speaking of these three states I have also spoken of the three judgments which My clemency delivers—one in this life, the second at death on those who die in mortal sin without hope, of whom I told thee that they went under the Bridge by the Devil's road, when I spoke to thee of their wretchedness. And the third is that of the last and universal judgment. And I who told thee somewhat of the suffering of the damned and the glory of the blessed, when all shall have reassumed their bodies given by Me, also promised thee, and now again I repeat my promise, that through the long endurance of My servants I will reform My spouse. Wherefore I invite thee to endure, Myself lamenting with thee over her iniquities. And I have shown thee the excellence of the ministers I have given her, and the reverence in which I wish seculars to hold them, showing thee the reason why their reverence towards My ministers should not diminish on account of the sins of the latter, and how displeasing to me is such diminution of reverence; and of the virtue of those who live like angels. And while speaking to thee on this subject, I also touched on the excellence of the sacraments. And further wishing thee to know of the states of tears and whence they proceed, I spoke to thee on the subject and told thee that all tears issue from the fountain of the heart, and pointed out their causes to thee in order.

“I told thee not only of the four states of tears, but also of the fifth, which germinates death. I have also answered thy fourth request, that I would provide for the particular case of an individual; I have provided as thou knowest. Further than this, I have explained My providence to thee, in general and in particular, showing thee how everything is made by divine providence, from the first beginning of the world until the end, giving you and permitting everything to happen to you, both tribulations and consolations

temporal and spiritual, and every circumstance of your life for your good, in order that you may be sanctified in Me, and My truth be fulfilled in you, which truth is that I created you in order to possess eternal life, and manifested this with the blood of My only-begotten Son, the Word.

“I have also in My last words fulfilled thy desire and My promise to speak of the perfection of obedience and the imperfection of disobedience; and how obedience can be obtained and how destroyed. I have shown it to thee as a universal key, and so it is. I have also spoken to thee of particular obedience, and of the perfect and imperfect, and of those in religion, and of those in the world, explaining the condition of each distinctly to thee, and of the peace given by obedience, and the war of disobedience, and how the disobedient man is deceived, showing thee how death came into the world by the disobedience of Adam, and how I, the Eternal Father, supreme and eternal Truth, give thee this conclusion of the whole matter, that in the obedience of the only begotten Word, My Son, you have life, and as from that first old man you contracted the infection of death, so all of you who will take the key of obedience have contracted the infection of the life of the new Man, sweet Jesus, of whom I made a Bridge, the road to Heaven being broken. And now I urge thee and My other servants to grief, for by your grief and humble and continual prayer I will do mercy to the world. Die to the world and hasten along this way of truth, so as not to be taken prisoner if thou goest slowly. I demand this of thee now more than at first, for now I have manifested to thee My truth. Beware that thou never leave the cell of self-knowledge, but in this cell preserve and spend the treasure which I have given thee, which is a doctrine of truth founded upon the living stone, sweet Christ Jesus, clothed in light which scatters darkness, with which doctrine clothe thyself, My best beloved and sweetest daughter, in the truth.”



## CHAPTER CXLVIII.

How this most devout soul, thanking and praising God, makes prayer for the whole world and for the Holy Church, and commending the virtue of faith brings this work to an end.

THEN that soul, having seen with the eye of the intellect, and having known by the light of holy faith the truth and excellence of obedience, hearing and tasting it with love and ecstatic desire, gazed upon the divine majesty and gave thanks to him saying, "Thanks, thanks to Thee, oh eternal Father, for Thou hast not despised me, the work of Thy hands, nor turned Thy face from me, nor despised my desires, Thou, the Light, hast not regarded my darkness ; Thou, true Life, hast not regarded my living death ; Thou, the Physician, hast not been repelled by my grave infirmities ; Thou, the eternal Purity, hast not considered the many miseries of which I am full ; Thou, who art the Infinite, hast overlooked that I am finite ; Thou, who art Wisdom, hast overlooked my folly ; Thy wisdom, Thy goodness, Thy clemency, Thy infinite good, have overlooked these infinite evils and sins, and the many others which are in me. Having known the truth through Thy clemency, I have found Thy charity, and the love of my neighbour. What has constrained me ? Not my virtues, but only Thy charity. May that same charity constrain Thee to illuminate the eye of my intellect with the light of faith, so that I may know and understand the truth which Thou hast manifested to me. Grant that my memory may be capable of retaining Thy benefits, that my will may burn in the fire of Thy charity, and may that fire so work in me that I give my body to blood, and that by that blood given for love of the Blood, together with the key of obedience, I may unlock the door of Heaven. I ask this of Thee with all my heart, for every rational creature, both in general and in particular, in the mystical body of the holy church. I confess and do not deny that Thou didst love me before I existed, and that Thy love for me is ineffable, as if Thou wast mad with love for Thy creature.

Oh, eternal Trinity! oh Godhead! Which Godhead gave value to the Blood of Thy Son, Thou, oh eternal Trinity, art a deep Sea, into which the deeper I enter the more I find, and the more I find the more I seek; the soul cannot be satiated in Thy abyss, for she continually hungers after Thee, the eternal Trinity, desiring to see Thee with light in Thy light. As the hart desires the spring of living water, so my soul desires to leave the prison of this dark body and see Thee in truth. How long, oh! Eternal Trinity, fire and abyss of love, will thy face be hidden from my eyes? Melt at once the cloud of my body. The knowledge which Thou hast given me of Thyself in Thy truth, constrains me to long to abandon the heaviness of my body, and to give my life for the glory and praise of Thy Name, for I have tasted and seen with the light of the intellect in Thy light, the abyss of Thee—the eternal trinity, and the beauty of Thy creature, for, looking at myself in Thee, I saw myself to be Thy image, my life being given me by Thy power, oh! eternal Father, and Thy wisdom, which belongs to Thy only-begotten Son, shining in my intellect and my will, being one with Thy Holy Spirit, who proceeds from Thee and Thy Son, by whom I am able to love Thee. Thou, Eternal Trinity, art my creator, and I am the work of Thy hands, and I know through the new creation which Thou hast given me in the blood of Thy Son, that Thou art enamoured of the beauty of Thy workmanship. Oh! Abyss, oh! Eternal Godhead, oh! Sea Profound! what more couldst Thou give me than Thyself, Thou art the fire which ever burns without being consumed; Thou consumest in Thy heat all the soul's self-love; Thou art the fire which takes away all cold; with Thy light Thou dost illuminate me so that I may know all Thy truth; Thou art that light above all light, which illuminates supernaturally the eye of my intellect, clarifying the light of faith so abundantly and so perfectly, that I see that my soul is alive, and in this light receives Thee—the true light. By the Light of faith I have acquired wisdom in the wisdom of the Word—Thy only-begotten Son. In the light of faith I am strong, constant, and persevering.

In the light of faith I hope, suffer me not to faint by the way. This light, without which I should still walk in darkness, teaches me the road, and for this I said, Oh! Eternal Father, that Thou hast illuminated me with the light of holy faith. Of a truth this light is a sea, for the soul revels in Thee, Eternal Trinity, the Sea Pacific. The water of the sea is not turbid, and causes no fear to the soul, for she knows the truth; it is a deep which manifests sweet secrets, so that where the light of Thy faith abounds, the soul is certain of what she believes. This water is a magic mirror into which Thou, the Eternal Trinity, biddest me gaze, holding it with the hand of love, that I may see myself, who am Thy creature, there represented in Thee, and Thyself in me through the union which Thou didst make of Thy godhead with our humanity. For this light I know to represent to myself Thee—the Supreme and Infinite Good, Good Blessed and Incomprehensible, Good Inestimable. Beauty above all beauty; Wisdom above all wisdom—for Thou art wisdom itself. Thou, the food of the angels, hast given Thyself in a fire of love to men; Thou, the garment which covers all our nakedness, feedest the hungry with Thy sweetness. Oh! Sweet, without any bitter, oh! Eternal Trinity, I have known in Thy light, which Thou hast given me with the light of holy faith, the many and wonderful things thou hast declared to me, explaining to me the path of supreme perfection, so that I may no longer serve thee in darkness, but with light, and that I may be the mirror of a good and holy life, and arise from my miserable sins, for through them I have hitherto served Thee in darkness. I have not known Thy truth and have not loved it. Why did I not know Thee? Because I did not see Thee with the glorious light of the holy faith; because the cloud of self-love darkened the eye of my intellect, and Thou, the Eternal Trinity, hast dissipated the darkness with Thy light. Who can attain to Thy Greatness, and give Thee thanks for such immeasurable gifts and benefits as Thou hast given me in this doctrine of truth, which has been a special grace over and above the ordinary graces which Thou givest also to

Thy other creatures? Thou hast been willing to condescend to my need and to that of Thy creatures—the need of introspection. Having first given the grace to ask the question, Thou repliest to it, and satisfiest Thy servant, penetrating me with a ray of grace, so that in that light I may give Thee thanks. Clothe me, clothe me with Thee, oh! Eternal Truth, that I may run my mortal course with true obedience and the light of holy faith, with which light I feel that my soul is about to become inebriated afresh.”





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## Saint Teresa of Avila

Saint Teresa of Ávila (1515-1582), born Teresa Sanchez de Cepeda y Ahumada, was a Spanish noblewoman born into a wealthy mercantile family in the Spanish province of Ávila. At the age of 18, Teresa decided to join the Carmelite *Covent of the Incarnation*, where she gained prominence as an author and theologian focusing on Christian mysticism and meditation. Among her many distinctions include Doctor of the Church; canonization by Pope Gregory XV; and recognition as a patron saint of Spain. Teresa of Ávila published a number of literary works, including her autobiography *The Life of Teresa of Jesus* (later extended with the publication of *Relationships*), *The Way of Perfection*, and *Interior Castle*.

Because of the breadth of her writings, Teresa of Ávila's works should peek the interest of everyone within the academy. For example, Philosopher Christia Mercer argues Rene Descartes' *Meditations on First Philosophy* were likely influenced by Teresa of Ávila's *Interior Castle*.<sup>1</sup> According to Mercer, Descartes' *Meditations* and Teresa of Ávila's *Interior Castle* have many similarities. First, Descartes' *Meditations* and Teresa of Avila's *Interior Castle* share in the meditative tradition. Spiritual meditations like *Interior Castle* "involved the need to focus on the meditator's subjectivity as a means to rethink everything the meditator has previously learned about the world. The point was to learn not to *care* about the external matters so as to develop new habits and beliefs. For most meditators, the only proper means to do this was through subjective exploration."<sup>2</sup> Second, while the content of the beliefs being meditated on in each of the two works differ in many ways, each employs a common "deceiver strategy" in their attempt to "force truth-seekers into extreme skepticism about their current beliefs, which leads to self-exploration."<sup>3</sup> Of course, this is not to say the importance of *Interior Castle* depends on its potential influence on Descartes; rather, understanding the ways in which Descartes was "the benefactor of a long tradition, to which women significantly contributed...[allows us to] rethink the role of women and other noncanonical figures in the history of philosophy and begin to create a more accurate story about philosophy's rich and diverse past."<sup>4</sup>

Along with *The Way of Perfection*, *Interior Castle* aims to show how a spiritual life of contemplative meditation results in a form spiritual and intellectual enlightenment. According to *The Way of Perfection*, a prayer-filled life requires mutual love, detachment from created things, and true humility. As the introduction to *The Way of Perfection* states, "Fraternal love, detachment and humility: these three virtues, if they are sought in the way these chapters direct, will make the soul mistress and sovereign over all created things—a "royal soul", in the Saint's happy phrase, the slave of none save of Him Who bought it with His blood." Thus, like Buddhist and Hindu thinkers before her, Saint Teresa of Ávila is concerned with a form of religious enlightenment and what it requires.

While staying true to the ideas presented in *The Way of Perfection*, *Interior Castle* outlines the rigors of the process of contemplative meditation. The work is split into seven parts, each corresponding to

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<sup>1</sup> ; David J. Craig, "She Thinks, Therefore I Am" *Columbia Magazine* (2017) <https://magazine.columbia.edu/article/she-thinks-therefore-i-am>

<sup>2</sup> Christia Mercer (2017), "Descartes is Not Our Father," *New York Times: The Stone* <https://nyti.ms/2jWXXfr>

<sup>3</sup> Christia Mercer (2016), "Descartes' Debt to Teresa of Ávila, or Why We Should Work on Women in the History of Philosophy," *Philosophical Studies* 174 (10): 2549.

<sup>4</sup> Christina Mercer (2017), "Descartes is Not Our Father," *New York Times: The Stone* <https://nyti.ms/2jWXXfr>

a stage one reaches along the path of spiritual enlightenment. Using the metaphor of a Castle, St. Teresa explains how the soul progresses through the seven stages of meditative practice she describes—through the seven mansions and rooms of one’s inner castle. St. Teresa claims “[She] began to think of the soul as if it were a castle made of a single diamond or of very clear crystal, in which there are many rooms, just as in Heaven there are many mansions.” According to St. Teresa, only through humble, self-reflective prayer and meditation can the first mansion be entered, let alone progress from one mansion to the next.

St. Teresa describes the meditative journey with vivid metaphoric imagery. For example, outside the walls of the castle are ‘poisonous beasts’ who represent the attractiveness of sin and self-deception.<sup>5</sup> In order for one progress through the mansions and its rooms of one’s interior castle, one must stay in the First Mansion to gain humility and self-knowledge. As one progresses from the First Mansion to the Second, one must seek growth by learning from, engaging with, and listening to others. The Third Mansion is for those who have a higher standard of discipline and charity towards others; those who enter the Third Mansion spend their time well and exercise charity. Within the Fourth Mansion, one ceases to be attached to the external world and experiences greater interior freedom. Within The Fifth Mansion, one disposes of oneself, and resigning to the will of God. The Sixth Mansion is where one recognizes the Supreme Truth of Gods will, and humbly submits oneself to said will. Finally, in the Seventh Mansion, one transforms and reaches a higher states of being—i.e. one enters into a spiritual union with God and enters into a state of self-forgetfulness.

## Important Sections

Introduction

The First Mansions: Chapters I and II

The Second Mansions: Chapter I

## Further Readings

### **On the Meditative Genre and Descartes’ Influences**

Charles Bolyard (2009), “Medieval Skepticism”, *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*  
<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/skepticism-medieval/>

Descartes (1641), *Meditations on First Philosophy*

Christia Mercer (2017), “Descartes’ Debt to Teresa of Ávila, or Why we Should Work on Women in the History of Philosophy,” *Philosophical Studies* 174 (10): 2539-2555.

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<sup>5</sup> Her descriptions of these “venomous creatures” and their deceptions is similar to the Evil Demon/Deceiver described by Descartes in his *Meditations on First Philosophy*.

Christia Mercer (2017), "Descartes is Not Our Father," *New York Times: The Stone*  
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Olivia Goldhill (2017), "One of Descartes' Most Famous Ideas was First Articulated by a Woman,"  
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### **On the Psychology of Religious Experience**

St. Teresa of Avila, *The Life of Teresa of Jesus*.

Marcella Biro Barton (1982), "Saint Teresa of Ávila: Did She Have Epilepsy?", *The Catholic Historical Review*. Vol. LXVII, no. 4;

Orrin Devinsky and George Lai (2008), "Spirituality and Religion in Epilepsy" *Epilepsy and Behavior*. Vol. 12, pp. 636-643.

### **On the Virtues Required for Perfection/Enlightenment**

St. Teresa of Avila, *The Way of Perfection*, Ch. 4-15

*Bhagavad Gita*, Chapters 5-7

Max Muller (1894), *The Vagradkbedika or Daimond-Cutter*, in *Buddhist Mahayana Texts* (Sacred Books of the East), Oxford University Press.



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THE INTERIOR CASTLE

NIHIL OBSTAT

DOM MICHAEL BARRETT, O.S.B. CENSOR DEPUTATUS

IMPRIMATUR

✠ EDUARDUS, ADM. APOSTOL. BIRMINGHAMIENSIS  
OSCOTT. DIE 24 FEBRUARII, 1921.

THE  
INTERIOR CASTLE  
OR  
THE MANSIONS

TRANSLATED FROM THE AUTOGRAPH  
OF SAINT TERESA OF JESUS  
BY THE BENEDICTINES OF STANBROOK

*Revised and annotated with Introduction by the*  
*VERY REV. PRIOR ZIMMERMAN*  
*O. C. D.*

THIRD EDITION  
WITH ADDITIONAL NOTES

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DEDICATED TO  
THE MARTYRED DAUGHTERS OF SAINT TERESA  
THE BLESSED MARTYRS OF COMPIEGNE  
BY THE DESCENDANTS OF THEIR  
FELLOW-PRISONERS

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*The Benedictines of Stanbrook desire to express their gratitude to the Very Rev. Benedict Zimmerman for having kindly revised the translation of the 'Interior Castle' and also for the Introduction, Notes, and Index which he has added to the book.*



## NOTE

IN this new edition the wording has been revised and condensed, chiefly with a view to rendering the translation more pregnant. Only one passage (VI. Mansion, ch. v. 13) has been substantially changed, in conformity with an explanation received from a high authority. It is admittedly a very difficult passage which appears to have been misunderstood by nearly all translators; but it is gratifying to notice that the new French translation by the Carmelite nuns of Anderlecht agrees with our interpretation. The editor is under an obligation to that translation for several interesting facts embodied in the Introduction and in the notes to the text.

B. Z.

WINCANTON

*December 25, 1911*

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## INTRODUCTION

SAINT TERESA began to write the *Interior Castle* on June 2, 1577, Trinity Sunday, and completed it on the eve of St. Andrew, November 29, of the same year. But there was a long interruption of five months,<sup>1</sup> so that the actual time spent in the composition of this work was reduced to about four weeks—a fortnight for the first, and another fortnight for the second half of the book. The rapidity with which it was written is easily explained by the fact that the Saint had conceived its plan some time previously. On January 17, 1577, she had written to her brother, Don Lorenzo de Cepeda, at Avila: ‘I have asked the bishop—Don Alvaro Mendoza—for my book (the *Life*) because I shall perhaps complete it by adding those new favours our Lord has lately granted me. With these one may even compose a new work of considerable size, provided God grants me the grace of explaining myself; otherwise the loss will be of small account.’<sup>2</sup> She never asked for permission to write anything, but waited until she received a command from her superiors, which, in this case, came from

scabidity

<sup>1</sup> *Castle*, Mansions v. ch. iv. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Letters of St. Teresa*, Vol. II.

Father Jerome Gracian, superior of the Discalced Carmelites of the Provinces of Andalusia and Castille, and from Don Alonso Velasquez, canon of Toledo, afterwards bishop of Osma.<sup>3</sup> The Saint was not in good health at the time; she repeatedly complains of noises in the head and other infirmities, but, worst of all, she was weighed down by troubles and anxieties resulting from the action of the superiors of the Order and of the Papal Nuncio against the nuns and friars of the Reform. Matters became even more serious when, in October, the nuns of the Incarnation of Avila proceeded to the election of a new prioress. Notwithstanding the prohibition of the provincial, fifty-five electors recorded their votes in favour of the Saint and were immediately declared excommunicated. The whole work of the Reform seemed on the brink of ruin, the Saint, as well as all her friends, was in disgrace, subject to obloquy and ill-treatment.

No trace of these trials is to be found in the *Interior Castle*. Saint Teresa possessed the power of concentration of thought in a marvellous degree. The early mornings and late evenings were devoted to the composition of the book, while the rest of the day was taken up by the affairs of the Order. Mother Mary of the Nativity, a member of the

<sup>3</sup>The French Carmelite nuns in their new translation, *Œuvres complètes de Sainte Thérèse*, t. vi, Introduction, p. 5, quoting the *Año Teresiano*, t. vii ad 7 July, and Father Gracian's *Dilucidario*, as well as his additions to Ribera, show the exact share of Fr. Gracian and Dr. Velasquez in the preliminaries of this work.

community of Toledo, where the book was begun, declared afterwards,<sup>4</sup> that she often saw her writing, generally after Holy Communion, her face resplendent, with such rapidity and so absorbed in her occupation that she seemed undisturbed by, and in fact quite unconscious of, any noise that was made. Mother Mariana of the Angels<sup>5</sup> reports having heard from the same witness, that entering her cell one day to deliver a message, the holy Mother was just beginning a new sheet of her book. While taking off her spectacles to listen to the message she was seized by a trance in which she remained for several hours. The nun, terrified at this, did not stir, but kept her eyes steadily on the Saint. When she came to, it was seen that the paper, previously blank, was covered with writing. Noticing that her visitor had discovered it, Saint Teresa put the paper quietly in the box.

<sup>4</sup> Fuente, *Obras de Santa Teresa de Jesus*. Edit. 1881, Vol. vi, p. 278.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* p. 178. A somewhat similar incident is reported by Mother Anne of the Incarnation (*Ibid.* p. 213), but it appears to be wrongly brought into connection with the composition of the *Castle*. The nun in question had belonged to the convent of St. Joseph at Segovia at an earlier period, but there is no evidence that St. Teresa visited this place in the course of the six months during which she composed this work. The Bollandists, indeed, maintain that it was commenced at Toledo, continued at Segovia and completed at Avila (n. 1541), but their sole authority for including Segovia is the passage in question, which, however, must refer to some other work of the Saint. The sister, passing St. Teresa's door, saw her writing, her face being lit up as by a bright light. She wrote very fast without making any corrections. After an hour, it being about midnight, she ceased and the light disappeared. The Saint then knelt down and remained in prayer for three hours, after which she went to sleep.

Another nun, Mary of St. Francis, left the following declaration: 'I know that our holy Mother wrote four books, the *Life*, the *Way of Perfection*, the *Foundations*, and the *Mansions*, which I have seen her writing. Once, while she was composing the last-named work, I entered to deliver a message, and found her so absorbed that she did not notice me; her face seemed quite illuminated and most beautiful. After having listened to me she said: "Sit down, my child, and let me write what our Lord has told me ere I forget it," and she went on writing with great rapidity and without stopping.'<sup>6</sup>

Mary of St. Joseph says she heard from Mary of the Nativity that Father Jerome Gracian commanded the Saint to write the *Mansions*; she, however, begged to be excused, because so many books having been written by holy and learned men, there remained nothing for a woman to write. At length she yielded under obedience. This nun (Mary of the Nativity) was frequently in the Saint's cell while she was writing and she noticed her resplendent face and the almost preternatural velocity with which her hand travelled over the paper.<sup>7</sup>

Writing to Mother Mary of St. Joseph, Prioress of Seville, November 8, 1581, St. Teresa gives her a message for Father Rodrigo Alvarez, S. J.: 'Our Father (Jerome Gracian, then provincial) tells me that he has handed you a book written by me,

<sup>6</sup> Fuente, p. 223.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* p. 255.

which perhaps you do not feel inclined to read yourself. Kindly read to Father Rodrigo Alvarez, at his next visit, the last Mansion, but under the seal of confession, as he asks this in his superior wisdom. This is only for you two. Tell him that the person he knows has arrived at this Mansion and enjoys the peace there described; that she is entirely at rest, and that some grave theologians have assured her that she is on a safe road. In case you could not read these pages to him do not send him the book, for it might lead to unpleasantness. Until I have his answer on this matter I will not write to him. Give him my compliments.'

At the end of the original manuscript, before the epilogue (marked with Ihs.) there is a notice in Father Alvarez' hand-writing to this effect: 'The Mother Prioress of the convent of Seville has read to me this seventh Mansion, whither a soul may arrive in the present life. Let all the saints praise the infinite goodness of God, Who communicates Himself to His creatures so that they truly seek His glory and the salvation of their neighbour. What I feel and judge of this matter is, that everything that has been read to me is conformable to Catholic truth and in accordance with Holy Scripture and the teaching of the Saints. Whosoever has read the doctrine of the Saints, such as the books of St. Gertrude, St. Catharine of Siena, or St. Bridget of Sweden, and other saints and spiritual writers,



will clearly understand that the spirit of Mother Tereza (*sic*) of Jesus is true, since it leads to the same effects as are to be found in the saints; and because this is in truth my judgment and opinion, I have hereunto set my name, this, the 22nd day of February, 1582. P. Rodrigo Alvarez.<sup>8</sup>

The work was copied, probably under the supervision of the Saint, who introduced many changes; when completed the original was handed to Father Jerome Gracian and to the Dominican, Fray Diego de Yanguas, for approval. Both, particularly the former, made numerous corrections, which Fuente, not without reason, calls impertinent, scratching out whole sentences and adding others. The book thus revised must have enjoyed a certain celebrity, though not to the same extent as the *Life*, to which St. Teresa herself preferred it. Scarcely a week after its completion she wrote to Father Salazar, S.J.: 'If Señor Carillo [Salazar himself] came, the person in question [the Saint] thinks he would find another jewel which in her opinion is superior to the former [the *Life*]. This one reflects nothing foreign to itself, but is resplendent in its own beauty. It is enriched with more delicate enamels than the former, the workmanship, too, is more perfect. For, as the person in question says, the jeweller was less experienced when he fashioned the previous one. Moreover, the gold of the new

<sup>8</sup> Autograph, fol. cx.

one is of better quality than that of the former, though the precious stones are not so well set. It has been done, as might be expected, according to the designs of the Jeweller Himself.'<sup>9</sup> Later on she wrote to Father Jerome Gracian: "The book I have written since seems to me superior [to the *Life*]; at least I had more experience when I wrote it."<sup>10</sup>

One day, speaking with Mother Mary of Jesus on spiritual matters, she said that our Lord had communicated so much to her since she had reached what she described in the seventh Mansion,—the spiritual Marriage,—that she did not consider it possible to advance further in this life, in the way of prayer, nor even to wish to do so.<sup>11</sup>

The book was eagerly read by those who were able to obtain copies. At the archiepiscopal Seminary at Salamanca it was read publicly after dinner; the students, contrary to custom, sacrificing the recreation rather than miss so edifying an instruction. The result was that several entered the religious life, one becoming a Franciscan, two others, who had already taken their degrees, joining the Discalced Carmelites.<sup>12</sup> We also know of a lady who became a Poor Clare through reading the *Interior Castle*.<sup>13</sup> The process of Beatification contains the following evidence of Don Francisco de Mora, architect to Philip III: 'The same prioress (of a

<sup>9</sup> December 7, 1577. *Letters* Vol. II.

<sup>10</sup> Jan. 14, 1580. *Letters* Vol. IV:

<sup>11</sup> Fuente, *Obras. l.c.* p. 275.    <sup>12</sup> *l.c.* p. 217.    <sup>13</sup> *Ibid.* p. 227.

convent of Dominican nuns) being concerned about my salvation gave me a book in manuscript, called *The Mansions*, by Mother Teresa, hoping I should derive some benefit from it. I fear this was not the case, but it made me acquainted with Teresa of Jesus, the foundress of the Discalced Carmelite nuns, of whom I had not yet heard, but for whom I now felt devotion."<sup>14</sup>

In August 1586 it was decided to print Saint Teresa's works, the Augustinian Fray Luis de Leon being selected as editor, as he was unconcerned in the quarrels raging round the Reform. Accordingly, the manuscript of the *Interior Castle* was handed to him. On the first leaf he wrote the following note:

'Many passages of this book written by the holy Mother have been scored through, other words being substituted or notes being added in the margin. Most of these corrections are badly done, the original text being much better. It will be noticed that the holy Mother's sentences are superior and agree with the context, which is not the case with the corrections. These improvements and glosses may therefore be dispensed with. Having myself read and considered everything with great care, it appears to me that the reader, too, should have before him the words of the author who knew best what to say; for this reason I have left out the additions, and have restored what has been changed, excepting only a

<sup>14</sup> Fuente, *Obras*. p. 190.

few corrections made by the writer herself. I beg of the reader that he would in charity reverence the words and even the letters traced by so holy a hand, and strive to understand what has been written. He will then see that there was no need for corrections; should he fail to understand her, let him believe that the writer knew what she said, and that her words cannot be tampered with if they are not to lose their meaning; otherwise what was to the point will seem out of place. This is how books become corrupted, useless, and are finally lost.’<sup>15</sup>

When Luis de Leon undertook the editing of St. Teresa’s writings he received a long letter from Don Diego de Yepes, afterwards Bishop of Tarazona, a former friend and confessor of the Saint, in which he records his personal recollections. I shall only insert here what he says about the *Interior Castle*:

‘This holy Mother desired to see the beauty of a soul in the state of grace, a thing greatly to be coveted both for the sake of seeing and of possessing it. While this desire lasted, she was commanded to write a treatise on prayer, of which she had much personal experience. On the eve of the Blessed Trinity, while considering what subject to choose for this treatise, God, Who disposes everything in due season, fulfilled her wish and furnished a suitable subject. He showed her a most beautiful globe

<sup>15</sup> Autograph. fol. 1.

of crystal, in the shape of a castle, with seven rooms, the seventh, situated in the centre, being occupied by the King of glory, resplendent with the most exquisite brilliancy, which shone through and adorned the remaining rooms. The nearer these lay to the centre, the more did they partake of that wondrous light. It did not, however, penetrate beyond the crystal, for everything round about was a mass of darkness and impurity, full of toads and vipers and other venomous animals.

‘She was still admiring this beauty which, by the grace of God dwells in the soul, when, lo ! the light suddenly disappeared, and the crystal, wherein the King of glory was still residing, became opaque and as dark as coal, emitting an intolerable odour; the venomous animals, formerly held in check outside, obtained admittance into the castle. The holy Mother wished that every one should behold this vision, for she thought that no one having seen the beauty and splendour of grace, which is forfeited by sin and replaced by such repulsive misery, would ever dare to offend God.

‘She told me this vision on the same day, for in this as well as in other things she was so communicative that on the following morning she said to me: “How I forgot myself yesterday! I cannot think how it could have happened. Those high aspirations of mine, and the affection I have for you must have caused me to go beyond all reason-

able limits. God grant I may have derived some profit therefrom." I promised her to say nothing about it during her life-time, but since her death I should like to make it known to all men. From this vision she learnt four important matters.

'First, she came to understand this axiom, which in this form she had never heard of in her life,<sup>16</sup> that God is present in all things by His essence, presence, and power. As she was deeply humble and submissive and obedient to the doctrine of the Church and the teaching of the learned ministers of God, she never rested until her revelations had been approved of by her superiors and by theologians, and were shown to be conformable to Holy Scripture. She went so far as to say that if all the angels of heaven said one thing, and her superiors another, though she could not doubt that the former were true angels, yet she would hold what was told her by her superiors, because faith comes through these and there remains no room for deceit, whereas revelations coming from angels might be illusionary.

'With such regard for obedience, she asked me one day at Toledo—probably at the time when she saw the vision of the Castle—whether it was true that God was in all things by His power, presence,

<sup>16</sup> See *Life*, ch. xviii. 20. *Mansions* v. ch. i. 9. The ignorance of the priest who had told her that God was only present by His grace, made a lasting impression on St. Teresa. She was first undeceived by a Dominican.

and essence, to which I replied in the affirmative, explaining it as best I could on the authority of St. Paul, particularly where he says "the sufferings of this time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come that shall be revealed in us,"<sup>17</sup> Laying stress on these words, "shall be revealed in us," she was so overjoyed that I was quite astonished. Though in a way it seemed to me a kind of curiosity, I could not help thinking there was some mystery about it, for she said: "This is the very thing."

Secondly, she was greatly surprised at the malice of sin, since, notwithstanding the presence of God in these various ways, it prevents the soul from partaking of that powerful light.

Thirdly, she derived such humility and self-knowledge from this vision, that from that moment she never thought of herself in all the good she was doing; for she learnt that all the beauty of the soul emanates from that resplendent light, and that the powers of the soul and of the body are enlivened and strengthened by the Power established in the centre, whence comes all our good, so that we have but a small share in our good works. All the good she did, she from this moment referred to God as its principal author.

Fourthly, she derived from it the subject of the book she was ordered to write on prayer, comparing

<sup>17</sup> Rom. viii. 18.

the seven rooms of the Castle with as many degrees of prayer, whereby we enter within ourselves and draw nearer to God. So that, penetrating to the depths of our soul and gaining perfect self-knowledge, we reach the seventh room where God Himself dwells, with Whom we become united by as perfect a union as is possible in the present life, being made partakers of His light and love.

‘I will say no more of this vision and the *Mansions*, because your Reverence must by now have seen this admirable book, and must know with what accuracy, with what majestic doctrine, with what lucid examples she describes the progress of the soul from the gate to the very centre. It is clearly seen in this treatise how she communicated with our Lord, and how His Majesty vouchsafed to place her in the centre and to unite her with Himself, as she puts it, by the bonds of marriage and an inseparable union.’<sup>18</sup>

After the publication of the *Interior Castle*, in 1588 at Salamanca, it became not only more widely known, but also more and more appreciated. Francis Suarez, the great theologian of the Society of Jesus, says in his deposition in the process of Beatification that he had read some of St. Teresa’s works, particularly the *Mansions*, which contain an absolutely safe doctrine and give proof of a wonderful spirit of prayer and contemplation.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Fuente, pp. 131-133.

<sup>19</sup> *L.c.* 184.



Thomas Hurtado, professor of theology at Seville, speaks as follows:

‘As often as I read the books of the holy Mother, I admire the wonderful manner in which God instructed her in mystical theology for the sake of souls giving themselves truly to familiar intercourse with His divine Majesty. But where I most regret my inability of expressing in fitting terms my sentiments towards this excellent teacher is when I look at, and refresh myself in that Castle with its seven rooms; for there is seen the effect of infused knowledge such as St. Denis received from St. Hierotheus<sup>20</sup> and both from St. Paul, and which has been committed to writing in the famous book of *Mystical Theology*. Hence comes, as from a fountain-head, notwithstanding the obscurity (to our manner of thinking) of its language, the doctrine of the great masters of the spiritual life such as Hugh of St. Victor, St. Bernard, Ruysbroek, Tauler, Gerson, and many others whom I pass by.

‘Nevertheless, I will boldly say that no one has given us water more limpid from that Apostolical and Areopagitical well than the holy Mother Teresa, who, in her books, but chiefly in the *Mansions*, has cleared up in simple language the most difficult questions of this divine theology, and has brought forth light from darkness, as it is

<sup>20</sup> Allusion to the famous *Mystical Theology* attributed to Dionysius the Areopagite, and long considered the chief authority on this subject.

written: (He) commanded light to shine out of darkness.'<sup>21</sup> Who has ever been able to show as clearly as our Saint how God takes possession of the soul, how He unites Himself with its substance, whence comes to the intellect the light of faith, to the will the ardour of love, and to the senses the jubilation over His works? No one has ever turned theory into practice in a more convincing or more catholic manner. The most profound secrets of this supernatural wisdom are here treated with such ease, so amiably, so delightfully, they are illustrated by such nice and homely examples, that instead of awe-inspiring obscurity, we find lovely flowers and the sweetness of love, through which, as through an avenue, the soul passes onwards. When God made known His exalted doctrine to St. Dionysius and other mystical writers, He made use of their own language and pen. But St. Teresa in the *Mansions* is like the light of dawn whose rays are not intercepted by the clouds of this world; like a soft rain from above, whereby the soul grows and profits by its communications with God. Until the teaching of this great doctor became known it seemed as though God were inaccessible, being surrounded by darkness, through which Moses and some other persons had to pass when approaching Him;<sup>22</sup> but they neither ex-

<sup>21</sup> 2 Cor. iv. 6.

<sup>22</sup> The example of Moses is scarcely to the point (cf. Exod. xxxiii. 11, and Num. xii. 7, 8).

plained the manner nor showed the way whereby they came to the enjoyment of the sweetness of the Spouse. Now, however, this way is clear and patent to all, having been pointed out in the *Mansions*, in language so straight and so methodical, and no longer such as could not be understood, or required further explanation. In my opinion this holy writer derived not only the substance of her teaching from infused knowledge, but even the words with which she explains it.<sup>23</sup>

Likewise Don Alvaro de Villegas, canon of Toledo, expressed his opinion that the *Way of Perfection* and the *Interior Castle* contain 'heavenly doctrine.' The weight of the subject-matter, the propriety of the comparisons, the force of the expressions, the consistency of the teaching, the sweetness of her well-chosen, vivid words, the clearness of the arguments, all this proves that she was guided by her heavenly Spouse, in Whom are hidden the treasures of the wisdom of God; and that the Holy Ghost, Who more than once was seen resting on her head like a dove, was dictating these works. Villegas does not believe that any one could read them, as such books ought to be read, without becoming himself a master of the spiritual life. For they are like heavenly dew, rendering the soul fruitful in the matter of prayer.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Fuente, pp. 330-332.

<sup>24</sup> *l.c.* p. 334. These testimonies could be easily multiplied.

It would be a mistake to consider the *Interior Castle* a complete treatise of mystical theology. Like St. Teresa's other works, it is intensely personal: she describes the road by which she has been led, being well aware that others may be led in a different way. In the heavenly Father's house there are many mansions, not only seven, and many paths lead to them. What gives the work such high value is, that it is the result of a most searching inquiry into the various phases whereby a soul is gradually transformed into the likeness of God Himself. Here St. Teresa is always at her best. She takes nothing for granted, even her own personal experiences are admitted only after having been fully investigated and found to be consistent one with the other, and conformable to the teaching of the Church and the words of Holy Scripture.

Mystical theology is generally divided into three parts, respectively called the purgative, the illuminative, and the unitive life. In the first, man is cleansed from sin and habitual imperfection by the use of the sacraments and by voluntary mortification of the passions. The mind is purified by sedulous meditation on the last end and on the Life and Passion of Christ, which must ever be the great model of the Christian. This first portion of the way to heaven can be covered by the help of the ordinary means of grace, without any direct and extraordinary intervention of divine power.

The second part differs in many ways from the first. It comprises the passive purification of the soul and the passive enlightenment of the mind. By sending it keen interior and exterior trials and sufferings, God completes the cleansing of the soul in a manner far surpassing any voluntary effort of man. By raising it to the stage of contemplation He gives it fresh light on the mysteries of our Redemption. The mind is then no longer compelled to strain the memory, the reason, and the will, in order to dwell upon the great truths of religion and to derive some personal benefit therefrom, for these truths are now more or less permanently before it and fill it with holy thoughts, sometimes giving it consolation in trouble, at other times striking a warning note against imperfection. Again, the subtraction of sensible consolation, and the interior aridity arising therefrom, leave a terrible blank in the soul, showing it that, without God's help, it is mere nothingness. This apparent estrangement from God is the keenest trial that can befall a soul, but also the most powerful means of cleansing it from the least, the most subtle imperfections.

Emerging from this state of probation, the soul enters upon the third stage, in which, though perhaps in the midst of severe suffering and sharp persecution, it knows itself to be a chosen child of God, to Whom it is united by perfect conformity of the will. Such phenomena as revelations, visions,

locutions, and even more wonderful manifestations, like the wound of love, spiritual betrothal and nuptials, are incidental rather than essential to the second and third stages. Some great contemplatives have never experienced anything of the kind, while, on the other hand, some of these occurrences may sometimes have been merely the work of an exuberant imagination, or even the result of diabolical illusion. They should therefore never be wished for, or cherished, but rather shunned and ignored, in as far as that is possible. If they are real and come from God, they will do their work without the co-operation of the soul. The danger of self-deception is so great that a person labouring under such phenomena should offer every resistance, and the spiritual director should exercise the utmost vigilance. St. Teresa is very eloquent on this point, and undeceived many would-be contemplatives, while her disciple, St. John of the Cross, is even more thorough-going in the deprecation of spiritual favours. Among the numerous marks whereby the trained theologian may discriminate between real and imaginary phenomena, there is one about which Saint Teresa speaks with wonderful clearness. If they proceed from hysteria the imagination alone is active and the higher powers of the soul are torpid; if, however, they come from God, the intellect and the will are so intensely active,

that the lower powers and even the body lose all strength for the time being.

It will be noticed that the first two Mansions belong to the purgative life, the third and fourth to the illuminative, and the remaining three to the unitive life. Compared with similar works, the treatment of the first stage must be called meagre. True, in her *Life* and in the *Way of Perfection* St. Teresa has dealt with this subject somewhat more fully. Indeed, the last-named work was designed as a treatise on Christian Ascetics, dealing with the purgation of the soul by mortification and the enlightenment of the mind by meditation. There, too, appears the first idea of the *Mansions*,<sup>25</sup> and Fuente remarks that the passage in question may be taken for the parting of the ways between the two works. However, this is not the only, nor, indeed, the chief reason why St. Teresa is so reticent about the preliminary stage of the contemplative life. The fact is that she herself did not pass through these experiences. By God's grace she was preserved from childhood from grievous sin and gross imperfection. Though she never grows tired of bewailing her faults and unfaithfulness, these avowals must be taken *cum grano salis*. While yet a child, she sometimes gave way to vanity in dress and wasted her time in reading romances. As a young religious, she was sought after by friends and relatives who

<sup>25</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. xx. 1

took pleasure in her attractive conversation. This proved further loss of time and caused distractions. Owing to acute suffering, she for some years left off the practice of mental prayer, though she faithfully performed all her religious obligations, as far as her weak state of health allowed. This is all. The war of the flesh against the spirit, the insubordination of the lower parts of nature, the fickleness of the will, which so often thwart the most noble aspirations of a soul, were unknown to her. Under these circumstances, we cannot be surprised to find her entering upon the journey towards God at a point which in many cases marks but the closing stage.

As to the remaining parts of this book, it will be seen from the parallel passages that they cover much the same ground as her *Life* and the *Relations*. With her singular gift of introspection and analysis, the Saint studied her own case from every point of view, so as to make sure that her extraordinary experiences were due to no illusion, and offered no obstacle to the safety of her soul. Although the *Interior Castle* contains little that we do not already know from her other works, it is superior to them by reason of its logical order and the masterly treatment of the most recondite matters of mystical theology. While ostensibly dealing with general facts, St. Teresa in reality records her personal experiences. How definite these were, how little room there remained for the freaks of the imagina-



tion, will appear from the fact that she nearly always repeats the very words she had used in her *Life* and in the other reports of her interior progress, although she did not have these writings before her eyes, nor had she ever seen them since they first left her hands. Every one of her experiences must have produced a profound impression to be remembered so minutely after an interval of years.

There is that in the *Interior Castle* which reminds one of Dante's *Paradiso*. In the one and the other, the soul, purified from earthly dross, is gradually being invested with new and glorious qualities, and is being led through regions unknown until it arrives at the very threshold of the throne of God. Not even the boldest imagination could have designed so wonderful a picture of a soul adorned with graces at once so varied and so true. In one case we know, the poet has drawn abundantly from the treasury of the Angelical Doctor, putting in verse the conclusions of the scholastic theologian. In the other case we can follow, chapter by chapter, the influence of the teaching of St. Thomas Aquinas. St. Teresa had never studied it herself, but her directors and confessors were deeply versed in it and solved her doubts and perplexities on the lines of the greatest of the schoolmen. The *Interior Castle* might almost be considered a practical illustration of certain parts of the *Summa theologica*,<sup>26</sup>

<sup>26</sup> S. Theol. 2da 2dæ, qq. 171-184.

as it describes the progress of the soul through every stage of perfection. When we have reached the second chapter of the seventh Mansion, there remains but one thing: the Beatific Vision, and this is reserved for the next life.

After the publication of the *Interior Castle* by Luis de Leon, the manuscript came into the possession of Father Jerome Gracian, who, after having made a copy of it which is still extant, presented the original, on the occasion of a visit to the convent of Seville, to Don Pedro Cereso Pardo, a great friend of the Saint, and a benefactor to the convent. When his only daughter took the habit there, the precious manuscript was part of her dowry. Doña Juana de Mendoza, Duchess of Beguiar, a novice in the same convent, had it bound in silver and precious stones. It is still there,<sup>27</sup> and the present writer had the privilege of seeing it. It comprises a hundred and thirteen leaves in folio, but originally there must have been some more leaves which at a later period were torn out. These, it is presumed, contained the headings of the chapters. Unlike the *Life* and the *Foundations*, the text of the *Castle* is divided only by figures, without indication of the contents of each chapter, but the arguments which have come down to us are so entirely similiar to those of the two works

<sup>27</sup> Bollandists, *Acta*, n. 1495. See also *Impressions in Spain*. By Lady Herbert. London, 1867, p. 171.

named, that it is impossible to consider them otherwise than the genuine work of the author. In the present translation they have been inserted in their proper places.

On the occasion of the ter-centenary of Saint Teresa's death, a photo-lithographic edition of the original was published under the direction of Cardinal Lluçh, Carmelite of the old observance, Archbishop of Seville:

*El Castillo Ynterior ó Tratado de las Moradas,*  
*escrito por Sta. Teresa de Jesús.*

*Litografia de Juan Moyano* (Seville) 1882.

The present translation, the third in English,<sup>28</sup> has been made directly from this autograph edition. It has been thought advisable that, as far as the genius of the language allows it, the wording of the author should be strictly adhered to, and that not even a shade of her expression should be sacrificed. For Teresa is not only a saint whose

<sup>28</sup> The first translation is to be found in the *Works of the Holy Mother St. Teresa of Jesus* (third part). Printed in the year MDCLXXV, pp. 137-286. It bears the title: *The Interiour Castle: or, Mansions*. As to the authors of this translation—Abraham Woodhead and another, whose name is not known—see my book *Carmel in England*, p. 342, note. It is stated there that the third part, containing the *Way of Perfection* and the *Castle*, has no title-page. This is true with regard to the copy I had before me when writing that book. The one I have now is more complete.

The second translation, by the Rev. John Dalton, appeared in 1852 and has been repeatedly reprinted. It was dedicated to Bishop Ullathorne.

Of foreign translations it will be sufficient to mention the one by Cyprien de la Nativité, in *Œuvres de la Sainte Mère Térèse de Jésus*, Paris, 1657, and the new one in *Œuvres* already mentioned.

every word is telling, but she is a classic in her own language who knows how to give expression to her deepest thoughts. Having compared word for word the translation with the original, I am in a position to affirm that this programme has been faithfully carried out. For the foot-notes—with few exceptions—as well as for the Index, I am responsible. It seemed to me important to point out all the parallel passages from the various works of the Saint. Only by this means can it be seen how consistent Saint Teresa is in all her writings.<sup>29</sup> It would have been easy to multiply quotations from the works of other writers on mystical theology. Thus, the influence of the *Imitation of Christ* and of the *Life of our Lord* by Ludolphus the Carthusian can be distinctly traced in the *Interior Castle*. Both these works, as well as some Spanish books, were held in such esteem by St. Teresa, that she ordered the prioress of each convent to keep them at the disposal of the nuns. As there is a limit to footnotes, I have contented myself with such references as seemed to me conducive to the elucidation of the doctrine laid down in this treatise.

In conclusion I venture to express the hope that

<sup>29</sup> The present translation ought to dispose of the reservations expressed by an able critic in his otherwise valuable appreciation of the works of the Saint. See *Santa Teresa*, by the late Alexander Whyte, D.D. London, 1898, p. 32.

Criticisms which have appeared in various papers, or have been privately conveyed, have been gratefully received and acted upon in the second and the present edition.

this new translation will be found helpful by those who feel called to a higher life.

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*July, 1, 1905, and December 25, 1911.*

THE INTERIOR CASTLE  
OR THE MANSIONS  
BY ST. TERESA

IHS

THIS TREATISE, STYLED THE INTERIOR CASTLE, WAS WRITTEN BY TERESA OF JESUS, NUN OF OUR LADY OF CARMEL, FOR HER SISTERS AND DAUGHTERS, THE DISCALCED CARMELITE NUNS.

RARELY has obedience laid upon me so difficult a task as this of writing about prayer; for one reason, because I do not feel that God has given me either the power or the desire for it, besides which, during the last three months I have suffered from noises and a great weakness in my head that have made it painful for me to write even on necessary business.<sup>1</sup>

However, as I know the power obedience has of making things easy which seem impossible, my will submits with a good grace, although nature seems greatly distressed, for God has not given me such strength as to bear, without repugnance, the constant struggle against illness while performing many different duties. May He, Who has helped

<sup>1</sup> 'I am always suffering from my head.' Letter of June 28, 1577. *Letters*, VOL. II.

me in other more difficult matters, aid me with His grace in this, for I trust in His mercy. I think I have but little to say that has not already been put forth in my other works written under obedience; in fact, I fear this will be but repetition of them. I am like a parrot which has learnt to talk; only knowing what it has been taught or has heard, it repeats the same thing over and over again. If God wishes me to write anything new, He will teach it me, or bring back to my memory what I have said elsewhere. I should be content even with this, for as I am very forgetful, I should be glad to be able to recall some of the matters about which people say I have spoken well, lest they should be altogether lost. If our Lord will not even grant me this, still, if I weary my brains and increase my headache by striving to obey, I shall gain in merit, though my words should be useless to any one. So I begin this work on the Feast of the Blessed Trinity in the year 1577, in the Convent of St. Joseph of Carmel at Toledo, where I am living, and I submit all my writings to the judgment of those learned men by whose commands I undertake them. That it will be the fault of ignorance, not malice, if I say anything contrary to the doctrine of the Holy Roman Catholic Church, may be held as certain. By God's goodness I am, and always shall be, faithful to the Church, as I have been in the past. May He be for ever blessed and glorified. Amen.

He who bids me write this, tells me that the nuns of these convents of our Lady of Carmel need some one to solve their difficulties about prayer: he

thinks that women understand one another's language best and that my sisters' affection for me would make them pay special attention to my words, therefore it is important for me to explain the subject clearly to them. Thus I am writing only to my sisters; the idea that any one else could benefit by what I say would be absurd. Our Lord will be doing me a great favour if He enables me to help but one of the nuns to praise Him a little better; His Majesty knows well that I have no other aim. If anything is to the point, they will understand that it does not originate from me and there is no reason to attribute it to me, as with my scant understanding and skill I could write nothing of the sort, unless God, in His mercy, enabled me to do so.



# THE FIRST MANSIONS

## CHAPTER I.

THIS CHAPTER TREATS OF THE BEAUTY AND DIGNITY OF OUR SOULS AND MAKES A COMPARISON TO EXPLAIN THIS. THE ADVANTAGE OF KNOWING AND UNDERSTANDING THIS AND THE FAVOURS GOD GRANTS TO US IS SHOWN, AND HOW PRAYER IS THE GATE OF THE SPIRITUAL CASTLE.

1. *Plan of this book.* 2. *The Interior Castle.* 3. *Our culpable self-ignorance.* 4. *God dwells in the centre of the soul.* 5. *Why all souls do not receive certain favours.* 6. *Reasons for speaking of these favours.* 7. *The entrance of the Castle.* 8. *Entering into oneself.* 9. *Prayer.* 10. *Those who dwell in the first mansion.* 11. *Entering.* 12. *Difficulties of the subject.*

1. WHILE I was begging our Lord to-day to speak for me, since I knew not what to say nor how to commence this work which obedience has laid upon me, an idea occurred to me which I will explain, and which will serve as a foundation for that I am about to write.

2. I thought of the soul as resembling a castle,<sup>1</sup> formed of a single diamond or a very transparent crystal,<sup>2</sup> and containing many rooms, just as in

<sup>1</sup> *Way of Perfection*, ch. xxviii, 9.

<sup>2</sup> In her *Life* St. Teresa likened God to a diamond (ch. xl, 14); and elsewhere (ch. xi, 10) the soul to a garden wherein our Lord takes His delight.

heaven there are many mansions.<sup>3</sup> If we reflect, sisters, we shall see that the soul of the just man is but a paradise, in which, God tells us, He takes His delight.<sup>4</sup> What, do you imagine, must that dwelling be in which a King so mighty, so wise, and so pure, containing in Himself all good, can delight to rest? Nothing can be compared to the great beauty and capabilities of a soul; however keen our intellects may be, they are as unable to comprehend them as to comprehend God, for, as He has told us, He created us in His own image and likeness.<sup>5</sup>

3. As this is so, we need not tire ourselves by trying to realize all the beauty of this castle, although, being His creature, there is all the difference between the soul and God that there is between the creature and the Creator; the fact that it is made in God's image teaches us how great are its dignity and loveliness. It is no small misfortune and disgrace that, through our own fault, we neither understand our nature nor our origin. Would it not be gross ignorance, my daughters, if, when a man was questioned about his name, or country, or parents, he could not answer? Stupid as this would be, it is unspeakably more foolish to care to learn

<sup>3</sup> St. John xiv. 2: 'In domo Patris mei mansiones multæ sunt.' St. John of the Cross uses the same comparison: 'If the soul shall overcome the devil in the first combat, it shall then pass on to the second; and if it shall be victorious there also, it shall then pass on to the third; and then through the seven mansions, the seven degrees of love, until the Bridegroom shall bring it to the "cellar of wine" of perfect charity. (*Ascent of Mount Carmel*, bk. ii. ch. xi. 7.)

<sup>4</sup> Prov. viii. 31: 'Deliciæ meæ esse cum filiis hominum.'

<sup>5</sup> Gen. i. 26: 'Faciamus hominem ad imaginem et similitudinem nostram.'

nothing of our nature except that we possess bodies, and only to realize vaguely that we have souls, because people say so and it is a doctrine of faith. Rarely do we reflect upon what gifts our souls may possess, Who dwells within them, or how extremely precious they are. Therefore we do little to preserve their beauty; all our care is concentrated on our bodies, which are but the coarse setting of the diamond, or the outer walls of the castle.<sup>6</sup>

4. Let us imagine, as I said, that there are many rooms in this castle, of which some are above, some below, others at the side; in the centre, in the very midst of them all, is the principal chamber in which God and the soul hold their most secret intercourse.<sup>7</sup> Think over this comparison very carefully; God grant it may enlighten you about the different kinds of graces He is pleased to bestow upon the soul. No one can know all about them, much less a person so ignorant as I am. The knowledge that such things are possible will console you greatly should our Lord ever grant you

<sup>6</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. xxviii. 5.

<sup>7</sup> St. John of the Cross on the words of his stanza: 'In the inner cellar of my Beloved have I drunk.' 'Here the soul speaks of that sovereign grace of God in taking it into the house of His love, which is the union or transformation of love in God . . . The cellar is the highest degree of love to which the soul can attain in this life, and is therefore said to be the inner. It follows from this that there are other cellars not so interior; that is, the degrees of love by which souls reach to this, the last. These cellars are seven in number, and the soul has entered them all when it has in perfection the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost, so far as it is possible for it. . . . Many souls reach and enter the first cellar, each according to the perfection of its love, but the last and inmost cellar is entered by few in this world, because therein is wrought the perfect union with God, the union of the spiritual marriage.' *A Spiritual Canticle*, stanza xxvi. 1-3. Concept. ch. vi. (*Minor Works of St. Teresa.*)

any of these favours; people themselves deprived of them can then at least praise Him for His great goodness in bestowing them on others. The thought of heaven and the happiness of the saints does us no harm, but cheers and urges us to win this joy for ourselves, nor will it injure us to know that during this exile God can communicate Himself to us loathsome worms; it will rather make us love Him for such immense goodness and infinite mercy.

5. I feel sure that vexation at thinking that during our life on earth God can bestow these graces on the souls of others shows a want of humility and charity for one's neighbour, for why should we not feel glad at a brother's receiving divine favours which do not deprive us of our own share? Should we not rather rejoice at His Majesty's thus manifesting His greatness wherever He chooses?<sup>8</sup> Sometimes our Lord acts thus solely for the sake of showing His power, as He declared when the Apostles questioned whether the blind man whom He cured had been suffering for his own or his parents' sins.<sup>9</sup> God does not bestow these favours on certain souls because they are more holy than others who do not receive them, but to manifest His greatness, as in the case of St. Paul and St. Mary Magdalen, and that we may glorify Him in His creatures.

6. People may say such things appear impossible and it is best not to scandalize the weak in faith by

<sup>8</sup> St. Matt. xx. 15: 'Aut non licet mihi quod volo, facere? an oculus tuus nequam est, quia ego bonus sum?'

<sup>9</sup> St. John ix. 2: 'Quis peccavit, hic, aut parentes ejus, ut cæcus nasceretur?'

speaking about them. But it is better that the latter should disbelieve us, than that we should desist from enlightening souls which receive these graces, that they may rejoice and may endeavour to love God better for His favours, seeing He is so mighty and so great. There is no danger here of shocking those for whom I write by treating of such matters, for they know and believe that God gives even greater proofs of His love. I am certain that if any one of you doubts the truth of this, God will never allow her to learn it by experience, for He desires that no limits should be set to His work: therefore, never discredit them because you are not thus led yourselves.

7. Now let us return to our beautiful and charming castle and discover how to enter it. This appears incongruous: if this castle is the soul, clearly no one can have to enter it, for it is the person himself: one might as well tell some one to go into a room he is already in! There are, however, very different ways of being in this castle; many souls live in the courtyard of the building where the sentinels stand, neither caring to enter farther, nor to know who dwells in that most delightful place, what is in it and what rooms it contains.

8. Certain books on prayer that you have read advise the soul to enter into itself,<sup>10</sup> and this is what I mean. I was recently told by a great theologian that souls without prayer are like bodies, palsied and lame, having hands and feet they cannot use.

<sup>10</sup> *Imitation*, bk. 11. ch. 1: 'Regnum Dei intra vos est.' Luke. xvii. 21. The *Imitation* is one of the books which according to St. Teresa's *Constitutions*, (§ 7) every prioress was bound to provide for her convent.

Just so, there are souls so infirm and accustomed to think of nothing but earthly matters, that there seems no cure for them. It appears impossible for them to retire into their own hearts; accustomed as they are to be with the reptiles and other creatures which live outside the castle, they have come at last to imitate their habits. Though these souls are by their nature so richly endowed, capable of communion even with God Himself, yet their case seems hopeless. Unless they endeavour to understand and remedy their most miserable plight, their minds will become, as it were, bereft of movement, just as Lot's wife became a pillar of salt for looking backwards in disobedience to God's command."

9. As far as I can understand, the gate by which to enter this castle is prayer and meditation. I do not allude more to mental than to vocal prayer, for if it is prayer at all, the mind must take part in it. If a person neither considers to Whom he is addressing himself, what he asks, nor what he is who ventures to speak to God, although his lips may utter many words, I do not call it prayer."<sup>11</sup> Sometimes, indeed, one may pray devoutly without making all these considerations through having practised them at other times. The custom of speaking to God Almighty as freely as with a slave—caring nothing whether the words are suitable or not, but simply saying the first thing that comes to mind from being learnt by rote by frequent repetition—cannot be called prayer: God grant that

<sup>11</sup> Gen. xix. 26: 'Respiciensque uxor ejus post se, versa est in statuam salis.'

<sup>12</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. xxi. 6; xxix. 4.

*the gate*

no Christian may address Him in this manner. I trust His Majesty will prevent any of you, sisters, from doing so. Our habit in this Order of conversing about spiritual matters is a good preservative against such evil ways.

10. Let us speak no more of these crippled souls, who are in a most miserable and dangerous state, unless our Lord bid them rise, as He did the palsied man who had waited more than thirty years at the pool of Bethsaida.<sup>13</sup> We will now think of the others who at last enter the precincts of the castle; they are still very worldly, yet have some desire to do right, and at times, though rarely, commend themselves to God's care. They think about their souls every now and then; although very busy, they pray a few times a month, with minds generally filled with a thousand other matters, for where their treasure is, there is their heart also.<sup>14</sup> Still, occasionally they cast aside these cares; it is a great boon for them to realize to some extent the state of their souls, and to see that they will never reach the gate by the road they are following.

11. At length they enter the first rooms in the basement of the castle, accompanied by numerous reptiles<sup>15</sup> which disturb their peace, and prevent their seeing the beauty of the building; still, it is a great gain that these persons should have found their way in at all.

<sup>13</sup> St. John v. 5: 'Erat autem quidam homo ibi triginta et octo annos habens in infirmitate sua.'

<sup>14</sup> St. Matt. vi. 21: 'Ubi enim est thesaurus tuus ibi est et cor tuum.'

<sup>15</sup> Many an ancient castle was provided with a bear-garden where rare animals were kept for the amusement of the inhabitants. This may have supplied the material for St. Teresa's comparison.

12. You may think, my daughters, that all this does not concern you, because, by God's grace, you are farther advanced; still, you must be patient with me, for I can explain myself on some spiritual matters concerning prayer in no other way. May our Lord enable me to speak to the point; the subject is most difficult to understand without personal experience of such graces. Any one who has received them will know how impossible it is to avoid touching on subjects which, by the mercy of God, will never apply to us.

## CHAPTER II.

DESCRIBES THE HIDEOUS APPEARANCE OF A SOUL IN MORTAL SIN AS REVEALED BY GOD TO SOME ONE; OFFERS A FEW REMARKS ON SELF-KNOWLEDGE: THIS CHAPTER IS USEFUL AS IT CONTAINS SOME POINTS REQUIRING ATTENTION. AN EXPLANATION OF THE MANSIONS.

1. *Effects of mortal sin.* 2. *It prevents the soul's gaining merit.* 3. *The soul compared to a tree.* 4. *Disorder of the soul in mortal sin.* 5. *Vision of a sinful soul.* 6. *Profit of realizing these lessons.* 7. *Prayer.* 8. *Beauty of the Castle.* 9. *Self-knowledge* 10. *Gained by meditating on the divine perfections.* 11. *Advantages of such meditation.* 12. *Christ should be our model.* 13. *The devil entraps beginners.* 14. *Our strength must come from God.* 15. *Sin blinds the soul.* 16. *Worldliness.* 17. *The world in the cloister.* 18. *Assaults of the devil.* 19. *Examples of the devil's arts.* 20. *Perfection consists in charity.* 21. *Indiscreet zeal.* 22. *Danger of detraction.*

1. BEFORE going farther, I wish you to consider the state to which mortal sin<sup>1</sup> brings this magnificent and beautiful castle, this pearl of the East, this tree of life, planted beside the living waters of life<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Life*, ch. xxxviii. 31; ch. xl. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. i. 3: 'Et erit tamquam lignum quod plantatum est secus decursus aquarum.'



which symbolize God Himself. No night can be so dark, no gloom nor blackness can compare to its obscurity. Suffice it to say that the sun in the centre of the soul, which gave it such splendour and beauty, is totally eclipsed, though the spirit is as fitted to enjoy God's presence as is the crystal to reflect the sun.<sup>3</sup>

2. While the soul is in mortal sin nothing can profit it; none of its good works merit an eternal reward, since they do not proceed from God as their first principle, and by Him alone is our virtue real virtue. The soul separated from Him is no longer pleasing in His eyes, because by committing a mortal sin, instead of seeking to please God, it prefers to gratify the devil, the prince of darkness, and so comes to share his blackness. I knew a person to whom our Lord revealed the result of a mortal sin<sup>4</sup> and who said she thought no one who realized its effects could ever commit it, but would suffer unimaginable torments to avoid it. This vision made her very desirous for all to grasp this truth, therefore I beg you, my daughters, to pray fervently to God for sinners, who live in blindness and do deeds of darkness.

3. In a state of grace the soul is like a well of limpid water, from which flow only streams of clearest crystal. Its works are pleasing both to God and man, rising from the River of Life, beside which it is rooted like a tree. Otherwise it would produce neither leaves nor fruit, for the waters of grace

<sup>3</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. xxviii. 9.

<sup>4</sup> In this as in most other cases when the Saint speaks of 'a person she knows,' she means herself. *Life*, ch. xl. 15.

nourish it, keep it from withering from drought, and cause it to bring forth good fruit. But the soul by sinning withdraws from this stream of life, and growing beside a black and fetid pool, can produce nothing but disgusting and unwholesome fruit. Notice that it is not the fountain and the brilliant sun which lose their splendour and beauty, for they are placed in the very centre of the soul and cannot be deprived of their lustre. The soul is like a crystal in the sunshine over which a thick black cloth has been thrown, so that however brightly the sun may shine the crystal can never reflect it.

4. O souls, redeemed by the Blood of Jesus Christ, take these things to heart; have mercy on yourselves! If you realize your pitiable condition, how can you refrain from trying to remove the darkness from the crystal of your souls? Remember, if death should take you now, you would never again enjoy the light of this Sun. O Jesus! how sad a sight must be a soul deprived of light! What a terrible state the chambers of this castle are in! How disorderly must be the senses—the inhabitants of the castle—the powers of the soul—its magistrates, governors, and stewards—blind and uncontrolled as they are! In short, as the soil in which the tree is now planted is in the devil's domain, how can its fruit be anything but evil? A man of great spiritual insight once told me he was not so much surprised at such a soul's wicked deeds as astonished that it did not commit even worse sins. May God in His mercy keep us from such great evil, for nothing in this life merits the name of evil in comparison with

this, which delivers us over to evil which is eternal.

5. This is what we must dread and pray God to deliver us from, for we are weakness itself, and unless He guards the city, in vain shall we labour to defend it.<sup>5</sup> The person of whom I spoke<sup>6</sup> said that she had learnt two things from the vision granted her. The first was, a great fear of offending God; seeing how terrible were the consequences, she constantly begged Him to preserve her from falling into sin. Secondly, it was a mirror to teach her humility, for she saw that nothing good in us springs from ourselves but comes from the waters of grace near which the soul remains like a tree planted beside a river, and from that Sun which gives life to our works. She realized this so vividly that on seeing any good deed performed by herself or by other people she at once turned to God as to its fountain head—without whose help she knew well we can do nothing—and broke out into songs of praise to Him. Generally she forgot all about herself and only thought of God when she did any meritorious action.

6. The time which has been spent in reading or writing on this subject will not have been lost if it has taught us these two truths; for though learned, clever men know them perfectly, women's wits are dull and need help in every way. Perhaps this is why our Lord has suggested these comparisons to me; may He give us grace to profit by them!

7. So obscure are these spiritual matters that to

<sup>5</sup> cxxvi. 1: 'Nisi Dominus custodierit civitatem, frustra vigilat qui custodit eam.'

<sup>6</sup> *Life*, ch. xxxviii. 33; ch. xl. 15, 16.

explain them an ignorant person like myself must say much that is superfluous, and even alien to the subject, before coming to the point. My readers must be patient with me, as I am with myself while writing what I do not understand; indeed, I often take up the paper like a dunce, not knowing what to say, nor how to begin. Doubtless there is need for me to do my best to explain these spiritual subjects to you, for we often hear how beneficial prayer is for our souls; our Constitutions oblige us to pray so many hours a day, yet tell us nothing of what part we ourselves can take in it and very little of the work God does in the soul by its means.<sup>7</sup> It will be helpful, in setting it before you in various ways, to consider this heavenly edifice within us, so little understood by men, near as they often come to it. Our Lord gave me grace to understand something of such matters when I wrote on them before, yet I think I have more light now, especially on the more difficult questions. Unfortunately I am too ignorant to treat of such subjects without saying much that is already well known.

8. Now let us turn at last to our castle with its many mansions. You must not think of a suite of rooms placed in succession, but fix your eyes on the keep, the court inhabited by the King.<sup>8</sup> Like the kernel of the palmito,<sup>9</sup> from which several rinds

<sup>7</sup> *Life*, ch. x. 2 *sqq.* *Constitut.* 2, 6.

<sup>8</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. xxviii. 1.

<sup>9</sup> The palmito here referred to is not a palm, but a shrub about four feet high and very dense with leaves, resembling palm leaves. The poorer classes and principally children dig it up by the roots, which they peel of its many layers until a sort of kernel is disclosed, which is

must be removed before coming to the eatable part, this principal chamber is surrounded by many others. However large, magnificent, and spacious you imagine this castle to be, you cannot exaggerate it; the capacity of the soul is beyond all our understanding, and the Sun within this palace enlightens every part of it.

9. A soul which gives itself to prayer, either much or little, should on no account be kept within narrow bounds. Since God has given it such great dignity, permit it to wander at will through the rooms of the castle, from the lowest to the highest. Let it not force itself to remain for very long in the same mansion, even that of self-knowledge. Mark well, however, that self-knowledge is indispensable, even for those whom God takes to dwell in the same mansion with Himself. Nothing else, however elevated, perfects the soul which must never seek to forget its own nothingness. Let humility be always at work, like the bee at the honeycomb, or all will be lost. But, remember, the bee leaves its hive to fly in search of flowers and the soul should sometimes cease thinking of itself to rise in meditation on the grandeur and majesty of its God. It will learn its own baseness better thus than by self-contemplation, and will be freer from the reptiles which enter the first room where self-knowledge is acquired. Although it is a great grace from God to practise self-examination, yet 'too much is as bad as too little,' as they say; believe me, by God's help, we shall advance more by contemplating the eaten, not without relish, and is somewhat like a filbert in taste. See St. John of the Cross, *Ascent of Mount Carmel*, bk. ii. ch. xiv. 3.

Divinity than by keeping our eyes fixed on ourselves, poor creatures of earth that we are.

10. I do not know whether I have put this clearly; self-knowledge is of such consequence that I would not have you careless of it, though you may be lifted to heaven in prayer, because while on earth nothing is more needful than humility. Therefore, I repeat, not only a *good* way, but the *best* of all ways, is to endeavour to enter first by the room where humility is practised, which is far better than at once rushing on to the others. This is the right road;—if we know how easy and safe it is to walk by it, why ask for wings with which to fly? Let us rather try to learn how to advance quickly. I believe we shall never learn to know ourselves except by endeavouring to know God, for, beholding His greatness we are struck by our own baseness, His purity shows our foulness, and by meditating on His humility we find how very far we are from being humble. ✓

11. Two advantages are gained by this practice. First, it is clear that white looks far whiter when placed near something black, and on the contrary, black never looks so dark as when seen beside something white. Secondly, our understanding and will become more noble and capable of good in every way when we turn from ourselves to God: it is very injurious never to raise our minds above the mire of our own faults. I described how murky and fetid are the streams that spring from the source of a soul in mortal sin.<sup>10</sup> Thus (although the case is

<sup>10</sup> *Supra*, § 3.

not really the same, God forbid! this is only a comparison), while we are continually absorbed in contemplating the weakness of our earthly nature, the springs of our actions will never flow free from the mire of timid, weak, and cowardly thoughts, such as: 'I wonder whether people are noticing me or not! If I follow this course, will harm come to me? Dare I begin this work? Would it not be presumptuous? Is it right for any one as faulty as myself to speak on sublime spiritual subjects?' Will not people think too well of me, if I make myself singular? Extremes are bad, even in virtue; sinful as I am I shall only fall the lower. Perhaps I shall fail and be a source of scandal to good people; such a person as I am has no need of peculiarities.'

12. Alas, my daughters, what loss the devil must have caused to many a soul by such thoughts as these! It thinks such ideas and many others of the same sort I could mention arise from humility. This comes from not understanding our own nature; self-knowledge becomes so warped that, unless we take our thoughts off ourselves, I am not surprised that these and many worse fears should threaten us. Therefore I maintain, my daughters, that we should fix our eyes on Christ our only good, and on His saints; there we shall learn true humility, and our minds will be ennobled, so that self-knowledge will not make us base and cowardly. Although only the first, this mansion contains great riches and such treasures that if the soul only manages to

<sup>11</sup> *Life*, ch. viii. 6, x. 4, xxiii. 3-5. *Way of Perf.* ch. xxxix. 1.

elude the reptiles dwelling here, it cannot fail to advance farther. Terrible are the wiles and stratagems the devil uses to hinder people from realizing their weakness and detecting his snares.

13. From personal experience I could give you much information as to what happens in these first mansions. I will only say that you must not imagine there are only a few, but a number of rooms, for souls enter them by many different ways, and always with a good intention. The devil is so angry at this that he keeps legions of evil spirits hidden in each room to stop the progress of Christians, whom, being ignorant of this, he entraps in a thousand ways. He cannot so easily deceive souls which dwell nearer to the King as he can beginners still absorbed in the world, immersed in its pleasures, and eager for its honours and distinctions. As the vassals of their souls, the senses and powers bestowed on them by God, are weak, such people are easily vanquished, although desirous not to offend God. ✓

14. Those conscious of being in this state must as often as possible have recourse to His Majesty, taking His Blessed Mother and the saints for their advocates to do battle for them, because we creatures possess little strength for self-defence. Indeed in every state of life all our help must come from God; may He in His mercy grant it us, Amen! What a miserable life we lead! As I have spoken more fully in other writings<sup>12</sup> on the ill that results from ignoring the need of humility and self-knowledge, I will treat

<sup>12</sup> *Life* ch. xiii. 23. *Way of Perf.* ch. x. 4. *Castle*, M. iii. ch. ii. 8. *Concep.* ch. ii. 20. *Const.* 21.



no more about it here, my daughters, although it is of the first importance. God grant that what I have said may be useful to you.

15 You must notice that the light which comes from the King's palace hardly shines at all in these first mansions; although not as gloomy and black as the soul in mortal sin, yet they are in semi-darkness, and their inhabitants see scarcely anything. I cannot explain myself; I do not mean that this is the fault of the mansions themselves, but that the number of snakes, vipers, and venomous reptiles from outside the castle prevent souls entering them from seeing the light. They resemble a person entering a chamber full of brilliant sunshine, with eyes clogged and half closed with dust. Though the room itself is light, he cannot see because of his self-imposed impediment. In the same way, these fierce and wild beasts blind the eyes of the beginner, so that he sees nothing but them.

16. Such, it appears to me, is the soul which, though not in a state of mortal sin, is so worldly and preoccupied with earthly riches, honours, and affairs, that as I said, even if it sincerely wishes to enter into itself and enjoy the beauties of the castle, it is prevented by these distractions and seems unable to overcome so many obstacles. It is most important to withdraw from all unnecessary cares and business, as far as compatible with the duties of one's state of life, in order to enter the second mansion. This is so essential, that unless done immediately I think it impossible for any one ever to reach the principal room, or even to remain

where he is without great risk of losing what is already gained; otherwise, although he is inside the castle, he will find it impossible to avoid being bitten some time or other by some of the very venomous creatures surrounding him.

17. What then would become of a religious like ourselves, my daughters, if, after having escaped from all these impediments, and having entered much farther into the more secret mansion, she should, by her own fault, return to all this turmoil? Through her sins, many other people on whom God had bestowed great graces would culpably relapse into their wretched state. In our convents we are free from these exterior evils; please God our minds may be as free from them, and may He deliver us from such ills.

18. Do not trouble yourselves, my daughters, with cares which do not concern you. You must notice that the struggle with the demons continues through nearly all the mansions of this castle. True, in some of them, the guards, which, as I explained, are the powers of the soul, have strength for the combat, but we must be keenly on the watch against the devils's arts, lest he deceive us in the form of an angel of light. He creeps in gradually, in numberless ways, and does us much harm, though we do not discover it until too late.<sup>13</sup>

19. As I said elsewhere,<sup>14</sup> he works like a file, secretly and silently wearing its way: I will give you some examples to show how he begins his wiles.

<sup>13</sup> *Life* ch. xxxi. 23.

<sup>14</sup> No doubt the Saint often used this excellent comparison in her verbal instructions, but it occurs nowhere else in her writings.

For instance: a nun has such a longing for penance as to feel no peace unless she is tormenting herself in some way.<sup>15</sup> This is good in itself; but suppose that the Prioress has forbidden her to practise any mortifications without special leave, and the sister thinking that, in such a meritorious cause, she may venture to disobey, secretly leads such a life that she loses her health and cannot even fulfil the requirements of her rule—you see how this show of good ends. Another nun is very zealous about religious perfection; this is very right, but may cause her to think every small fault she sees in her sisters a serious crime, and to watch constantly whether they do anything wrong, that she may run to the Prioress to accuse them of it. At the same time, may be she never notices her own shortcomings because of her great zeal about other people's religious observance, while perhaps her sisters, not seeing her intention but only knowing of the watch she keeps on them, do not take her behaviour in good part.

20. The devil's chief aim here is to cool the charity and lessen the mutual affection of the nuns, which would injure them seriously. Be sure, my daughters, that true perfection consists in the love of God and our neighbour, and the better we keep both these commandments, the more perfect we shall be. The sole object of our Rule and Constitutions is to help us to observe these two laws.

21. Indiscreet zeal about others must not be indulged in; it may do us much harm; let each one look to herself. However, as I have spoken fully

<sup>15</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. x. 5; xxxix. 4; *Rel.* iii. 12.

on this subject elsewhere,<sup>16</sup> I will not enlarge on it here, and will only beg you to remember the necessity of this mutual affection. Our souls may lose their peace and even disturb other people's if we are always criticizing trivial actions which often are not real defects at all, but we construe them wrongly through ignorance of their motives. See how much it costs to attain perfection! Sometimes the devil tempts nuns in this way about the Prioress, which is still more dangerous. Great prudence is then required, for if she disobeys the Rule or Constitutions the matter must not always be overlooked, but should be mentioned to her;<sup>17</sup> if, after this, she does not amend, the Superior of the Order should be informed of it. It is true charity to speak in this case, as it would be if we saw our sisters commit a grave fault; to keep silence for fear that speech would be a temptation against charity, would be that very temptation itself.<sup>18</sup>

22. However, I must warn you seriously not to talk to each other about such things, lest the devil deceive you. He would gain greatly by your doing so, because it would lead to the habit of detraction; rather, as I said, state the matter to those whose duty it is to remedy it. Thank God our custom

<sup>16</sup> The Saint must frequently have spoken on the subject, but she never treated it more fully than in this place. *Way of Perf.* ch. xli.7. *Life*, ch. xiii. 11, 14 *sqq.* Visitation of convents.

<sup>17</sup> *Way of Perfection*, ch. ii 3. *Visit.* 20-22, 34, 36.

<sup>18</sup> 'It is terrible to think what harm a Prioress can do! For although the Sisters witness things which scandalize them (of which there are plenty here!), yet they think it would be sinning against obedience to see any harm in them.' (Letter to Father Gracian, written at Malagon at the beginning of December, 1579. *Letters*, Vol. III.)

here of keeping almost perpetual silence gives little opportunity for such conversations, still, it is well to stand ever on our guard.

## THE SECOND MANSIONS

### ONLY CHAPTER

TREATS OF THE GREAT IMPORTANCE OF PERSEVERANCE IN ORDER TO ENTER THE LAST MANSIONS, AND OF THE FIERCE WAR THE DEVIL WAGES AGAINST US. HOW ESSENTIAL IT IS TO TAKE THE RIGHT PATH FROM THE VERY COMMENCEMENT OF OUR JOURNEY. A METHOD OF ACTION WHICH HAS PROVED VERY EFFICACIOUS.

1. *Souls in the second mansions.* 2. *Their state.* 3. *Their sufferings.* 4. *They cannot get rid of their imperfections.* 5. *How God calls these souls.* 6. *Perseverance is essential.* 7. *Temptations of the devil.* 8. *Delusion of earthly joys.* 9. *God alone to be loved.* 10. *Reasons for continuing the journey.* 11. *Warfare of the devil.* 12. *Importance of choice of friends.* 13. *Valour required.* 14. *Presumption of expecting spiritual consolations at first.* 15. *In the Cross is strength.* 16. *Our falls should raise us higher.* 17. *Confidence and perseverance.* 18. *Recollection.* 19. *Why we must practise prayer.* 20. *Meditation kindles love.*

1. Now let us consider which are the souls that enter the second mansions, and what they do there. I do not wish to enlarge on this subject, having already treated it very fully elsewhere,<sup>1</sup> for I could not avoid repeating myself, as my memory is very bad. If I could state my ideas in another form they would not weary you, for we never tire of reading books on this subject, numerous as they are.

<sup>1</sup> *Life*, ch. xi-xiii. *Way of Perf.* ch. xx-xxix.

✓ 2. In this part of the castle are found souls which have begun to practise prayer; they realize the importance of their not remaining in the first mansions, yet often lack determination to quit their present condition by avoiding occasions of sin, which is a very perilous state to be in.

3. However, it is a great grace that they should sometimes make good their escape from the vipers and poisonous creatures around them and should understand the need of avoiding them. In some way these souls suffer a great deal more than those in the first mansions, although not in such danger, as they begin to understand their peril and there are great hopes of their entering farther into the castle. I say that they suffer a great deal more, for those in an earlier stage are like deaf-mutes and are not so distressed at being unable to speak, while the others, who can hear but cannot talk, find it much harder. At the same time, it is better not to be deaf, and a decided advantage to hear what is said to us.

4. These souls hear our Lord calling them, for as they approach nearer to where His Majesty dwells He proves a loving Neighbour, though they may still be engaged in the amusements and business, the pleasures and vanities of this world. While in this state we continually fall into sin and rise again, for the creatures amongst whom we dwell are so venomous, so vicious, and so dangerous, that it is almost impossible to avoid being tripped up by them. Yet such are the pity and compassion of this Lord of ours, so desirous is He that we should

seek Him and enjoy His company, that in one way or another He never ceases calling us to Him. So sweet is His voice, that the poor soul is disconsolate at being unable to follow His bidding at once, and therefore, as I said, suffers more than if it could not hear Him.

5. I do not mean that divine communications and inspirations received in this mansion are the same as those I shall describe later on; God here speaks to souls through words uttered by pious people, by sermons or good books, and in many other such ways. Sometimes He calls souls by means of sickness or troubles, or by some truth He teaches them during prayer, for tepid as they may be in seeking Him, yet God holds them very dear.

6. Do not think lightly, sisters, of this first grace, nor be downcast if you have not responded immediately to Our Lord's voice, for His Majesty is willing to wait for us many a day and even many a year, especially when He sees perseverance and good desires in our hearts. Perseverance is the first essential; with this we are sure to profit greatly. However, the devils now fiercely assault the soul in a thousand different ways: it suffers more than ever, because formerly it was mute and deaf, or at least could hear very little, and offered but feeble resistance, like one who has almost lost all hope of victory.

7. Here, however, the understanding being more vigilant and the powers more on the alert, we cannot avoid hearing the fighting and cannonading around us. For now the devils set on us the reptiles, that is to say, thoughts about the world and its joys



which they picture as unending; they remind us of the high esteem men held us in, of our friends and relations; they tell us how the penances which souls in this mansion always begin to wish to perform would injure our health: in fine, the evil spirits place a thousand impediments in the way.

8. O Jesus! What turmoil the devils cause in the poor soul! How unhappy it feels, not knowing whether to go forward or to return to the first mansion! On the other hand, reason shows it the delusion of overrating worldly things, while faith teaches what alone can satisfy its cravings. Memory reminds the soul how all earthly joys end, recalling the death of those who lived at ease; how some died suddenly and were soon forgotten, how others, once so prosperous, are now buried beneath the ground and men pass by the graves where they lie, the prey of worms,<sup>2</sup> while the mind recalls many other such incidents.

9. The will inclines to love Our Lord and longs to make some return to Him Who is so amiable, and Who has given so many proofs of His love, especially by His constant presence with the soul, which this faithful Lover never quits, ever accompanying it and giving it life and being. The under-

<sup>2</sup> 'How many, thinking to live long, have been deceived and unexpectedly have been snatched away! How often hast thou heard that such a one was slain by the sword; another drowned; another, falling from on high, broke his neck; this man died at the table; that other came to his death while he was at play. . . . Thus death is the end of all; and man's life passeth suddenly like a shadow' (*Imitation*, bk. 1. ch. xxiii. 7). The edition of the *Imitation* known to St. Teresa under the title of *Contemptus Mundi* was translated by Luis de Granada, printed at Seville in 1536, at Lisbon in 1542, and at Alcalá in 1548. See *Life*, ch. xxxix. 21, note.

standing aids by showing that however many years life might last, no one could ever wish for a better friend than God; that the world is full of falsehood, and that the worldly pleasures pictured by the devil to the mind were but troubles and cares and annoyances in disguise.

10. Reason convinces the soul that as outside its interior castle are found neither peace nor security, it should cease to seek another home abroad, its own being full of riches that it can enjoy at will. Besides, it is not every one who, like itself, possesses all he needs within his own dwelling, and above all, such a Host, Who will give it all it can desire, unless, like the prodigal son, it chooses to go astray and feed with the swine.<sup>3</sup> Surely these arguments are strong enough to defeat the devil's wiles! But, O my God, how the force of worldly habits and the example of others who practise them ruin everything! Our faith is so dead that we trust less to its teaching than to what is visible, though, indeed, we see that worldly lives bring nothing but unhappiness. All this results from those venomous thoughts I described, which, unless we are very careful, will deform the soul as the sting of a viper poisons and swells the body.

11. When this happens, great care is evidently needed to cure it, and only God's signal mercy prevents its resulting in death. Indeed, the soul passes through severe trials at this time, especially when the devil perceives from a person's character and behaviour that she is likely to make very great

<sup>3</sup> St. Luke xv. 16: 'Et cupiebat implere ventrem suum de siliquis quas porci manducabant.'

progress, for then all hell will league together to force her to turn back. O my Lord! what need there is here that, by Thy mercy, Thou shouldst prevent the soul from being deluded into forsaking the good begun! Enlighten it to see that its welfare consists in perseverance in the right way, and in the withdrawing from bad company.

12. It is of the utmost importance for the beginner to associate with those who lead a spiritual life,<sup>4</sup> and not only with those in the same mansion as herself, but with others who have travelled farther into the castle, who will aid her greatly and draw her to join them. The soul should firmly resolve never to submit to defeat, for if the devil sees it staunchly determined to lose life and comfort and all that he can offer, rather than return to the first mansion, he will the sooner leave it alone.

13. Let the Christian be valiant; let him not be like those who lay down to drink from the brook when they went to battle (I do not remember when).<sup>5</sup> Let him resolve to go forth to combat with the host of demons, and be convinced that there is no better weapon than the cross. I have already said,<sup>6</sup> yet it is of such importance that I repeat it here: let no one think on starting of the reward to be reaped: this would be a very ignoble way of commencing such a large and stately building. If built on sand it would soon fall down.<sup>7</sup> Souls

<sup>4</sup> *Life*, ch. vii. 33-37; xvi. 12; xxx. 6. *Way of Perfection*, ch. vi. 1; vii. 4.

<sup>5</sup> With Gedeon. Jud. vii. 5: 'Qui lingua lambuerint aquas, sicut solent canes lambere, separabis eos seorsum.'

<sup>6</sup> *Life*, ch. xi 16.

<sup>7</sup> St. Matt. vii. 26, 27: 'Qui ædificavit domum suam super arenam ...

who acted thus would continually suffer from discouragement and temptations, for in these mansions no manna rains;<sup>8</sup> farther on, the soul is pleased with all that comes, because it desires nothing but what God wills.

14. What a farce it is! Here are we, with a thousand obstacles, drawbacks, and imperfections within ourselves, our virtues so newly born that they have scarcely the strength to act (and God grant that they exist at all!) yet we are not ashamed to expect sweetness in prayer and to complain of feeling dryness.<sup>9</sup>

15. Do not act thus, sisters; embrace the cross your Spouse bore on His shoulders; know that your motto should be: 'Most happy she who suffers most if it be for Christ!'<sup>10</sup> All else should be looked upon as secondary: if our Lord give it you, render Him grateful thanks. You may imagine you would be resolute in enduring external trials if God gave you interior consolations: His Majesty knows best what is good for us; it is not for us to advise Him how to treat us, for He has the right to tell us that we know not what we ask.<sup>11</sup> Remember, it is of the greatest importance—the sole aim of one beginning to practise prayer should be to endure trials, and to resolve and strive to the utmost of her power to conform her own will to the will of

et fuit ruina illius magna.'

<sup>8</sup> Ps. lxxvii. 24: 'Pluit illis manna ad manducandum.' *Way of Perf.* ch. x. 4.

<sup>9</sup> *Life*, ch. xii. 5.

<sup>10</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. xvii. 6; xxiii. 1.

<sup>11</sup> St. Matt. xx. 22: 'Nescitis quid petatis.'

God.<sup>12</sup> Be certain that in this consists all the greatest perfection to be attained in the spiritual life, as I will explain later. She who practises this most perfectly will receive from God the highest reward and is the farthest advanced on the right road. Do not imagine that we have need of a cabalistic formula or any other occult or mysterious thing to attain it—our whole welfare consists in doing the will of God. If we start with the false principle of wishing God to follow our will and to lead us in the way we think best, upon what firm foundation can this spiritual edifice rest?

16. Let us endeavour to do our best: beware of the poisonous reptiles—that is to say, the bad thoughts and aridities which are often permitted by God to assail and torment us so that we cannot repel them. Indeed, perchance we feel their sting! He allows this to teach us to be more on our guard in the future and to see whether we grieve much at offending Him. Therefore if you occasionally lapse into sin, do not lose heart and cease trying to advance, for God will draw good even out of our falls, like the merchant who sells theriac, who first takes poison, then the theriac, to prove the power of his elixir.<sup>13</sup> This combat would suffice to teach us to amend our habits if we realized our failings in no other way, and would show us the injury we receive from a life of dissipation. Can any evil be greater than that we find at home? What peace can we hope to find elsewhere, if we have none

<sup>12</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. xvi. 2. *Found.* ch. v. 2, 3. *Life*, ch. iv. 11; xi. 20.

<sup>13</sup> A drug greatly in vogue until recent times. It was composed of all the essences supposed to contain life-giving and life-preserving qualities of animals and plants.

within us? What friends or kindred can be so close and intimate as the powers of our soul, which, whether we will or no, must ever bear us company? These seem to wage war on us as if they knew the harm our vices had wrought them. 'Peace, peace be unto you,' my sisters, as our Lord said, and many a time proclaimed to His Apostles.<sup>14</sup> Believe me, if we neither possess nor strive to obtain this peace at home, we shall never find it abroad.

17. By the blood which our Lord shed for us, I implore those who have not yet begun to enter into themselves, to stop this warfare: I beg those already started in the right path, not to let the combat turn them back from it. Let them reflect that a relapse is worse than a fall, and see what ruin it would bring. They should confide in God's mercy, trusting nothing in themselves; then they will see how His Majesty will lead them from one mansion to another, and will set them in a place where these wild beasts can no more touch or annoy them, but will be entirely at their mercy and merely objects of ridicule. Then, even in this life, they will enjoy a far greater happiness than they are able even to desire.

18. As I said at the beginning of this work, I have explained elsewhere<sup>15</sup> how you should behave when the devil thus disturbs you. I also told you that the habit of recollection is not to be gained by force of arms, but with calmness, which will enable you to practise it for a longer space of time.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>14</sup> St. Luke xxiv. 36. St. John xx. 19.

<sup>15</sup> *Life*, ch. xi. and xix. 8. *Way of Perfection*, ch. xxiii. 3.

<sup>16</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. xix. 3.

I will say no more now, except that I think it very helpful for those of you who are beginners to consult persons experienced in such matters, lest you imagine that you are injuring yourselves by leaving your prayer to perform any necessary duties. This is not the case; our Lord will direct such things to our profit, although we may have no one to counsel us.<sup>17</sup> The only remedy for having given up a habit of recollection is to recommence it, otherwise the soul will continue to lose it more and more every day, and God grant it may realize its danger.

19. You may think, that if it is so very injurious to desist, it would have been better never to have begun, and to have remained outside the castle. But, as I began by saying, and as God Himself declares: 'He that loves danger shall perish by it,'<sup>18</sup> and the door by which we must enter this castle is prayer. Remember, we *must* get to heaven, and it would be madness to think we could do so without sometimes retiring into our souls so as to know ourselves, or thinking of our failings and of what we owe to God, or frequently imploring His mercy. Our Lord also says, 'No man cometh to the Father but by Me'<sup>19</sup> (I am not sure whether this quotation is correct, but I think so), and, 'He that seeth Me seeth the Father also.'<sup>20</sup>

20. If we never look up at Him and reflect on what we owe Him for having died for us, I do not understand how we can know Him, or perform

<sup>17</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. xxiii. 3.

<sup>18</sup> *Ecclus.* iii. 27: 'Qui amat periculum, in illo peribit.'

<sup>19</sup> *St. John* xiv. 6: 'Nemo venit ad Patrem, nisi per Me.'

<sup>20</sup> *St. John* xiv. 9. 'Qui videt me, videt et Patrem.'

good deeds in His service. What value is there in faith without works? and what are they worth if they are not united to the merits of Jesus Christ, our only good? What would incite us to love our Lord unless we thought of Him? May He give us grace to understand how much we cost Him; that 'the servant is not above his lord'<sup>21</sup>; that we must toil for Him if we would enjoy His glory; and prayer is a necessity to prevent us from constantly falling into temptation.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>21</sup> St. Matt. x. 24: 'Nec servus super dominum suum.'

<sup>22</sup> St. Matt. xxvi. 41: 'Orate ut non intretis in tentationem.'



# THE THIRD MANSIONS

## CHAPTER I.

TREATS OF THE INSECURITY OF LIFE IN THIS EXILE, HOWEVER HIGH WE MAY BE RAISED, AND OF HOW WE MUST ALWAYS WALK IN FEAR. CONTAINS SOME GOOD POINTS.

1. *Souls in the Third Mansions.* 2. *Insecurity of this life.* 3. *Our danger of falling from grace.* 4. *The Saint bewails her past life.* 5. *Our Lady's patronage.* 6. *Fear necessary even for religious.* 7. *St. Teresa's contrition.* 8. *Characteristics of those in the Third Mansions.* 9. *The rich young man in the Gospel.* 10. *Reason of aridities in prayer.* 11. *Humility.* 12. *Tepidity.* 13. *We must give all to God.* 14. *Our debt.* 15. *Consolations and aridities.*

1. As for those who, by the mercy of God, have vanquished in these combats and persevered until they reached the third mansions, what can we say to them but 'Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord'?<sup>1</sup> It is no small favour from God that I should be able to translate this verse into Spanish so as to explain its meaning, considering how dense I usually am in such matters. We may well call these souls blessed, for, as far as we can tell, unless they turn back in their course they are on the safe road to salvation. Now, my sisters, you see how important it is for them to conquer in their former struggles, for I am convinced that our Lord will

<sup>1</sup> Ps. cxi: 1. 'Beatus vir qui timet Dominum.'

henceforth never cease to keep them in security of conscience, which is no small boon.

2. I am wrong in saying 'security,' for there is no security in this life; understand that in such cases I always imply: 'If they do not cease to continue as they have begun.' What misery to live in this world! We are like men whose enemies are at the door, who must not lay aside their arms, even while sleeping or eating, and are always in dread lest the foe should enter the fortress by some breach in the walls. O my Lord and my all! How canst Thou wish us to prize such a wretched existence? We could not desist from longing and begging Thee to take us from it, were it not for the hope of losing it for Thy sake or devoting it entirely to Thy service—and above all, because we know it is Thy will that we should live. Since it is so, 'Let us die with Thee!'<sup>2</sup> as St. Thomas said, for to be away from Thee is but to die again and again, haunted as we are by the dread of losing Thee for ever!

3. This is why I say, daughters, that we ought to ask our Lord as our boon to grant us one day to dwell in safety with the Saints, for with such fears, what pleasure can she enjoy whose only pleasure is to please God? Remember, many Saints have felt this as we do, and were even far more fervent, yet fell into grave sin, and we cannot be sure that God would stretch forth His hand to raise us from sin again to do such penance as they performed. This applies to extraordinary grace.<sup>3</sup> Truly, my

<sup>2</sup> St. John xi. 16: 'Eamus et nos ut moriamur cum eo.'

<sup>3</sup> These last words, in the margin, but in the handwriting of the Saint, were scored through by one of the censors, but Fr. Luis de Leon wrote

daughters, I feel such terror as I tell you this, that I know not how to write it, nor even how to go on living, when I reflect upon it as I very often do. Beg of His Majesty, my daughters, to abide within me, for otherwise, what security could I feel, after a life so badly spent as mine has been?

4. Do not grieve at knowing this. I have often seen you troubled when I spoke about it, for you wish that my past had been a very holy one, in which you are right—indeed, I wish the same myself. But what can be done, now that I have wasted it entirely through my own fault? I have no right to complain that God withheld the aid I needed to fulfil your wishes. It is impossible for me to write this without tears and great shame, when I see that I am explaining these matters to those capable of teaching me. What a hard task has obedience laid upon me! God grant that, as I do it for Him, it may be of some service to you; therefore beg Him to pardon me for my miserable presumption.

5. His Majesty knows that I have nothing to rely upon but His mercy; as I cannot cancel the past, I have no other remedy but to flee to Him, and to confide in the merits of His Son and of His Virgin Mother, whose habit, unworthy as I am, I wear as you do also. Praise Him, then, my daughters, for making you truly daughters of our Lady, so that you need not blush for my wickedness as you have such a good Mother. Imitate her; think how great she must be and what a blessing it is for you to have her for a patroness, since my sins and evil underneath, (as he did in other cases) 'Nothing to be crossed out.'

character have brought no tarnish on the lustre of our holy Order.

6. Still I must give you one warning: be not too confident because you are nuns and the daughters of such a Mother. David was very holy, yet you know what Solomon became.<sup>4</sup> Therefore do not rely on your enclosure, on your penitential life, nor on your continual exercise of prayer and constant communion with God, nor trust in having left the world or in the idea that you hold its ways in horror. All this is good, but is not enough, as I have already said, to remove all fear; therefore meditate on this text and often recall it: 'Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord.'<sup>5</sup>

7. I do not recollect what I was saying, and have digressed very much: for when I think of myself my mind cannot soar to higher things but is like a bird with broken wings; so I will leave this subject for the present.

8. To return to what I began to explain about the souls which have entered the third mansions. God has shown them no small favour, but a very great one, in enabling them to pass through the first difficulties. Thanks to His mercy I believe there are many such people in the world: they are very desirous not to offend His Majesty even by venial sins, they love penance and spend hours in meditation, they employ their time well, exercise themselves in works of charity to their neighbours, are well-ordered in their conversation and dress,

<sup>4</sup> St. Teresa wrote 'Solomon'; Father Gracian corrected 'Absalom,' and Fr. Luis de Leon restored the original text.

<sup>5</sup> Ps. cxi. 1.

and those who own a household govern it well. This is certainly to be desired, and there appears no reason to forbid their entrance to the last mansions; nor will our Lord deny it them if they desire it, for this is the right disposition for receiving all His favours.

9. O Jesus! can any one declare that he does not desire this great blessing, especially after he has passed through the chief difficulties? No; no one can! We all say we desire it, but there is need of more than that for the Lord to possess entire dominion over the soul. It is not enough to say so, any more than it was enough for the young man when our Lord told him what he must do if he desired to be perfect.<sup>6</sup> Since I began to speak of these dwelling-rooms I have him constantly before my mind, for we are exactly like him; this very frequently produces the great dryness we feel in prayer, though sometimes it proceeds from other causes as well. I am not speaking of certain interior sufferings which give intolerable pain to many devout souls through no fault of their own; from these trials, however, our Lord always delivers them with much profit to themselves. I also except people who suffer from melancholy and other infirmities. But in these cases, as in all others, we must leave aside the judgments of God.

10. I hold that these effects usually result from the first cause I mentioned; such souls know that nothing would induce them to commit a sin (many of them would not even commit a venial sin

<sup>6</sup> Matt. xix. 21.

advertently), and that they employ their life and riches well. They cannot, therefore, patiently endure to be excluded from the presence of our King, Whose vassals they consider themselves, as indeed they are. An earthly king may have many subjects yet all do not enter his court. Enter then, enter, my daughters, into your interior; pass beyond the thought of your own petty works, which are no more, nor even as much, as Christians are bound to perform: let it suffice that you are God's servants, do not pursue so much as to catch nothing.<sup>7</sup> Think of the saints, who have entered the Divine Presence, and you will see the difference between them and ourselves.

11. Do not ask for what you do not deserve, nor should we ever think, however much we may have done for God, that we merit the reward of the saints, for we have offended Him. Oh, humility, humility! I know not why, but I am always tempted to think that persons who complain so much of aridities must be a little wanting in this virtue. However, I am not speaking of severe interior sufferings, which are far worse than a want of devotion.

12. Let us try ourselves, my sisters, or let our Lord try us; He knows well how to do so (although we often pretend to misunderstand Him). We will now speak of these well-ordered souls. Let us consider what they do for God and we shall see at once what little right we have to murmur against His Majesty. If we turn our backs on Him and go away sorrowfully like the youth in the Gospel<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Proverbially, like 'having too many irons in the fire.'

<sup>8</sup> St. Mark. x. 22. *Way of Perf.* ch. xvii. 5.

when He tells us what to do to be perfect, what can God do? for He must proportion the reward to our love for Him. This love, my daughters, must not be the fabric of our imagination; we must prove it by our works. Yet do not suppose that our Lord has need of any works of ours; He only expects us to manifest our goodwill.<sup>9</sup>

13. It seems to us we have done everything by taking the religious habit of our own will, and renouncing worldly things and all our possessions for God (although they may have been but the nets of St. Peter,<sup>10</sup> yet they seemed much to us, for they were our all). This is an excellent disposition: if we continue in it and do not return, even in desire, to the company of the reptiles of the first rooms, doubtless, by persevering in this poverty and detachment of soul, we shall obtain all for which we strive. But, mark this—it must be on one condition—that we ‘hold ourselves for unprofitable servants,’<sup>11</sup> as we are told either by St. Paul or by Christ, and that we do not consider that our Lord is bound to grant us any favours, but that, as we have received more from Him, we are the deeper in His debt.

14. How little is all we can do for so generous a God, Who died for us, Who created us, Who gives us being, that we should not think ourselves happy to be able to acquit ourselves of part of the debt we owe Him for having served us, without asking Him for fresh mercies and favours? I am loth to

<sup>9</sup> *Rel.* ix. 15.

<sup>10</sup> St. Matt. iv. 20: ‘Relictis retibus secuti sunt eum.’

<sup>11</sup> St. Luke xvii. 10: ‘Servi inutiles sumus: quod debuimus facere fecimus.’

use this expression, yet so it is, for He did nothing else during the whole time He lived in this world but serve us.

15. Think well my daughters, over some of the points I have treated, although confusedly, for I do not know how to explain them better. Our Lord will make you understand them, that you may reap humility from your dryness, instead of the disquietude the devil strives to cause by it. I believe that where true humility exists, although God should never bestow consolations, yet He gives a peace and resignation which make the soul happier than are others with sensible devotion. These consolations, as you have read, are often given by the Divine Majesty to the weakest souls who, I suppose would not exchange them for the fortitude of Christians serving God in aridities: we love consolations better than the cross! Do Thou, O Lord, Who knowest all truth, so prove us that we may know ourselves.



## CHAPTER II:

CONTINUES THE SAME SUBJECT AND SPEAKS OF ARIDITIES IN PRAYER AND THEIR RESULTS: OF THE NECESSITY OF TRYING OURSELVES AND HOW OUR LORD PROVES THOSE WHO ARE IN THESE MANSIONS.

1. *Imperfections of dwellers in the first three mansions.*
2. *Our trials show us our weakness.*
3. *Humility learnt by our faults.*
4. *Love of money.*
5. *Liberty of spirit.*
6. *On bearing contempt.*
7. *Detachment proved by trials.*
8. *Virtue and humility are the essentials.*
9. *Perfection requires detachment.*
10. *We should try to make rapid progress.*
11. *Leave our cares in God's hands.*
12. *Humility more necessary than corporal penances.*
13. *Consolations rarely received until the fourth mansions.*
14. *Advantages of hearing of them.*
15. *Perfection consists in love, not in reward.*
16. *St. Teresa's joy at seeing other souls favoured.*
17. *These graces should be striven for.*
18. *Obedience and direction.*
19. *Misguided zeal for others.*

1. I HAVE known some, in fact, I may say numerous souls, who have reached this state, and for many years lived, apparently, a regular and well-ordered life, both of body and mind. It would seem that they must have gained the mastery over this world, or at least be extremely detached from it, yet if His Majesty sends very moderate trials they become so disturbed and disheartened as not only to astonish but to make me anxious about them. Advice is useless; having practised virtue for so long they

think themselves capable of teaching it, and believe that they have abundant reason to feel miserable.

2. The only way to help them is to compassionate their troubles; indeed, one cannot but feel sorry at seeing people in such an unhappy state. They must not be argued with, for they are convinced they suffer only for God's sake, and cannot be made to understand they are acting imperfectly, which is a further error in persons so far advanced. No wonder that they should feel these trials for a time, but I think they ought speedily to overcome their concern about such matters. God, wishing His elect to realize their own misery, often temporarily withdraws His favours: no more is needed to prove to us in a very short time what we really are.<sup>2</sup>

3. Souls soon learn in this way; they perceive their faults very clearly, and sometimes the discovery of how quickly they are overcome by but slight earthly trials is more painful than the subtraction of God's sensible favours. I consider that God thus shows them great mercy, for though their behaviour may be faulty, yet they gain greatly in humility. Not so with the people of whom I first spoke; they believe their conduct is saintly, and wish others to agree with them. I will give you some examples which will help us to understand and to try ourselves, without waiting for God to try us, since it would be far better to have prepared and examined ourselves beforehand.

4. A rich man, without son or heir, loses part of

<sup>1</sup> See letter concerning Francisco de Salcedo. Nov. 1576. Vol. II.

<sup>2</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. xxxviii. 7.

his property,<sup>3</sup> but still has more than enough to keep himself and his household. If this misfortune grieves and disquiets him as though he were left to beg his bread, how can our Lord ask him to give up all things for His sake? This man will tell you he regrets losing his money because he wished to bestow it on the poor.

5. I believe His Majesty would prefer me to conform to His will, and keep peace of soul while attending to my interests, to such charity as this. If this person cannot resign himself because God has not raised him so high in virtue, well and good: let him know that he is wanting in liberty of spirit; let him beg our Lord to grant it him, and be rightly disposed to receive it. Another person has more than sufficient means to live on, when an opportunity occurs for acquiring more property: if it is offered him, by all means let him accept it; but if he must go out of his way to obtain it and then continues working to gain more and more—however good his intention may be (and it must be good, for I am speaking of people who lead prayerful and good lives), he cannot possibly enter the mansions near the King.

6. Something of the same sort happens if such people meet with contempt or want of due respect. God often gives them grace to bear it well, as He loves to see virtue upheld in public, and will not have it condemned in those who practise it, or else because these persons have served Him faithfully, and He, our supreme Good, is exceedingly good to us all; nevertheless, these persons are disturbed, and

<sup>3</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. xxxviii. 10. *Concep.* ch. ii. 11, 12. *Life*, xi. 3.

cannot overcome or get rid of the feeling for some time<sup>4</sup> Alas! have they not long meditated on the pains our Lord endured and how well it is for us to suffer, and have even longed to do so? They wish every one were as virtuous as they are; and God grant they do not consider other people to blame for their troubles and attribute merit to themselves!

7. You may think, my daughters, that I have wandered from the subject, for all this does not concern you: nothing of the sort occurs to us here, where we neither own nor wish for any property, nor endeavour to gain it, and no one does us any wrong. The instances I have mentioned do not coincide exactly, yet conclusions applicable to us may be drawn from them, which it would be neither well nor necessary to state. These will teach you whether you are really detached from all you have left; trifling occasions often occur, although perhaps not quite of the same kind, by which you can prove to yourselves whether you have obtained the mastery over your passions.

8. Believe me, the question is not whether we wear the religious habit or not, but whether we practise the virtues and submit our will in all things to the will of God. The object of our life must be to do what He requires of us: let us not ask that *our* will may be done, but *His*. If we have not yet attained to this, let us be humble, as I said above. Humility is the ointment for our wounds; if we have it, although perhaps He may defer His coming for a time, God, Who is our Physician, will come and heal us.

<sup>4</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. xxxviii. 12.

9. The penances performed by the persons I spoke of are as well regulated as their life, which they value very highly because they wish to serve our Lord with it—in which there is nothing to blame—so they are very discreet in their mortifications lest they should injure their health. Never fear they will kill themselves: they are far too sensible! Their love is not strong enough to overcome their reason; I wish it were—that they might not be content to creep on their way to God: a pace that will never bring them to their journey's end!

10. We seem to ourselves to be making progress, yet we become weary, for, believe me, we are walking through a mist; it will be fortunate if we do not lose ourselves. Do you think, my daughters, if we could travel from one country to another in eight days, that it would be well to spend a year on the journey, through wind, snow, and inundations and over bad roads?<sup>5</sup> Would it not be better to get it over at once, for it is full of dangers and serpents? Oh, how many striking instances could I give you of this! God grant that I have passed beyond this state myself: often I think that I have not.

11. All things obstruct us while prudence rules our actions; we are afraid of everything and therefore fear to make progress—as if we could reach the inner chambers while others make the journey for us! As this is impossible, sisters, for the love of God let us exert ourselves, and leave our reason and

<sup>5</sup> St. Teresa very probably had in her mind her journey to make a foundation at Seville, when the boat, which was crossing the Guadalquivir, narrowly escaped being carried down the river by the current. *Found. ch. xxiv. 6*

~~our fears in His hands~~, paying no attention to the weaknesses of nature which might retard us. Let our Superiors, to whom the charge belongs, look after our bodies; let our only care be to hasten to our Lord's presence—for though there are few or no indulgences to be obtained here, yet regard for health might mislead us and it would be none the better for our care, as I know well.

12. I know, too, that our bodies are not the chief factors in the work we have before us; they are accessory: extreme humility is the principal point. It is the want of this, I believe, that stops people's progress. It may seem that we have made but little way: we should believe that is the case, and that our sisters are advancing much more rapidly than we are. Not only should we wish others to consider us the worst of all; we should endeavour to make them think so. If we act in this manner, our soul will do well; otherwise we shall make no progress and shall always remain the prey to a thousand troubles and miseries. The way will be difficult and wearisome without self-renunciation, weighed down as we are by the burden and frailties of human nature, which are no longer felt in the more interior mansions.

13. In these third mansions the Lord never fails to repay our services, both as a just and even as a merciful God, Who always bestows on us far more than we deserve, giving us greater happiness than could be obtained from any earthly pleasures and amusements. I think He grants few consolations here, except, perhaps, occasionally to entice us to

prepare ourselves to enter the last mansions by showing us their contents. There may *appear* to you to be no difference except in name between sensible devotion, and consolations and you may ask why I distinguish them. I think there *is* a very great difference, but I may be mistaken.

14. This will be best explained while writing of the fourth mansion, which comes next, when I must speak of the consolations received there from our Lord. The subject may appear futile, yet may prove useful by urging souls who know what each mansion contains to strive to enter the best. It will solace those whom God has advanced so far; others, who thought they had reached the summit, will be abashed, yet if they are humble they will be led to thank God.

15. Those who do not receive these consolations may feel a despondency that is uncalled for, since perfection does not consist in consolation but in greater love; our reward will be in proportion to this, and to the justice and sincerity of our actions. Perhaps you wonder, then, why I treat of these interior favours and their nature. I do not know; ask him who bade me write this. I must obey Superiors, not argue with them, which I have no right to do.

16. I assure you that when I had neither received these favours,<sup>6</sup> nor understood them by experience, or ever expected to (and rightly so, for I should have felt reassured if I had known or even conjectured that I was pleasing to God in any way),

<sup>6</sup> *Life*, ch. xii. 2. *Rel.* vii. 3.

yet when I read of the mercies and consolations that our Lord grants to His servants, I was delighted and praised Him fervently. If such as myself acted thus, how much more would the humble and good glorify Him! I think it is worth while to explain these subjects and show what consolations and delights we lose through our own fault, if only for the sake of moving a single soul to praise God once. ✓

17. When these joys are from God they come laden with love and strength, which aid the soul on its way and increase its good works and virtues. Do not imagine that it is unimportant whether you try to obtain these graces or no; if you are not to blame, the Lord is just: what He refuses in one way, His Majesty will give you in another, as He knows how; His secret ways are very mysterious, and doubtless He will do what is best for you.

18. Souls who by God's mercy are brought so far (which, as I said, is no small mercy, for they are likely to ascend still higher) will be greatly benefited by practising prompt obedience. Even if they are not in the religious state, it would be well if they, like certain other people, were to take a director,<sup>7</sup> so as never to follow their own will, which is the cause of most of our ills. They should not choose one of their own turn of mind<sup>8</sup> (as the saying goes), who is over prudent in his actions, but should select one thoroughly detached from worldly things; it is very helpful to consult a person who has learnt and can teach this. It is encouraging to see that trials which seemed to us impossible to ✓

<sup>7</sup> *Life*, ch. xiii. 29.

<sup>8</sup> *Rel.* vii. 18.



submit to are possible to others, and that they bear them sweetly. Their flight makes us try to soar, like nestlings taught by the elder birds, who, though they cannot fly far at first, little by little imitate their parents: I know the great benefit of this. However determined such persons may be not to offend our Lord, they must not expose themselves to temptation: they are still near the first mansions to which they might easily return. Their strength is not yet established on a solid foundation like that of souls exercised in sufferings, who know how little cause there is to fear the tempests of this world and care nothing for its pleasures: beginners might succumb before any severe trial. Some great persecution, such as the devil knows how to raise to injure us, might make beginners turn back; while zealously trying to withdraw others from sin they might succumb to the attacks made upon them.

19. Let us look at our own faults, and not at other persons'. People who are extremely correct themselves are often shocked at everything they see<sup>9</sup>; however, we might often learn a great deal that is essential from the very persons whom we censure. Our exterior comportment and manners may be better—this is well enough, but not of the first importance. We ought not to insist on every one following in our footsteps, nor to take upon ourselves to give instructions in spirituality when, perhaps, we do not even know what it is. Zeal for the good of souls, though given us by God, may

<sup>9</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. vii. 6. *Castle, M.* 1. ch. ii. 20, 21.

often lead us astray, sisters; it is best to keep our rule, which bids us ever to live in silence and in hope.<sup>10</sup> Our Lord will care for the souls belonging to Him; and if we beg His Majesty to do so, by His grace we shall be able to aid them greatly. May He be for ever blessed!

<sup>10</sup> Isa. xxx. 15: 'In silentio et in spe erit fortitudo vestra.' *Rule* § 13.

## THE FOURTH MANSIONS

### CHAPTER I.

HOW SWEETNESS AND TENDERNESS IN PRAYER DIFFER FROM CONSOLATIONS. EXPLAINS HOW ADVANTAGEOUS IT WAS FOR ST. TERESA TO COMPREHEND THAT THE IMAGINATION AND THE UNDERSTANDING ARE NOT THE SAME THING. THIS CHAPTER IS USEFUL FOR THOSE WHOSE THOUGHTS WANDER MUCH DURING PRAYER.

1. *Graces received in this mansion.* 2. *Mystic favours.* 3. *Temptations bring humility and merit.* 4. *Sensible devotion and natural joys.* 5. *Sweetness in devotion.* 6. *St. Teresa's experience of it.* 7. *Love of God, and how to foster it.* 8. *Distractions.* 9. *They do not destroy divine union.* 10. *St. Teresa's physical distractions.* 11. *How to treat distractions.* 12. *They should be disregarded.* 13. *Self-knowledge necessary.*

1. Now that I commence writing about the fourth mansions, it is requisite, as I said,<sup>1</sup> to commend myself to the Holy Ghost and to beg Him henceforth to speak for me, that I may be enabled to treat these matters intelligibly. Henceforth they begin to be supernatural and it will be most difficult to speak clearly about them,<sup>2</sup> unless His Majesty

<sup>1</sup> First Mansions, ch. i. 1.

<sup>2</sup> There are two kinds of contemplation: acquired or natural, and infused or supernatural. In their widest sense, including many remarkable phenomena of Natural religion, and, of course, the most wonderful manifestations recorded in the Old Testament, they form the sys-

undertakes it for me, as He did when I explained the subject (as far as I understood it) somewhat about fourteen years ago.<sup>3</sup> I believe I now possess more light about the favours God grants some souls, but that is different from being able to elucidate them.<sup>4</sup> May His Majesty enable me to do so if it would be useful, but not otherwise.

2. As these mansions are nearer the King's dwelling they are very beautiful, and so subtle are the things seen and heard in them, that, as those tell us who have tried to do so, the mind cannot give a lucid idea of them to those inexperienced in the matter. People who have enjoyed these favours, especially if it was to any great extent, will easily comprehend me.

3. Apparently a person must have dwelt for a long time in the former mansions before entering these; although in ordinary cases the soul must have been in the last one spoken of, yet, as you must often have heard, there is no fixed rule, for God gives when, them called Mysticism and are the proper object of Mystical theology. Natural or acquired contemplation is based upon an idealistic turn of mind which enables the soul to gaze upon the Godhead (simple gaze, as St. Teresa calls it) without approaching Him by the laborious process of reasoning, and in so doing embraces Him with its affective powers; like a person who, devoid of technical skill, takes in and is enamoured by, the beauty of a painting. Infused contemplation is the highest act of the Gifts of the Holy Ghost of Knowledge and Wisdom. It is often impossible, nor is it always essential, to determine where acquired contemplation ends and infused contemplation begins. But it should be borne in mind that both the one and the other are operations and not merely a passive state or mere fruition. Even the highest form of contemplation, the Beatific Vision, is a supernatural act of the soul, an operation of unending duration. A ship moved by a gentle breeze is rightly said to be actually sailing though the rowers are at rest.

<sup>3</sup> *Life*, ch. xii. 11.

<sup>4</sup> *Life*, ch. xvii. 7.

how, and to whom He wills<sup>5</sup>—the goods are His own, and His choice wrongs no one.<sup>6</sup> The poisonous reptiles rarely come into these rooms, and, if they enter, do more good than harm. I think it is far better for them to get in and make war on the soul in this state of prayer; were it not tempted, ✓ the devil might sometimes deceive it about divine consolations, thus injuring it far more. Besides, the soul would benefit less, because all occasions of gaining merit would be withdrawn, were it left continually absorbed in God. I am not confident that this absorption is genuine when it always remains in the same state, nor does it appear to me possible for the Holy Ghost to dwell constantly within us, to the same extent, during our earthly exile.

4. I will now describe, as I promised, the difference between sweetness in prayer and spiritual consolations. It appears to me that what we acquire for ourselves in meditation and petitions to our ✓ Lord may be termed 'sweetness in devotion.'<sup>7</sup> It is natural, although ultimately aided by the grace of God. I must be understood to imply this in all I say, for we can do nothing without Him. This

<sup>5</sup> Philippus a SS. Trinitate, *Summa Theologiæ Mysticæ*, pars iii. tract. i. disc. iii. art. 2. *Life*, ch. xv. 11, xxii. 22, 23. *Way of Perf.* ch. xvi 4, xli. 2. *Concep.* ch. v. 3.

<sup>6</sup> S. Matt. xx. 15: 'Aut non licet mihi quod volo facere?'

<sup>7</sup> *Way of Perf.*, ch. xix. 8. *Castle*, M. iv. ch. ii. 4. The first three mansions of the Interior Castle correspond with the 'first water,' or the prayer of Meditation, explained in ch. xi-xiii. of the *Life*; the fourth mansion, or the prayer of Quiet, with the 'second water,' *Life*, ch. xiv. and xv.; the fifth mansion, or the prayer of Union, with the 'third water,' *Life*, ch. xvi. and xvii.; and the sixth mansion, ecstasy, etc., with the 'fourth water,' *Life*, ch. xviii.-xxi.

sweetness arises principally from the good work we perform, and appears to result from our labours: well may we feel happy at having thus spent our time. We shall find, on consideration, that many temporal matters give us the same pleasure—such as unexpectedly coming into a large fortune, suddenly meeting with a dearly-loved friend, or succeeding in any important or influential affair which makes a sensation in the world. Again, it would be felt by one who had been told her husband, brother, or son was dead, and who saw him return to her alive. I have seen people weep from such happiness, as I have done myself. I consider both these joys and those we feel in religious matters to be natural ones. Although there is nothing wrong about the former, yet those produced by devotion spring from a more noble source—in short, they begin in ourselves and end in God. Spiritual consolations, on the contrary, arise from God, and our nature feels them and rejoices as keenly in them, and indeed far more keenly, than in the others I described.

5. O Jesus! how I wish I could elucidate this point! It seems to me that I can perfectly distinguish the difference between the two joys, yet I have not the skill to make myself understood; may God give it me! I remember a verse we say at Prime at the end of the final Psalm; the last words are: ‘Cum dilatasti cor meum’—‘When Thou didst dilate my heart.’<sup>8</sup> To those with much experience, this suffices to show the difference between sweetness in prayer and spiritual consolations; other people will

<sup>8</sup> Ps. cxviii. 32. *Way of Perf.* ch. xxviii. 11.

require more explanation. The sensible devotion I mentioned does not dilate the heart, but generally appears to narrow it slightly; although joyful at seeing herself work for God, yet such a person sheds tears of sorrow which seem partly produced by the passions. I know little about the passions of the soul, or I could write of them more clearly and could better define what comes from the sensitive disposition and what is natural, having passed through this state myself, but I am very stupid. Knowledge and learning are a great advantage to every one.

6. My own experience of this delight and sweetness in meditation was that when I began to weep over the Passion I could not stop until I had a severe headache;<sup>9</sup> the same thing occurred when I grieved over my sins: this was a great grace from our Lord. I do not intend to inquire now which of these states of prayer is the better, but I wish I knew how to explain the difference between the two. In that of which I speak, the tears and good desires are often partly caused by the natural disposition, but although this may be the case, yet, as I said, these feelings terminate in God. Sensible devotion is very desirable if the soul is humble enough to understand that it is not more holy on account of these sentiments, which cannot always with certainty be ascribed to charity, and even then are still the gift of God.

7. These feelings of devotion are most common with souls in the first three mansions, who are nearly always using their understanding and reason

<sup>9</sup> *Life*, ch. iii. 1.

in making meditations. This is good for them, for they have not been given grace for more; they should, however, try occasionally to elicit some acts such as praising God, rejoicing in His goodness and that He is what He is: let them desire that He may be honoured and glorified. They must do this as best they can, for it greatly inflames the will. Let them be very careful, when God gives these sentiments, not to set them aside in order to finish their accustomed meditation. But, having spoken fully on this subject elsewhere,<sup>10</sup> I will say no more now. I only wish to warn you that to make rapid progress and to reach the mansions we wish to enter, it is not so essential to *think* much as to *love* much: therefore you must practise whatever most excites you to this. Perhaps we do not know what love is, nor does this greatly surprise me. Love does not consist in great sweetness of devotion, but in a fervent determination to strive to please God in all things, in avoiding, as far as possible, all that would offend Him, and in praying for the increase of the glory and honour of His Son and for the growth of the Catholic Church. These are the signs of love; do not imagine that it consists in never thinking of anything but God, and that if your thoughts wander a little all is lost."

8. I, myself, have sometimes been troubled by this turmoil of thoughts. I learnt by experience, but little more than four years ago, that our thoughts, or it is clearer to call it our imagination, are not

<sup>10</sup> *Life*, ch. xii. 2-4.

<sup>11</sup> *Found.* ch. v. 2. *Way of Perf.* ch. xxxi. 6, 12. *Life*, ch. xv. 10, ch. xxx. 19.



the same thing as the understanding. I questioned a theologian on the subject; he told me it was the fact, which consoled me not a little. As the understanding is one of the powers of the soul, it puzzled me to see it so sluggish at times, while, as a rule, the imagination takes flight at once, so that God alone can control it by so uniting us to Himself<sup>12</sup> that we seem, in a manner, detached from our bodies. It puzzled me to see that while to all appearance the powers of the soul were occupied with God and recollected in Him, the imagination was wandering elsewhere.

9. Do Thou, O Lord, take into account all that we suffer in this way through our ignorance. We err in thinking that we need only know that we must keep our thoughts fixed on Thee. We do not understand that we should consult those better instructed than ourselves, nor are we aware that there is anything for us to learn. We pass through terrible trials, on account of not understanding our own nature and take what is not merely harmless, but good, for a grave fault. This causes the sufferings felt by many people, particularly by the unlearned, who practise prayer. They complain of interior trials, become melancholy, lose their health, and even give up prayer altogether for want of recognizing that we have within ourselves as it were, an interior world. We cannot stop the revolution of the heavens as they rush with velocity upon their course, neither can we control our imagination. When this wanders we at once imagine that all the powers of the soul follow it; we think everything

<sup>12</sup> *Life*. ch. xv. 9, 10.

is lost, and that the time spent in God's presence is wasted. Meanwhile, the soul is perhaps entirely united to Him in the innermost mansions, while the imagination is in the precincts of the castle, struggling with a thousand wild and venomous creatures and gaining merit by its warfare. Therefore we need not let ourselves be disturbed, nor give up prayer, as the devil is striving to persuade us. As a rule, all our anxieties and troubles come from misunderstanding our own nature. ✓

10. Whilst writing this I am thinking of the loud noise in my head which I mentioned in the Introduction, and which has made it almost impossible to obey the command given me to write this. It sounds as if there were a number of rushing waterfalls within my brain, while in other parts, drowned by the sound of the waters, are the voices of birds singing and whistling. This tumult is not in my ears, but in the upper part of my head, where, they say, is placed the superior part of the soul. I have long thought that this must be so because the flight of the spirit seems to take place from this part with great velocity.<sup>13</sup> Please God I may recollect to explain the cause when writing of the latter mansions, this not being the proper place for it. It may be that God has sent this suffering in my head to help me to understand the matter, for all this tumult in my brain does not interfere with my prayer, nor with my speaking to you, but the great calm and love and desires in my soul remain undisturbed and my mind is clear.

11. How, then, can the superior part of the soul

<sup>13</sup> Second Relation addressed to Fr. Rodrigo Alvarez.

remain undisturbed if it resides in the upper part of the brain? I cannot account for it, but am sure that I am speaking the truth. This noise disturbs my prayer when unaccompanied with ecstasy, but when it is ecstatic I do not feel any pain, however great. I should suffer keenly were I forced to cease praying on account of these infirmities. We should not be distressed by reason of our thoughts, nor allow ourselves to be worried by them: if they come from the devil, he will let us alone if we take no notice of them; and if they are, as often happens, one of the many frailties entailed by Adam's sin, let us be patient and suffer them for the love of God. Likewise, since we must eat and sleep without being able to avoid it, much to our grief, let us acknowledge that we are human, and long to be where no one may despise us.<sup>14</sup> Sometimes I recall these words, spoken by the Spouse in the Canticle;<sup>15</sup> truly never in our lives have we better reason to say them, for I think no earthly scorn or suffering can try us so severely as these struggles within our souls. All uneasiness or conflict can be borne while we have peace in ourselves, as I said; but if, while seeking for rest amidst the thousand trials of the world—knowing that God has prepared this rest for us—the obstacle is found in ourselves, the trial must needs prove painful and almost insufferable.

12. Take us therefore, O Lord, to where these miseries can no longer cause us to be despised, for

<sup>14</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. xxxiii. 8. *Life*, ch. xxi. 8. *Rel.* ii. 12.

<sup>15</sup> According to Fr. Gracian the Saint here refers to Cant. viii. 1: 'Et jam me nemo despiciat.'

sometimes it seems as if they mocked our souls. Even in this life God delivers us from them when we reach the last mansion, as by His grace I will show you. Everybody is not so violently distressed and assaulted by these weaknesses as I have been for many years,<sup>16</sup> on account of my wickedness, so that it seems as if I strove to take vengeance on myself.<sup>17</sup> Since I suffer so much in this way, perhaps you may do the same, so I shall continue to explain the subject to you in different ways, in order to find some means of making it clear. The thing is inevitable, therefore do not let it disturb or grieve you, but let the mill clack on while we grind our wheat; that is, let us continue to work with our will and intellect.

13. These troubles annoy us more or less according to the state of our health or in different circumstances. The poor soul suffers; although not now to blame, it has sinned at other times, and must be patient. We are so ignorant that what we have read and been told has not sufficed to teach us to disregard wandering thoughts, therefore I shall not be wasting time in instructing and consoling you about these trials. However, this will help you but little until God chooses to enlighten you, and additional measures are needed: His Majesty wishes us to learn by ordinary means to understand ourselves and to recognize the share taken in these troubles by our wandering imagination, our nature, and the devil's temptations, instead of laying all the blame on our souls. ✓

<sup>16</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. xvii. 2.

<sup>17</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. xxxi. 9.

## CHAPTER II.

CONTINUES THE SAME SUBJECT, EXPLAINING BY A COMPARISON IN WHAT DIVINE CONSOLATIONS CONSIST: AND HOW WE OUGHT TO TRY TO PREPARE OURSELVES TO RECEIVE THEM, WITHOUT ENDEAVOURING TO OBTAIN THEM.

1. *Physical results of sensible devotion.* 2. *Effects of divine consolations.* 3. *The two fountains.* 4. *They symbolize two kinds of prayer.* 5. *Divine consolations shared by body and soul.* 6. *The incense within the soul.* 7. *Graces received in this prayer.* 8. *Such favours not to be sought after.*

1. GOD help me! how I have wandered from my subject! I forget what I was speaking about, for my occupations and ill-health often force me to cease writing until some more suitable time. The sense will be very disconnected; as my memory is extremely bad and I have no time to read over what is written, even what I really understand is expressed very vaguely, at least so I fear. I think I said that spiritual consolations are occasionally connected with the passions. These feelings of devotion produce fits of sobbing; I have even heard that sometimes they cause a compression of the chest, and uncontrollable exterior motions violent enough to cause bleeding at the nose and other painful effects.<sup>1</sup>

2. I can say nothing about this, never having experienced anything of the kind myself; but there appears some cause for comfort in it, because, as I said, all ends in the desire to please God and to

<sup>1</sup> 'A clear description of an attack of hysteria with the significant remark that she herself had never experienced anything of the kind'. (Dr. Goix, quoted by P. Grégoire, *La prétendue hystérie de Sainte Thérèse*, Lyon, Vitte, 1895, p. 53.)

enjoy His presence. What I call divine consolations, or have termed elsewhere the 'prayer of quiet,' is a very different thing, as those will understand who, by the mercy of God, have experienced them.

3. To make the matter clearer, let us imagine we see two fountains with basins which fill with water. I can find no simile more appropriate than water by which to explain spiritual things, as I am very ignorant and have poor wits to help me.<sup>2</sup> Besides, I love this element so much that I have studied it more attentively than other things. God, Who is so great, so wise, has doubtless hidden secrets in all things He created, which we should greatly benefit by knowing, as those say who understand such matters. Indeed, I believe that in each smallest creature He has made, though it be but a tiny ant, there are more wonders than can be comprehended. These two basins are filled in different ways; the one with water from a distance flowing into it through many pipes and waterworks, while the other basin is built near the source of the spring itself and fills quite noiselessly. If the fountain is plentiful, like the one we speak of, after the basin is full the water overflows in a great stream which flows continually. No machinery is needed here, nor does the water run through aqueducts.

4. Such is the difference between the two kinds of prayer. The water running through the aqueducts resembles sensible devotion, which is obtained by meditation. We gain it by our thoughts, by meditating on created things, and by the labour of

<sup>2</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. xix. 5; also St. John of the Cross, *Ascent of Mount Carmel*, bk. ii. ch. xiv. 2, and xxi. 3.

our minds; in short, it is the result of our endeavours, and so makes the commotion I spoke of, while profiting the soul.<sup>3</sup> The other fountain, like divine ✓ consolations, receives the water from the source itself, which signifies God: as usual, when His Majesty wills to bestow on us any supernatural favours, we experience the greatest peace, calm, and sweetness in the inmost depths of our being; I know neither where nor how.

5. This joy is not, like earthly happiness, at once felt by the heart; after gradually filling it to the brim, the delight overflows throughout all the mansions and faculties, until at last it reaches the body. Therefore, I say it arises from God and ends in ourselves, for whoever experiences it will find that the whole physical part of our nature shares in this delight and sweetness. While writing this I have been thinking that the verse ‘*Dilatasti cor meum,*’ ‘Thou hast dilated my heart,’<sup>4</sup> declares that the heart is dilated. This joy does not appear to me to originate in the heart, but in some more interior part and, as it were, in the depths of our being. I think this must be the centre of the soul, as I have since learnt and will explain later on. I discover secrets within us which often fill me with astonishment: how many more must there be unknown to me! O my Lord and my God! how stupendous is Thy grandeur! We are like so many foolish peasant lads: we think we know something of Thee, yet it must be comparatively nothing, for there are profound secrets even in ourselves of

<sup>3</sup> *Life*, ch. x. 2.

<sup>4</sup> Ps. cxviii. 32. *Life*, ch. xvii. 14.

which we know naught. I say 'comparatively nothing' in proportion with all the secrets hidden within Thee, yet how great are Thy mysteries that we are acquainted with and can learn even by the study of such of Thy works as we see!<sup>5</sup>

6. To return to the verse I quoted, which may help to explain the dilation begun by the celestial waters in the depths of our being. They appear to dilate and enlarge us internally, and benefit us in an inexplicable manner, nor does even the soul itself understand what it receives. It is conscious of what may be described as a certain fragrance, as if within its inmost depths were a brazier sprinkled with sweet perfumes. Although the spirit neither sees the flame nor knows where it is, yet it is penetrated by the warmth, and scented fumes, which are even sometimes perceived by the body. Understand me, the soul does not feel any real heat or scent, but something far more subtle, which I use this metaphor to explain. Let those who have never experienced it believe that it really occurs to others: the soul is conscious of it and feels it more distinctly than can be expressed. It is not a thing we can fancy or gain by anything we can do; clearly it does not arise from the base coin of human nature, but from the most pure gold of Divine Wisdom. I believe that in this case the powers of the soul are not united to God, but are absorbed and astounded at the marvel before them. I may possibly be contradicting what I wrote elsewhere,<sup>6</sup> nor would

<sup>5</sup> *Life*, ch. xiv. 9 *Way of Perf.* ch. xxviii. 11.

<sup>6</sup> *Life*, ch. xiv. 3: 'The faculties are not lost, neither are they asleep; the will alone is occupied in such a way that without knowing how it has become a captive it gives a simple consent to become the prisoner



this be surprising, for it was done about fifteen years ago, and perhaps God has given me since then a clearer insight into the matter. I may be entirely mistaken on the subject, both then and now, but never do I wilfully say what is untrue. No; by the mercy of God, I would rather die a thousand times than tell a falsehood: I speak of the matter as I understand it. I believe that in this case the will must in some way be united with that of God. The after effects on the soul, and the subsequent behaviour of the person, show whether this prayer was genuine or no: this is the best crucible by which to test it.

7. Our Lord bestows a signal grace on the soul if it realizes how great is this favour, and another greater still if it does not turn back on the right road. You are longing, my daughters, to enter into this state of prayer at once, and you are right, for, as I said, the soul cannot understand the value of the graces there bestowed by God upon it, nor the love which draws Him ever closer to it: we should certainly desire to learn how to obtain this favour. I will tell you what I know about it, setting aside certain cases in which God bestows these graces for no other reason than His own choice, into which we have no right to enquire.

8. Practise what I advised in the preceding mansions, then—humility, humility! for God lets Himself be vanquished by this and grants us all we ask.<sup>7</sup>

of God.' *Ibid.* § 4: 'The other two faculties help the will that it may render itself capable of the fruition of so great a good; nevertheless, it occasionally happens even when the will is in union that they hinder it very much.' See also *Way of Perf.* ch. xxxi. 8.

<sup>7</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. xvi. 1. *Life*, ch. xxii. 16.

The first proof<sup>8</sup> that you possess humility is that you neither think you now deserve these graces and consolations from God, nor that you ever will as long as you live. You ask me: 'How shall we receive them, if we do not try to gain them?' I answer, that there is no surer way to obtain them than the one I have told you, therefore make no efforts to acquire them, for the following reasons. The first is, that the chief means of obtaining them is to love God without self-interest. The second, that it is a slight lack of humility to think that our wretched services can win so great a reward. The third, that the real preparation for them is to desire to suffer and imitate our Lord, rather than to receive consolations, for indeed we have all offended Him. The fourth reason is, that His Majesty has not promised to give us these favours in the same way as He has bound Himself to bestow eternal glory on us if we keep His commandments. We can be saved without these special graces; He sees better than we do what is best for us and which of us love Him sincerely. I know for a certain truth, being acquainted with some who walk by the way of love (and therefore only seek to serve Jesus Christ crucified), that not only they neither ask for nor desire consolation, but they even beg Him not to give it them during this life: this is a fact. Fifthly, we should but labour in vain: this water does not flow through aqueducts, like that we first spoke of, and if the spring does not afford it, in vain shall we toil to obtain it. I mean, that though we may meditate and try our hardest, and though we shed

<sup>8</sup> Philippus a SS. Trinitate, *l.c.* art. 3.

tears to gain it, we cannot make this water flow. God alone gives it to whom He chooses, and often when the soul is least thinking of it. We are His, sisters, let Him do what He will with us, and lead us where He will. If we are really humble and annihilate ourselves, not only in our imagination (which often deceives us), but if we truly detach ourselves from all things, our Lord will not only grant us these favours but many others that we do not know even how to desire. May He be for ever praised and blessed! Amen.

### CHAPTER III.

OF THE PRAYER OF RECOLLECTION WHICH GOD GENERALLY GIVES THE SOUL BEFORE GRANTING IT THAT LAST DESCRIBED. ITS EFFECTS: ALSO THOSE OF THE PRAYER OF DIVINE CONSOLATIONS DESCRIBED IN THE LAST CHAPTER.

1. *The prayer of recollection compared to the inhabitants of the castle.*
2. *The Shepherd recalls His flock into the castle.*
3. *This recollection supernatural.*
4. *It prepares us for higher favours.*
5. *The mind must act until God calls it to recollection by love.*
6. *The soul should here abandon itself into God's hands.*
7. *The prayer of recollection, and distractions in prayer.*
8. *Liberty of spirit gained by consolations.*
9. *The soul must be watchful.*
10. *The devil specially tempts such souls.*
11. *False trances and raptures.*
12. *How to treat those deluded in this way.*
13. *Risks of delusion in this mansion.*

1. THE effects of divine consolations are very numerous: before describing them, I will speak of another kind of prayer which usually precedes them. I need not say much on this subject, having written about it elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> This is a kind of recollection which, I believe, is supernatural. There is

<sup>1</sup> *Life*, ch. xiv. 2. The Saint says in the second chapter of this mansion, § 5, and also in letters dated Dec. 7, 1577 (Vol. II) and Jan. 14, 1580, that when writing the *Interior Castle* she had more experience in

no occasion to retire nor to shut the eyes, nor does it depend on anything exterior; involuntarily the eyes suddenly close and solitude is found. Without any labour of one's own, the temple of which I spoke is reared for the soul in which to pray: the senses and exterior surroundings appear to lose their hold, while the spirit gradually regains its lost sovereignty. Some say the soul enters into itself; others, that it rises above itself.<sup>2</sup> I can say nothing about these terms, but had better speak of the subject as I understand it. You will probably grasp my spiritual things than when she composed her former works. This is fully borne out by the present chapter. In the corresponding part of her *Life* she practically confounded the prayer of recollection with the prayer of quiet (the second state of the soul). Likewise, in the *Way of Perfection*, ch. xxviii., she speaks of but one kind of prayer of recollection and then passes on to the prayer of quiet. Here, however, she mentions a second form of the prayer of recollection. See Philippus a SS. Trinitate, pars iii. tract. 1, disc. iii. art. 1, 'De oratione recollectionis' (page 81 of the third vol. of the edition of 1874); 'de secundo modo recollectionis' (*ibid.* p. 82.); and art. 2: 'De oratione quietis' (*ibid.* p. 84.) Antonius a Spiritu Sancto, *Direct. Mystic.* tract. iv. n. 78: 'Duo sunt hujus recollectionis modi, primus quidem activus [reference to the *Way of Perfection*, *l. c.*], secundus autem passivus, [reference to this chapter of the Fourth Mansion].' The former is not supernatural, in the sense that with special grace from above it can be acquired; the second is altogether supernatural and more like gratuitous grace (*ibid.* no. 80 and 81). On the meaning of 'Solitude,' 'Silence,' etc., see Anton. a Sp. S. *l. c.*, tract. 1, n. 78-82.

<sup>2</sup> The edition of Burgos (vol. iv, P. 59) refers appropriately to the following passage in the *Tercer Abecedario* (See *Life*, ch. iv, 8) by the Franciscan friar Francisco de Osuna, a work which exercised a profound influence on St. Teresa: 'Entering within oneself, and rising above oneself, are the two principal points in this exercise, those which, above all others, one ought to strive after, and which give the highest satisfaction to the soul. There is less labour in entering within oneself than in rising above oneself and therefore it appears to me that when the soul is ready and fit for either, you ought to do the former, because the other will follow without any effort, and will be all the more pure and spiritual; however, follow what course your soul prefers as this will bring you more grace and benefit.' (Tr. ix. ch. viii).

meaning, although, perhaps, I may be the only person who understands it. Let us imagine that the senses and powers of the soul (which I compared in my allegory to the inhabitants of the castle) have fled and joined the enemy outside. After long days and years of absence, perceiving how great has been their loss, they return to the neighbourhood of the castle, but cannot manage to re-enter it, for their evil habits are hard to break off; still, they are no longer traitors, and they wander about outside.

2. The King, Who holds His court within it, sees their good will, and out of His great mercy desires them to return to Him. Like a good Shepherd, He plays so sweetly on His pipe, that although scarcely hearing it they recognize His call and no longer wander, but return, like lost sheep, to the mansions. So strong is this Pastor's power over His flock, that they abandon the worldly cares which misled them and re-enter the castle.

3. I think I never put this matter so clearly before. To seek God within ourselves avails us far more than to look for Him amongst creatures; Saint Augustine tells us how he found the Almighty within his own soul, after having long sought for Him elsewhere.<sup>3</sup> This recollection helps us greatly

<sup>3</sup> Some editors of the *Interior Castle* think that St. Teresa refers to the following passage taken from the *Confessions* of St. Augustine: 'Too late have I loved Thee, O Beauty, ever ancient yet ever new! too late have I loved Thee! And behold, Thou wert within me and I abroad, and there I searched for Thee, and, deformed as I was, I pursued the beauties that Thou hast made. Thou wert with me, but I was not with Thee. Those things kept me far from Thee, which, unless they were in Thee, could have had no being' (*St. Augustine's Confessions*, bk. x. ch. xxvii.). The *Confessions of St. Augustine* were first translated

when God bestows it upon us. But do not fancy you can gain it by thinking of God dwelling within you, or by imagining Him as present in your soul: this is a good practice and an excellent kind of meditation, for it is founded on the fact that God resides within us;<sup>4</sup> it is not, however, the prayer of recollection, for by the divine assistance every one can practise it, but what I mean is quite a different thing. Sometimes, before they have begun to think of God, the powers of the soul find themselves within the castle. I know not by what means they entered, nor how they heard the Shepherd's pipe; the ears perceived no sound but the soul is keenly conscious of a delicious sense of recollection experienced by those who enjoy this favour, which I cannot describe more clearly.

4. I think I read somewhere<sup>5</sup> that the soul is then like a tortoise or sea-urchin, which retreats into it—into Spanish by Sebastian Toscano, a Portuguese Augustinian. This edition, which was published at Salamanca in 1554, was the one used by St. Teresa. However, it is more probable that here and elsewhere (*Life*, ch. xli. 10; *Way of Perf.* ch. xxviii. 2) St. Teresa quotes a passage which occurs in a pious book entitled *Soliloquia*, and erroneously attributed to St. Augustine: 'I have gone about the streets and the broad ways of the city of this world seeking Thee, but have not found Thee for I was wrong in seeking without for what was within.' (ch. xxxi.) This treatise which is also quoted by St. John of the Cross, *Spiritual Canticle*, stanza i. 7, *Ascent of Mount Carmel*, bk. i. ch. v. 1, appeared in a Spanish translation at Valladolid in 1515, at Medina del Campo in 1553, and at Toledo in 1565.

<sup>4</sup> *Life*, ch. xiv. 7, 8; xviii. 20.

<sup>5</sup> St. Teresa read this in the *Tercer Abecedario* of Francisco de Osuna (tr. vi, ch. iv): 'This exercise concentrates the senses of man in the interior of the heart where dwells 'the daughter of the king'; that is, the Catholic soul; thus recollected, man may well be compared to the tortoise or sea-urchin which rolls itself up and withdraws within itself, disregarding everything outside.'

self. Those who said this no doubt understood what they were talking about; but these creatures can withdraw into themselves at will, while here it is not in our power to retire into ourselves, unless God gives us the grace. In my opinion, His Majesty only bestows this favour on those who have renounced the world, in *desire* at least, if their state of life does not permit their doing so in *fact*. He thus specially calls them to devote themselves to spiritual things; if they allow Him power to act freely He will bestow still greater graces on those whom He thus begins calling to a higher life. Those who enjoy this recollection should thank God fervently: it is of the highest importance for them to realize the value of this favour, gratitude for which would prepare them to receive still more signal graces. Some books advise that as a preparation for hearing what our Lord may say to us we should keep our minds at rest, waiting to see what He will work in our souls.<sup>6</sup> But unless His Majesty has begun to suspend our faculties, I cannot understand how we are to stop thinking, without doing ourselves more harm than good. This point has been much debated by those learned in spiritual matters; I confess my want of humility in having been unable to yield to their opinion.<sup>7</sup>

5. Some one told me of a certain book written on the subject by the saintly Friar Peter of Alcantara (as I think I may justly call him); I should have submitted to his decision, knowing that he was competent to judge, but on reading it I found he

<sup>6</sup> *Life*, ch. xii. 8.

<sup>7</sup> *Life*, ch. xiv. 10.

agreed with me that the mind must act until called to recollection by love, although he stated it in other words.<sup>8</sup> Possibly I may be mistaken, but I rely on these reasons. Firstly, he who reasons less and tries to do least, does most in spiritual matters. We

<sup>8</sup> A Golden Treatise of Mental Prayer by St. Peter of Alcantara, translated by Rev. G. F. Bullock M.A. and edited by Rev. George Seymour Hollings S.S.J.E. London, Mowbray, 1905, p. 117.

Eighth Counsel. Let the last and chiefest counsel be that in this holy exercise we should endeavour to unite Meditation with Contemplation making of the one a ladder for attaining to the other. For this we must know that (p. 118) the very office of Meditation is to consider Divine things with studiousness and attention passing from one to another, to move our hearts to some affection and deep feeling for them, which is as though one should strike a flint to draw from it the spark.

For Contemplation is to have drawn forth this spark: I mean to have now found this affection and feeling which were sought for, and to be in peace and silence enjoying them; not with many discursive and intellectual speculations but with simple gaze upon the truth.

Wherefore, says a holy teacher, Meditation goes its way and brings forth fruit, with labour, but Contemplation bears fruit without labour. The one seeketh, the other findeth; the one consumeth the food, the other enjoys it; the one discourseth, and maketh reflections, the other is contented with a simple gaze upon the things, for it hath in possession their love and joy. Lastly, the one is as the means, the other as the end; the one as the road and journeying along it, the other as the end of the road and of the journeying.

From this is to be inferred a very common thing, which all masters of the spiritual life teach, although it is little (p. 119) understood of those who learn it; which is this, that, as the means cease when the end has been attained, as the voyaging is over when the port has been touched, so when, through the working out of our Meditation, we have come to the repose and sweet savour of Contemplation, we ought then to cease from that pious and laborious searching; and being satisfied with the simple gaze upon, and thought of, God—as though we had Him there present before us—we should rest in the enjoyment of that affection then given, whether it be of love, or of admiration, or joy, or other like sentiment.

The reason why this counsel is given is this, that as the aim of this devotion is love and the affections of the will rather than the speculations of the understanding, when the will has been caught and taken



should make our petitions like beggars before a powerful and rich Emperor; then, with downcast eyes, humbly wait. When He secretly shows us He hears our prayers, it is well to be silent, as He has drawn us into His presence; there would then be no harm in trying to keep our minds at rest (that is to say, if we can). If, however, the King makes no sign of listening or of seeing us, there is no need to stand inert, like a dolt, which the soul would

by this affection, we should put away all those discursive and intellectual speculations, so far as we can, in order that our soul with all its forces may be fastened upon this affection without being diverted by the action of other influences. A learned teacher, therefore, counsels us that as soon as anyone feels himself fired by the love of God, he should first put aside (p. 120.) all these considerations and thoughts—however exalted they may seem—not because they are really not good in themselves, but because they are then hindrances to what is better, and more important. For this is nothing else than that, having come to the end and purpose of our work, we should stay therein, and leave Meditation for the love of Contemplation. This may especially be done at the end of any exercise, that is, after the petition for the Divine love of which we have spoken, for one reason, because then it is supposed that the labour of the exercise we have just gone through has produced some divine devotion and feeling, since, saith the wise man, ‘Better is the end of prayer than the beginning’: and for another reason, that, after the work of Prayer and Meditation, it is well that one should give his mind a little rest, and allow it to repose in the arms of Contemplation. At this point, then, we should put away all other thoughts that may present themselves, and, quieting the mind and stilling the memory, fix all upon our Lord; and remembering that we are then in His presence, no longer dwell upon the details of divine things.

*Ibidem* p. 121. And not only at the end of the exercise but in the midst of it, and at whatever part of it, this spiritual swoon should come upon us, when the intellect is laid to sleep, we should make this pause, and enjoy the blessing bestowed; and then, when we have finished the digestion of it, turn to the matter we have in hand, as the gardener does, when he waters his garden-bed; who, after giving it (p. 122) a sufficiency of water, holds back the stream, and lets it soak and spread itself through the depths of the earth; and then when this hath somewhat dried up, he turns down upon it again the flow of water that it may receive still more, and be well irrigated.’

resemble if it continued inactive. In this case its dryness would greatly increase, and the imagination would be made more restless than before by its very effort to think of nothing. Our Lord wishes us at such a time to offer Him our petitions and to place ourselves in His presence; He knows what is best for us.

6. I believe that human efforts avail nothing in these matters, which His Majesty appears to reserve to Himself, setting this limit to our powers. In many other things, such as penances, good works, and prayers, with His aid we can help ourselves as far as human weakness will allow. The second reason is, that these interior operations being sweet and peaceful,<sup>9</sup> any painful effort does us more harm than good. By 'painful effort' I mean any forcible restraint we place on ourselves, such as holding our breath.<sup>10</sup> We should rather abandon our souls into the hands of God, leaving Him to do as He chooses with us, as far as possible forgetting all self-interest and resigning ourselves entirely to His will. The third reason is, that the very effort to think of nothing excites our imagination the more. The fourth is, because we render God the most true and acceptable service by caring only for His honour and glory and forgetting ourselves, our advantages, comfort and happiness. How can we be self-oblivious, while keeping ourselves under such strict control that we are afraid to move, or even to think, or to leave our minds enough liberty to desire God's greater glory and to rejoice in the

<sup>9</sup> *Sap.* viii. 1 : 'Disponit omnia suaviter.'

<sup>10</sup> *Life*, ch. xv. 1.

glory which He possesses? When His Majesty wishes the mind to rest from working He employs it in another manner, giving it a light and knowledge far above any obtainable by its own efforts and absorbing it entirely into Himself. Then, though it knows not how, it is filled with wisdom such as it could never gain for itself by striving to suspend the thoughts. God gave us faculties for our use; each of them will receive its proper reward. Then do not let us try to charm them to sleep, but permit them to do their work until divinely called to something higher."

7. In my opinion, when God chooses to place the soul in this mansion it is best for it to do as I advised, and then endeavour, without force or disturbance, to keep free from wandering thoughts. No effort, however, should be made to suspend the imagination entirely from acting, for it is well to remember God's presence and to consider Who He is. If transported out of itself by its feelings, well and good; but let it not try to understand what is passing within it, for this favour is bestowed on the will which should be left to enjoy it in peace,

"The whole of the time in which our Lord communicates the simple, loving general attention of which I made mention before, or when the soul, assisted by grace, is established in that state, we must contrive to keep the understanding in repose, undisturbed by the intrusion of forms, figures, or particular knowledge, unless it were slightly and for an instant, and that with sweetness of love, to enkindle our souls the more. At other times, however, in all our acts of devotion and good works, we must make use of good recollections and meditations, so that we may feel an increase of profit and devotion; most especially applying ourselves to the life, passion, and death of Jesus Christ, our Lord, that our life and conduct may be an imitation of His.' (St. John of the Cross, *Ascent of Mount Carmel*, bk. ii. ch. xxxii. 7.)

only making loving aspirations occasionally. Although, in this kind of prayer, the soul makes no effort towards it, yet often, for a very short time, the mind ceases to think at all. I explained elsewhere why this occurs during this spiritual state.<sup>12</sup> On first speaking of the fourth mansions, I told you I had mentioned divine consolations before the prayer of recollection. The latter should have come first, as it is far inferior to consolations, of which it is the commencement. Recollection does not require us to give up meditation, nor to cease using our intellect. In the prayer of quiet, when the water flows from the spring itself and not through conduits, the mind ceases to act; it is forced to do so, although it does not understand what is happening, and so wanders hither and thither in bewilderment, finding no place for rest. Meanwhile the will, entirely united to God, is much disturbed by the tumult of the thoughts: no notice, however, should be taken of them, or they would cause the loss of a great part of the favour the soul is enjoying. Let the spirit ignore these distractions and abandon itself in the arms of divine love: His Majesty will teach it how best to act, which chiefly consists in its recognizing its unworthiness of so great a good and occupying itself in thanking Him for it.

8. In order to treat of the prayer of recollection, I passed over in silence the effects and symptoms to be found in souls thus favoured by God. Divine consolations evidently cause a dilation or enlargement of the soul that may be compared to water

<sup>12</sup> *Life*, ch. xv. 2.

flowing from a spring into a basin which has no outlet, but is so constructed as to increase in size and proportion to the quantity poured into it. God seems to work the same effect by this prayer, besides giving many other marvellous graces, so preparing and disposing the soul to contain all He intends to give it. After interior sweetness and dilation the soul is not so restrained as formerly in God's service, but possesses much more liberty of spirit. It is no longer distressed by the terror of hell, for though more anxious than ever not to offend God, it has lost servile fear and feels sure that one day it will possess its Lord. It does not dread the loss of health by austerities;<sup>13</sup> believing that there is nothing it could not do by His grace, it is more desirous than before of doing penance. Greater indifference is felt for sufferings because faith being stronger, it trusts that if borne for God He will give the grace to endure them patiently. Indeed, such a one at times even longs for trials, having a most ardent desire to do something for His sake. As the soul better understands the Divine Majesty, it realizes more vividly its own baseness. Divine consolation shows it how vile are earthly pleasures; by gradually withdrawing from them, it gains greater self-mastery. In short, its virtues are increased and it will not cease to advance in perfection, unless it turns back and offends God. Should it act thus, it would lose everything, however high the state it may have reached.

9. It is not to be supposed that all these effects are produced merely by God's having shown these

<sup>13</sup> *Life*, ch. xxiv. 2.

favours once or twice. They must be received continually, for it is on their frequent reception that the whole welfare of the soul depends. I strongly urge those who have reached this state to avoid most carefully all occasions of offending God.<sup>14</sup> The soul is not yet fully established in virtue, but is like a new-born babe first feeding at its mother's breast:<sup>15</sup> if it leaves her, what can it do but die? I greatly fear that when a soul to whom God has granted this favour discontinues prayer, except under urgent necessity, it will, unless it returns to the practice at once, go from bad to worse.

10. I realize the danger of such a case, having had the grief of witnessing the fall of persons I knew through their withdrawal from Him Who sought, with so much love, to make Himself their friend, as He proved by His treatment of them. I urgently warn such persons not to run the risk of sinning, for the devil would rather gain one of these souls than many to whom our Lord does not grant such graces,<sup>16</sup> as the former may cause him severe loss by leading others to follow their example, and may even render great service to the Church of God. Were there no other reason except that he saw the special love His Majesty bears these people, it would suffice to make Satan frantic to destroy God's work in them, so that they might be lost eternally. Therefore they suffer grievous temptations, and if they fall, they fall lower than others.

<sup>14</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. xvi. 5. *Castle, M.* v. ch. i, 2, 3; ii. 4, 5; iii. 2, 6, 12.

<sup>15</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. xxxi. 7. *Concept.* ch. iv. 6.

<sup>16</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. xl. 3.

11. You, my sisters, are free from such dangers, as far as we can tell: God keep you from pride and vainglory! The devil sometimes offers counterfeits of the graces I have mentioned: this can easily be detected—the effects being exactly contrary to those of the genuine ones.<sup>17</sup> Although I have spoken of it elsewhere,<sup>18</sup> I wish to warn you here of a special danger to which those who practise prayer are subject, particularly women, whose weakness of constitution makes them more liable to such mistakes. On account of their penances, prayers, and vigils, or even merely because of debility of health, some persons cannot receive spiritual consolation without being overcome by it. On feeling any interior joy, their bodies being languid and weak, they fall into a slumber—they call it spiritual sleep—which is a more advanced stage of what I have described; they think the soul shares in it as well as the body, and abandon themselves to a sort of intoxication. The more they lose self-control, the more do their feelings get possession of them, because the frame becomes more feeble. They fancy this is a trance and call it one, but I call it nonsense; it does nothing but waste their time and injure their health.

12. This state lasted with a certain person for eight hours, during which time she was neither insensible, nor had she any thought of God.<sup>19</sup> She was cured by being made to eat and sleep well and to leave off some of her penances. Her recovery

<sup>17</sup> *Life*, ch. xx. 31.

<sup>18</sup> *Found.* ch. vi.

<sup>19</sup> *Found.* ch. vi. 15.

was owing to some one who understood her case; hitherto she had unintentionally deceived both her confessor and other people, as well as herself. I feel quite sure the devil had been at work here to serve his own ends and he was beginning to gain a great deal from it. It should be known that when God bestows such favours on the soul, although there may be languor both of mind and body, it is not shared by the soul, which feels great delight at seeing itself so near God, nor does this state ever continue for more than a very short time.<sup>20</sup> Although the soul may become absorbed again, yet, as I said, unless already feeble, the body suffers neither exhaustion nor pain. I advise any of you who experience the latter to tell the Prioress, and to divert your thoughts as much as possible from such matters. The Superior should prevent such a nun from spending more than a very few hours in prayer, and should make her eat and sleep well until her usual strength is restored, if she has lost it in this way.<sup>21</sup> If the nun's constitution is so delicate that this does not suffice, let her believe me when I tell her that God only calls her to the active life. There must be such people in monasteries: employ her in the various offices and be careful that she is never left very long alone, otherwise she will entirely lose her health. This treatment will be a great mortification to her: our Lord tests her love for Him by the way in which she bears His absence. He may be pleased, after a time, to restore her strength; if not, she will make as

<sup>20</sup> *Life* ch. xviii. 16, 17.

<sup>21</sup> *Letter* of Oct. 23, 1576. Vol. II.



much progress, and earn as great a reward by vocal prayer and obedience as she would have done by contemplation, and perhaps more.

13. There are people, some of whom I have known, whose minds and imaginations are so active as to fancy they see whatever they think about, which is very dangerous.<sup>22</sup> Perhaps I may treat of this later on, but cannot do so now. I have dwelt at length on this mansion, as I believe it to be the one most souls enter. As the natural is combined with the supernatural, the devil can do more harm here than later on, when God does not leave him so many opportunities. May God be for ever praised ! Amen.

<sup>22</sup> *Found.* ch. viii. 7-8.

# THE FIFTH MANSIONS

## CHAPTER I.

BEGINS TO TREAT OF THE UNION OF THE SOUL WITH GOD IN PRAYER. HOW TO BE SURE THAT WE ARE NOT DECEIVED IN THIS MATTER.

*1. Graces of the fifth mansions. 2. Contemplation to be striven for. 3. Physical effects of the prayer of union. 4. Amazement of the intellect. 5. The prayer of union and of quiet contrasted. 6. Divine and earthly union. 7. Competent directors in these matters. 8. Proof of union. 9. Assurance left in the soul. 10. Divine union beyond our power to obtain.*

1. OH, my sisters, how shall I describe the riches, treasures, and joys contained in the fifth mansions! Would it not be better to say nothing about them? They are impossible to depict, nor can the mind conceive, nor any comparisons portray them, all earthly things being too vile to serve the purpose. Send me, O my Lord, light from heaven that I may give some to these Thy servants, some of whom by Thy good will often enjoy these delights, lest the devil in the guise of an angel of light should deceive those whose only desire is to please Thee.

2. I said 'some,' but in reality there are very *few*<sup>1</sup> who never enter this mansion: some more and some less, but most of them may be said at least

<sup>1</sup> *Found.* ch. iv. 8.

to gain admittance into these rooms. I think that certain graces I am about to describe are bestowed on only a few of the nuns, but if the rest only arrive at the portal they receive a great boon from God, for 'many are called, but few are chosen.'<sup>2</sup> All we who wear the holy habit of the Carmelites are called to prayer and contemplation. This was the object of our Order,<sup>3</sup> to this lineage we belong. Our holy Fathers of Mount Carmel sought in perfect solitude and utter contempt of the world for this treasure, this precious pearl,<sup>4</sup> of which we speak, and we are their descendants. How little do most of us care to prepare our souls, that our Lord may reveal this jewel to us! Outwardly we may appear to practise the requisite virtues, but we have far more to do than this before it is possible to attain to contemplation, to gain which we should neglect no means, either small or great. Rouse yourselves, my sisters, and since some foretaste of heaven may be had on earth, beg our Lord to give us grace not to miss it through our own fault. Ask Him to show us where to find it—ask Him to give us strength of soul to dig until we find this hidden treasure, which lies buried within our hearts, as I wish to show you if it please God to enable me. I said 'strength of *soul*,' that you might understand that strength of *body* is not indispensable when our Lord God chooses to withhold it. He makes it impossible for no one to gain these riches,

<sup>2</sup> St. Matt. xx. 16: 'Multi enim sunt vocati, pauci vero electi.'

<sup>3</sup> Maneant singuli in cellulis suis, vel juxta eas, die ac nocte in lege Domini meditantes et in orationibus vigilantes.' (*Carmelite Rule*).

<sup>4</sup> St. Matt. xiii. 46.

but is content that each should do his best. Blessed be so just a God!

3. But, daughters, if you would purchase this treasure of which we are speaking, God would have you keep back nothing from Him, little or great. He will have it all;<sup>5</sup> in proportion to what you know you have given will your reward be great or small. There is no more certain sign whether or not we have reached the prayer of union. Do not imagine that this state of prayer is, like the one preceding it, a sort of drowsiness (I call it 'drowsiness' because the soul seems to slumber, being neither quite asleep nor wholly awake). In the prayer of union the soul is asleep, fast asleep, as regards the world and itself: in fact, during the short time this state lasts it is deprived of all feeling whatever, being unable to think on any subject, even if it wished. No effort is needed here to suspend the thoughts: if the soul can love—it knows not how, nor whom it loves, nor what it desires. In fact, it has died entirely to this world, to live more truly than ever in God. This is a delicious death, for the soul is deprived of the faculties it exercised while in the body:<sup>6</sup> delicious because, (although not really the case), it seems to have left its mortal covering to abide more entirely in God. So completely does this take place, that I know not whether the body retains sufficient life to continue breathing; on

<sup>5</sup> 'The reason why there are so few contemplatives is that there are so few persons who wholly withdraw themselves from transitory and created things' (*Imitation*, bk. iii. ch. xxxi. 1). See also *Way of Perf.* ch. xvi. 5. *Life*, ch. xi. 2-4; xxii. 18, 19.

<sup>6</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. xxv. 1. *Life*, ch. xvi. *Rel.* I. i; viii. 7.

consideration, I believe it does not; at any rate, if it still breathes, it does so unconsciously.

4. The mind entirely concentrates itself on trying to understand what is happening, which is beyond its power; it is so astounded that, if consciousness is not completely lost, at least no movement is possible: the person may be compared to one who falls into a dead faint with dismay.<sup>7</sup>

5. Oh, mighty secrets of God! Never should I weary of trying to explain them if I thought it possible to succeed! I would write a thousand foolish things that one might be to the point, if only it might make us praise God more. I said this prayer produced no drowsiness in the mind; on the other hand, in the prayer (of quiet) described in the last mansion, until the soul has gained much experience it doubts what really happened to it. 'Was it nothing but fancy, or was it a sleep? Did it come from God or from the devil, disguised as an angel of light?' The mind feels a thousand misgivings, and well for it that it should, because, at I said, nature may sometimes deceive us in this case. Although there is little chance of the poisonous reptiles entering here, yet agile little lizards will try to slip in, though they can do no harm, especially if they remain unnoticed. These, as I said, are trivial fancies of the imagination, which are often very troublesome. However active these small lizards may be, they cannot enter the fifth mansion, for neither the imagination, the understanding, nor the memory has power to hinder the graces bestowed on it.

<sup>7</sup> *Life*, ch. xvii. 2.

6. I dare venture to assert that, if this is genuine union with God, the devil cannot interfere nor do any harm, for His Majesty is so joined and united with the essence of the soul, that the evil one dare not approach, nor can he even understand this mystery. This is certain, for it is said that the devil does not know our thoughts, much less can he penetrate a secret so profound that God does not reveal it even to us.<sup>8</sup> Oh, blessed state, in which this cursed one cannot injure us! What riches we receive while God so works in us that neither we ourselves nor any one else can impede Him! What will He not bestow, Who is so eager to give, and Who can give us all He desires! You may perhaps have been puzzled at my saying 'if this is genuine union with God,' as if there might be other unions. There are indeed—not with God, but with vanities—when the devil transports the soul passionately addicted to them, but the union differs from that which is divine and the mind misses the delight and satisfaction, peace and happiness of divine union. These heavenly consolations are above all earthly joys, pleasure, and satisfaction. As great a difference exists between their origin and that of worldly pleasures as between their opposite effects, as you know by experience.

7. I said somewhere<sup>9</sup> that the one seems only to touch the surface of the body, while the other penetrates to the very marrow: I believe this is

<sup>8</sup> According to St. Thomas, angels—whether good or bad—do not know the thoughts of man unless they become manifest by some exterior sign. S. Theol. I. q. lvii. art. 4. See also St. John of the Cross, *Dark Night*, bk. II, ch. xxiii. 2, 5.

<sup>9</sup> Mansion iv. ch. i. 5.

correct, and I cannot express myself better. I fancy that you are not yet satisfied on this question, but are afraid of deception, for spiritual matters are very hard to explain. Enough, however, has been said for those who have received this grace, as the difference between divine union and any other is very striking. However, I will give you a clear proof which cannot mislead you, nor leave any doubt whether the favour comes from God or no. His Majesty brought it back to my memory this very day; it appears to me to be an unmistakable sign. In difficult questions, although I think I understand them and am speaking the truth, I always say 'it appears to me'; for, in case my opinion is wrong, I am most willing to submit to the judgment of theologians. Although they may not have had personal experience in such matters, yet in some way I do not understand, God Who sets them to give light to His Church enables them to recognize the truth when it is put before them. If they are not thoughtless and indevout, but servants of God, they are never dismayed at His mighty works, knowing perfectly well that it is in His power to perform far greater wonders. If some of the marvels told are new to them, yet they have read of others of the same kind, showing the former to be possible. I have had great experience as to this and have also met with timid, half-instructed people whose ignorance has cost me very dear.<sup>10</sup> I am convinced that those who refuse to believe that God can do far more than this, and that He is pleased now, as in the past, to commu-

<sup>10</sup> *Life*, ch. viii. 15.

nicate Himself to His creatures, shut fast their hearts against receiving such favours themselves. Do not imitate them, sisters: be convinced that it is possible for God to perform still greater wonders. Do not concern yourselves as to whether those who receive these graces are good or wicked; as I said, He knows best and it is no business of yours: you should serve Him with a single heart and with humility, and should praise Him for His works and wonders.<sup>11</sup>

8. Let us now speak of the sign which proves the prayer of union to have been genuine. As you have seen, God then deprives the soul of all its senses that He may the better imprint in it true wisdom: it neither sees, hears, nor understands anything while this state lasts, which is never more than a very brief time;<sup>12</sup> it appears to the soul to be much shorter than it really is. God visits the soul in a manner which prevents its doubting, on returning to itself, that it dwelt in Him and that He was within it, and so firmly is it convinced of this truth that, although years may pass before this favour recurs, the soul can never forget it nor doubt the fact,<sup>13</sup> setting aside the effects left by this prayer, to which I will refer later on. The conviction felt by the soul is the main point.

9. But, you may ask, how can a person who is incapable of sight and hearing see<sup>14</sup> or know these

<sup>11</sup> *Life*, ch. xviii. 16.

<sup>12</sup> *Life*, ch. xx. 13, 24.

<sup>13</sup> Philippus a SS. Trinitate, *l.c.*, pars iii. tr. i. disc. iv. art. 2, where he adds some further signs. Anton. a Sp. S., *l.c.*, tract. i. nn. 116 and 117.

<sup>14</sup> The soul does not see the good Master who teaches it, although



things? I do not say that she saw it at the time, but that she perceives it clearly afterwards, not by any vision but by a certitude which remains in the heart which God alone could give. I know of some one who was unaware of God's being in all things by presence, power and essence, yet was firmly convinced of it by a divine favour of this sort.<sup>15</sup> She asked an ill-instructed priest of the kind I mentioned to tell her in what way God dwelt within us: he was as ignorant on the subject as she had been before our Lord revealed to her the truth, and answered that the Almighty was only present in us by grace.<sup>16</sup> Yet so strong was her clearly conscious of His presence.' (*Concept.* ch. iv. 3.)

<sup>15</sup> 'There are three ways in which God is present in the soul. The first is His presence in essence, not in holy souls only, but in wretched and sinful souls as well, and also in all created things; for it is by this presence that He gives life and being, and were it withdrawn at once all things would return to nothing. This presence never fails in the soul. The second is His presence by grace, whereby He dwells in the soul, pleased and satisfied with it. This presence is not in all souls; for those who fall into mortal sin lose it, and no soul can know in a natural way whether it has it or not. The third is His presence by spiritual affection. God is wont to show His presence in many devout souls in divers ways, in refreshment, joy and gladness.' (St. John of the Cross, *Spiritual Canticle*, stanza xi. 2.)

'In every soul, even that of the greatest sinner in the world, God dwells and is substantially present. This way of union or presence of God, in the order of nature, subsists between Him and all His creatures; by this He preserves them in being, and if He withdraws it they immediately perish and cease to be. And so, when I speak of the union of the soul with God, I do not mean this substantial presence which is in every creature, but that union and transformation of the soul in God by love which is only then accomplished when there subsists the likeness which love begets.' (St. John of the Cross, *Ascent*, bk. ii. ch. v. 3.)

Fr. Gracian, *Peregrinación de Anastasio* (Burgos, 1905), p. 171.

<sup>16</sup> *Life*, ch. xviii. 20. *Rel.* ix. 17; xi. 8. St. Teresa was so deeply impressed by the ignorance of this priest that she very frequently referred to it.

conviction of the truth learnt during her prayer that she did not believe him and questioned other spiritual persons on the subject, who confirmed her in the true doctrine, much to her joy. Do not mistake and imagine that this certainty of God's having visited the soul concerns any corporal presence such as that of our Lord Jesus Christ Who dwells in the Blessed Sacrament, although we do not see Him: it relates solely to the Divinity. If we did not see it, how can we feel so sure of it? That I do not know: it is the work of the Almighty and I am certain that what I say is the fact. I maintain that a soul which does not feel this assurance has not been united to God entirely, but only by one of its powers, or has received one of the many other favours God is accustomed to bestow on men. In all such matters we must not seek to know how things happened: our understanding could not grasp them, therefore why trouble ourselves on the subject? It is enough to know that it is He, the all-powerful God, Who has performed the work. We can do nothing on our own part to gain this favour; it comes from God alone; therefore let us not strive to understand it.

10. Concerning my words: 'We can do nothing on our own part,' I was struck by the words of the Bride in the Canticles, which you will remember to have heard: 'The King brought me into the cellar of wine,'<sup>17</sup> (or 'placed me' I think she says): she does not say she went of her own accord,

<sup>17</sup> *Cant.* i. 3: 'Introduxit me rex in cellaria sua.' *Castle*, M. v. ch. ii. 11. *Way of Perf.* ch. xviii. 1. *Concep.* ch. iv. 4-8; v. 5; vi. 7; vii. 2-5. *Life*, ch. xviii. 17.

although telling us how she wandered up and down seeking her Beloved.<sup>18</sup> I think the prayer of union is the 'cellar' in which our Lord places us when and how He chooses, but we cannot enter it through any effort of our own. His Majesty alone can bring us there and come into the centre of our souls. In order to declare His wondrous works more clearly, He will leave us no share in them except complete conformity of our wills to His and abandonment of all things: He does not require the faculties or senses to open the door to Him; they are all asleep. He enters the innermost depths of our souls without a door, as He entered the room where the disciples sat, saying 'Pax vobis,'<sup>19</sup> and as He emerged from the sepulchre without removing the stone that closed the entrance. You will see farther on, in the seventh mansion, far better than here, how God makes the soul enjoy His presence in its very centre. O daughters, what wonders shall we see, if we keep ever before our eyes our own baseness and frailty and recognize how unworthy we are to be the handmaids of so great a Lord, Whose marvels are beyond our comprehension! May He be for ever praised! Amen.

<sup>18</sup> *Cant.* iii. 2: 'Per vicos et plateas quæram quem diligit anima mea.'

<sup>19</sup> St. John, xx. 19.

## CHAPTER II.

CONTINUES THE SAME SUBJECT: EXPLAINS THE PRAYER OF UNION BY A DELICATE COMPARISON AND SPEAKS OF THE EFFECTS IT LEAVES UPON THE SOUL. THIS CHAPTER SHOULD RECEIVE GREAT ATTENTION.

1. *The soul compared to a butterfly.* 2. *The grandeurs of creation.*
3. *Symbol of the soul and the silkworm.* 4. *Preparation of the soul for God's indwelling.* 5. *Mystic death of the silkworm.*
6. *Effects of divine union.* 7. *Increase of fervour and detachment.* 8. *Trials succeeding the prayer of union.* 9. *Longing for death and zeal for God's honour.* 10. *This zeal supernatural.*
11. *God alone works this grace.* 12. *The same zeal as that felt by our Lord on earth.* 13. *Christ's keenest suffering.*

1. You may imagine that there is no more left to be described of the contents of this mansion, but a great deal remains to be told, for as I said, it contains favours of various degrees. I think there is nothing to add about the prayer of union, but when the soul on which God bestows this grace disposes itself for their reception, I could tell you much about the marvels our Lord works in it. I will describe some of them in my own way, also the state in which they leave the soul, and will use a suitable comparison to elucidate the matter, explaining that though we can take no active part in this work of God within us,<sup>1</sup> yet we may do much to prepare ourselves to receive this grace. You have heard how wonderfully silk is made—in a way such as God alone could plan—how it all comes from an egg resembling a tiny pepper-corn. Not having seen it myself, I only know of it by hearsay, so if the facts are inaccurate the fault will not be mine. When, in the warm weather, the mulberry trees

<sup>1</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. xxv. 3.

come into leaf, the little egg which was lifeless before its food was ready, begins to live. The caterpillar nourishes itself upon the mulberry leaves until, when it has grown large, people place near it small twigs upon which, of its own accord, it spins silk from its tiny mouth until it has made a narrow little cocoon in which it buries itself. Then this large and ugly worm leaves the cocoon as a lovely little white butterfly.

2. If we had not seen this but had only heard of it as an old legend, who could believe it? Could we persuade ourselves that insects so utterly without the use of reason as a silkworm or a bee would work with such industry and skill in our service that the poor little silkworm loses its life over the task? This would suffice for a short meditation, sisters, without my adding more, for you may learn from it the wonders and the wisdom of God. How if we knew the properties of all things? It is most profitable to ponder over the grandeurs of creation and to exult in being the brides of such a wise and mighty King.

3. Let us return to our subject. The silkworm symbolizes the soul which begins to live when, kindled by the Holy Spirit, it commences using the ordinary aids given by God to all, and applies the remedies left by Him in His Church, such as regular confession, religious books, and sermons; these are the cure for a soul dead in its negligence and sins and liable to fall into temptation. Then it comes to life and continues nourishing itself on this food and on devout meditation until it has attained full vigour, which is the essential point,

for I attach no importance to the rest. When the silkworm is full-grown as I told you in the first part of this chapter, it begins to spin silk and to build the house wherein it must die. By this house, when speaking of the soul, I mean Christ. I think I read or heard somewhere, either that our life is hid in Christ, or in God (which means the same thing) or that Christ is our life.<sup>2</sup> It makes little difference to my meaning which of these quotations is correct.

4. This shows, my daughters, how much, by God's grace, we can do, by preparing this home for ourselves, towards making Him our dwelling-place as He is in the prayer of union. You will suppose that I mean we can take away from or add something to God when I say that He is our home, and that we can make this home and dwell in it by our own power. Indeed we can: though we can neither deprive God of anything nor add aught to Him, yet we can take away from and add to ourselves, like the silkworms. The little we can do will hardly have been accomplished when this insignificant work of ours, which amounts to nothing at all, will be united by God to His greatness and thus enhanced with such immense value that our Lord Himself will be the reward of our toil. Although He has had the greatest share in it, He will join our trifling pains to the bitter sufferings He endured for us and make them one.

5. Forward then, my daughters! hasten over your work and build the little cocoon. Let us renounce

<sup>2</sup> Col. iii. 3: 'Vita vestra est abscondita cum Christo in Deo.' Gal. ii. 20: 'Vivo autem, jam non ego; vivit vero in me Christus.'

self-love and self-will,<sup>3</sup> care for nothing earthly, do penance, pray, mortify ourselves, be obedient, and perform all the other good works of which you know. Act up to your light; you have been taught your duties. Die! die as the silkworm does when it has fulfilled the office of its creation, and you will see God and be immersed in His greatness, as the little silkworm is enveloped in its cocoon. Understand that when I say 'you will see God,' I mean in the manner described, in which He manifests Himself in this kind of union.

6. Now let us see what becomes of the 'silkworm,' for all I have been saying leads to this. As soon as, by means of this prayer, the soul has become entirely dead to the world, it comes forth like a lovely little white butterfly!<sup>4</sup> Oh, how great God is! How beautiful is the soul after having been immersed in God's grandeur and united closely to Him for but a short time! Indeed, I do not think it is ever as long as half an hour.<sup>5</sup> Truly, the spirit does not recognize itself, being as different from what it was as is the white butterfly from the repulsive caterpillar. It does not know how it can have merited so great a good, or rather, whence this grace came<sup>6</sup> which it well knows it merits not. The soul desires to praise our Lord God and longs to sacrifice itself and die a thousand deaths for Him. It feels an unconquerable desire for great

<sup>3</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. xxxi. 11.

<sup>4</sup> St. Teresa must have been thinking of this simile when she chose 'butterflies' as the pseudonym for her nuns in her letters at the time when she was obliged to be cautious on account of the troubles of the Reform.

<sup>5</sup> *Life*, ch. xviii. 16.

<sup>6</sup> *Life*, ch. xviii. 5-7.

crosses and would like to perform the most severe penances; it sighs for solitude and would have all men know God, while it is bitterly grieved at seeing them offend Him. These matters will be described more fully in the next mansion; there they are of the same nature, yet in a more advanced state the effects are far stronger, because, as I told you, if, after the soul has received these favours, it strives to make still farther progress, it will experience great things. Oh, to see the restlessness of this charming little butterfly, although never in its life has it been more tranquil and at peace! May God be praised! It knows not where to stay nor take its rest; everything on earth disgusts it after what it has experienced, particularly when God has often given it this wine which leaves fresh graces behind it at every draught.

7. It despises the work it did while yet a caterpillar—the slow weaving of its cocoon thread by thread—its wings have grown and it can fly; could it be content to crawl? All that it can do for God seems nothing to the soul compared with its desire. It no longer wonders at what the saints bore for Him, knowing by experience how our Lord aids and transforms the soul until it no longer seems the same in character and appearance. Formerly it feared penance, now it is strong: it wanted courage to forsake relations, friends, or possessions: neither its actions, its resolutions, nor separation from those it loved could detach the soul, but rather seemed to increase its fondness. Now it finds even their rightful claims a burden,<sup>7</sup> fearing contact with

<sup>7</sup> *Rel.* ix. 11.



them lest it should offend God. It wearies of everything, realizing that no true rest can be found in creatures.

8. I seem to have enlarged on this subject, yet far more might be said about it; those who have received this favour will think I have treated it too briefly. No wonder this pretty butterfly, estranged from earthly things, seeks repose elsewhere. Where can the poor little creature go? It cannot return to whence it came, for as I told you, that is not in the soul's power, do what it will, but depends upon God's pleasure. Alas, what fresh trials begin to afflict the mind! Who would expect this after such a sublime grace?<sup>8</sup> In fact in one way or another we must carry the cross all our lives. If people told me that ever since attaining to the prayer of union they had enjoyed constant peace and consolation, I should reply that they could never have reached that state, but that, at the most, if they had arrived as far as the last mansion, their emotion must have been some spiritual satisfaction joined to physical debility. It might even have been a false sweetness caused by the devil, who gives peace for a time only to wage far fiercer war later on. I do not mean that those who reach this stage possess no peace; they do so in a very high degree, for their sorrows, though extremely severe, are so beneficial and proceed from so good a source as to procure both peace and happiness.

9. Discontent with this world gives such a painful longing to quit it that, if the heart finds comfort,

<sup>8</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. xviii. 1-4. *Castle*, M. vi ch. i. 3, *sqq.* M. vii. ch. iv. 7.

it is solely from the thought that God wishes it to remain here in banishment. Even this is not enough to reconcile it to fate, for after all the gifts received, it is not yet so entirely surrendered to the will of God as it afterwards becomes. Here, although conformed to His will, the soul feels an unconquerable reluctance to submit, for our Lord has not given it higher grace. During prayer this grief breaks forth in floods of tears, probably from the great pain felt at seeing God offended and at thinking how many souls, both heretics and heathens, are lost eternally, and keenest grief of all, Christians also! The soul realizes the greatness of God's mercy and knows that however wicked men are, they may still repent and be saved; yet it fears that many precipitate themselves into hell.

10. Oh, infinite greatness of God! A few years ago—indeed, perhaps but a few days—this soul thought of nothing but itself. Who has made it feel such tormenting cares? If we tried for many years to obtain such sorrow by means of meditation, we could not succeed.

11. God help me! If for long days and years I considered how great a wrong it is that God should be offended, and that lost souls are His children and my brethren; if I pondered over the dangers of this world and how blessed it would be to leave this wretched life, would not that suffice? No, daughters, the pain would not be the same. For this, by the help of God, we can obtain by such meditation; but it does not seem to penetrate the very depths of our being like the other which

appears to cut the soul to pieces and grind it to powder through no action—even sometimes with no wish—of its own. What is this sorrow, then? Whence does it come? I will tell you. Have you not heard (I quoted the words to you just now, but did not apply to them this meaning)<sup>9</sup> how the Bride says that God ‘brought her into the cellar of wine and set in order charity in her’?<sup>10</sup> This is what happens here. The soul has so entirely yielded itself into His hands and is so subdued by love for Him that it knows or cares for nothing but that God should dispose of it according to His will. I believe that He only bestows this grace on those He takes entirely for His own. He desires that, without knowing how, the spirit should come forth stamped with His seal for indeed it does no more than does the wax when impressed with the signet. It does not mould itself but need only be in a fit condition—soft and pliable; even then it does not soften itself<sup>9</sup> but must merely remain still and submit to the impression.

12. How good Thou art, O God! All is done for us by Thee, Who dost but ask us to give our wills to Thee that we may be plastic as wax in Thy hands. You see, sisters, what God does to this soul so that it may know that it is His. He gives it something of His own—that which His Son possessed when living on earth—He could bestow ~~on~~ greater gift on us. Who could ever have longed more eagerly to leave this life than did Christ?

<sup>9</sup> Fifth Mansions, ch. i. 10.

<sup>10</sup> *Cant.* ii. 4. ‘Introduxit me in cellam vinariam, ordinavit in me caritatem.’

As He said at the Last Supper: 'With desire have I desired'" this. O Lord! does not that bitter death Thou art to undergo present itself before Thine eyes in all its pain and horror? 'No, for My ardent love and My desire to save souls are immeasurably stronger than the torments. This deeper sorrow I have suffered and still suffer while living here on earth, makes other pain seem as nothing in comparison.'

13. I have often meditated on this and I know that the torture a friend of mine<sup>12</sup> has felt, and still feels, at seeing our Lord sinned against is so unbearable that she would far rather die than continue in such anguish. Then I thought that if a soul whose charity is so weak compared to that of Christ—indeed, in comparison with His this charity might be said not to exist—experiences this insufferable grief, what must have been the feelings of our Lord Jesus Christ and what must His life have been? for all things were present before His eyes and He was the constant witness of the great offences committed against His Father. I believe without doubt that this pained Him far more than His most sacred Passion. There, at least, He found the end of all His trials, while His agony was allayed by the consolation of gaining our salvation through His death and of proving how He loved His Father by suffering for Him. Thus, people who, urged by fervent love, perform great penances

<sup>11</sup> St. Luke xxii. 15: 'Desiderio desideravi hoc pascha manducare vobiscum, antequam patiar.'

<sup>12</sup> This friend is, of course, St. Teresa herself. See *Life*, ch. xiii. 14; xxxii. 9. *Way of Perf.* ch. i. 3. *Castle*, M. vii. ch. i. 5, 6. *Excl.* x. 9.

hardly feel them but want to do still more and count even that as little. What, then, must His Majesty have felt at thus publicly manifesting His perfect obedience to His Father and His love for His brethren? What joy to suffer in doing God's will! Yet I think the constant sight of the many sins committed against God and of the numberless souls on their way to hell must have caused Him such anguish that, had He not been more than man, one day of such torment would have destroyed not only His life but many more lives, had they been His.

### CHAPTER III.

THIS CHAPTER CONTINUES THE SAME SUBJECT AND SPEAKS OF ANOTHER KIND OF UNION WHICH THE SOUL CAN OBTAIN WITH THE HELP OF GOD. THE IMPORTANCE OF LOVE OF OUR NEIGHBOUR IN THIS MATTER. THIS IS VERY USEFUL TO READ.

1. Zeal for souls left by divine union.
2. The soul may fall from such a state.
3. How divine union may always be obtained.
4. Union with the will of God the basis of all supernatural union.
5. Advantage of union gained by self-mortification.
6. Defects which hinder this union.
7. Divine union obtained by perfect love of God and our neighbour.
8. Love for God and our neighbour are proportionate.
9. Real and imaginary virtues.
10. Illusionary good resolutions.
11. Works, not feelings, procure union.
12. Fraternal charity will certainly gain this union.

1. LET us now return to our little doye and see what graces God gives it in this state. This implies that the soul endeavours to advance in the service of our Lord and in self-knowledge. If it receives the grace of union and then does no more, thinking itself safe, and so leads a careless life, wandering off the road to heaven (that is, the keeping of the

commandments) it will share the fate of the butterfly that comes from the silkworm, which lays some eggs that produce more of its kind and then dies for ever. I say it leaves some eggs, for I believe God will not allow so great a favour to be lost but that if the recipient does not profit by it, others will. For while it keeps to the right path, this soul, with its ardent desires and great virtues, helps others and kindles their fervour with its own. Yet even after having lost this it may still long to benefit others and delight to make known the mercies shown by God to those who love and serve Him.<sup>1</sup>

2. I knew a person to whom this happened. Although greatly erring, she longed that others should profit by the favours God had bestowed on her and taught the way of prayer to people ignorant of it, thus helping them immensely.<sup>2</sup> God afterwards bestowed fresh light upon her; indeed the prayer of union had not hitherto produced the above effects in her. How many people there must be to whom our Lord communicates Himself, who, like Judas, are called to the Apostleship and made kings by Him, as was Saul, yet who afterwards lose everything by their own fault! We should learn from this, sisters, that if we would merit fresh favours and avoid losing those we already possess, our only safety lies in obedience and in following the law of God. This I say, both to those who have received these graces and to those who have not.

3. In spite of all I have written, there still seems some difficulty in understanding this mansion. 'The

<sup>1</sup> *Life*, ch. vii. 18. *Way of Perf.* xli. 8.

<sup>2</sup> *Life*. ch. vii. 21.

advantage of entering is so great, that it is well that none should despair of doing so because God does not give them the supernatural gifts described above. With the help of divine grace true union can always be attained by forcing ourselves to renounce our own will and by following the will of God in all things.<sup>3</sup>

4. Oh, how many of us affirm that we do this, and believe we seek nothing else—indeed we would die for the truth of what we say! If this be the case I can only declare, as I fancy I did before, and I shall again and again, that we have already obtained this grace from God. Therefore we need not wish for that other delightful union described above, for its chief value lies in the resignation of our will to that of God without which it could not be reached.<sup>4</sup> Oh, how desirable is this union! The happy soul which has attained it will live in this world and in the next without care of any sort. No earthly events can trouble it, unless it should see itself in danger of losing God or should witness any offence offered Him. Neither sickness, poverty, nor the loss of any one by death affect it, except that of persons useful to the Church of God, for the soul realizes thoroughly that God's disposal is wiser than its own desires.

5. You must know that there are different kinds

<sup>3</sup> *Found.* ch. v. 10. 'These shall not attain to the true liberty of a pure heart, nor to the grace of a delightful familiarity with Me, unless they first resign themselves and offer themselves a daily sacrifice to Me: for without this, divine union neither is nor will be obtained.' (*Imitation*, book iii. ch. xxxvii. 4.)

<sup>4</sup> Philippus a SS. Trinitate, *l.c.*, p. iii. tr. i. disc. ii. art. 4.

of sorrow: there are both griefs and joys rising from an impulse of nature or from a charity which makes us pity our neighbour, like that felt by our Saviour when He raised Lazarus from the dead.<sup>5</sup> These feelings do not destroy union with the will of God nor do they disturb the soul by a restless, turbulent, and lasting passion. They soon pass away, for as I said of sweetness in prayer,<sup>6</sup> they do not affect the depths of the soul but only its senses and faculties. They are found in the former mansions, but do not enter the last of all. Is it necessary, in order to attain to this kind of divine union, for the powers of the soul to be suspended? No; God has many ways of enriching the soul and bringing it to these mansions besides what might be called a 'short cut.' But, be sure of this, my daughters: in any case the silkworm must die and it will cost you more in this way. In the former manner this death is facilitated by finding ourselves introduced into a new life; here, on the contrary, we must give ourselves the death-blow. I own that the work will be much harder, but then it will be of higher value so that your reward will be greater if you come forth victorious;<sup>7</sup> yet there is no doubt it is possible for you to attain this true union with the will of God.

6. This is the union I have longed for all my life and that I beg our Lord to grant me; it is the most certain and the safest. But alas, how few of us ever

<sup>5</sup> St. John xi. 35, 36: 'Et lacrymatus est Jesus. Dixerunt ergo Judæi: Ecce quomodo amabat eum.'

<sup>6</sup> Fourth Mansions, ch. i. 5. Fifth Mansions, ch. i. 7.

<sup>7</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. xvii. 2.



obtain it ! Those who are careful not to offend God, and who enter the religious state, think there is nothing more to do. How many maggots remain in hiding until, like the worm which gnawed at Jonas's ivy,<sup>8</sup> they have destroyed our virtues. These pests are such evils as self-love, self-esteem, rash judgment of others even in small matters, and a want of charity in not loving our neighbour quite as much as ourselves. Although perforce we satisfy our obligations sufficiently to avoid sin, yet we fall far short of what must be done in order to obtain perfect union with the will of God.

7. What do you think, daughters, is His will? That we may become quite perfect and so be made one with Him and with His Father as He prayed we might be.<sup>9</sup> Observe, then, what is wanting in us to obtain this. I assure you it is most painful for me to write on this subject, for I see how far I am, through my own fault, from having attained perfection. There is no need for us to receive special consolations from God in order to arrive at conformity with His will; He has done enough in giving us His Son to teach the way. This does not mean that we must so submit to the will of God as not to sorrow at such troubles as the death of a father or brother, or that we must bear crosses

<sup>8</sup> Jonas iv. 6, 7: 'And the Lord God prepared an ivy, and it came up over the head of Jonas, to be a shadow over his head, and to cover him, for he was fatigued; and Jonas was exceeding glad of the ivy. But God prepared a worm, when the morning arose on the following day: and it struck the ivy and it withered.'

<sup>9</sup> St. John xvii. 22, 23: 'Ut sint unum, sicut et nos unum sumus. Ego in eis, et tu in me: ut sint consummati in unum.' *Way of Perf.* ch. xxxii. 6.

and sickness with joy.<sup>10</sup> This is well, but it sometimes comes from common sense which, as we cannot help ourselves, makes a virtue of necessity. How often the great wisdom of the heathen philosophers led them to act thus in trials of this kind! Our Lord asks but two things of us: love for Him and for our neighbour: these are what we must strive to obtain. If we practise both these virtues perfectly we shall be doing His will and so shall be united to Him. But, as I said, we are very far from obeying and serving our great Master perfectly in these two matters: may His Majesty give us the grace to merit union with Him; it is in our power to gain it if we will.

8. I think the most certain sign that we keep these two commandments is that we have a genuine love for others. We cannot know whether we love God although there may be strong reasons for thinking so, but there can be no doubt about whether we love our neighbour or no.<sup>11</sup> Be sure that in proportion as you advance in fraternal charity, you are increasing in your love of God,<sup>12</sup> for His Majesty bears so tender an affection for us that I cannot doubt He will repay our love for others by augmenting, in a thousand different ways, that which we bear for Him. We should watch most carefully over ourselves in this matter, for if we are faultless on this point we have done all. I believe human nature is so evil that we could not feel a perfect

<sup>10</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. ix. 1, 2.

<sup>11</sup> 1 St. John iv. 20: 'Qui enim non diligit fratrem suum quem videt, Deum quem non videt quomodo potest diligere?'

<sup>12</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. xviii. 5.

✓ charity for our neighbour unless it were rooted in the love of God.

9. In this most important matter, sisters, we should be most vigilant in little things, taking no notice of the great works we plan during prayer which we imagine that we would perform for other people, even perhaps for the sake of saving a single soul. If our actions afterwards belie these grand schemes, there is no reason to imagine that we should do anything of the sort. I say the same of humility and the other virtues. The devil's wiles are many; he would turn hell upside down a thousand times to make us think ourselves better than we are. He has good reason for it, for such fancies are most injurious; sham virtues springing from this root are always accompanied by a vainglory never found in those of divine origin, which are free from pride.

10. It is amusing to see souls who, while they are at prayer, fancy they are willing to be despised and publicly insulted for the love of God, yet afterwards do all they can to hide their small defects; if any one unjustly accuses them of a fault, God deliver us from their outcries! Let those who cannot bear such things take no notice of the splendid plans they made when alone, which could have been no genuine determination of the will but only some trick of the imagination, or the results would have been very different. The devil assaults and deceives people in this way, often doing great harm to women and others too ignorant to understand the difference between the powers of the soul and the imagination, and a thousand other matters of

the sort. O sisters! how easy it is to know which of you have attained to a sincere love of your neighbour, and which of you are far from it. If you knew the importance of this virtue, your only care would be to gain it.

11. When I see people very anxious to know what sort of prayer they practise, covering their faces and afraid to move or think lest they should lose any slight tenderness and devotion they feel, I know how little they understand how to attain union with God since they think it consists in such things as these. No, sisters, no; our Lord expects *works* from us. If you see a sick sister whom you can relieve,<sup>13</sup> never fear losing your devotion; compassionate her; if she is in pain, feel for it as if it were your own and, when there is need, fast so that she may eat, not so much for her sake as because you know your Lord asks it of you. This is the true union of our will with the will of God. If some one else is well spoken of, be more pleased than if it were yourself; this is easy enough, for if you were really humble it would vex you to be praised. It is a great good to rejoice at your sister's virtues being known and to feel as sorry for the fault you see in her as if it were yours, hiding it from the sight of others.

12. I have often spoken on this subject elsewhere,<sup>14</sup> because, my sisters, if we fail in this I know that all is lost: please God this may never be our case. If you possess fraternal charity, I assure you that you will certainly obtain the union I have described.

<sup>13</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. vii. 4.

<sup>14</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. iv. 3; vii. 4.

If you are conscious that you are wanting in this charity, although you may feel devotion and sweetness and a short absorption in the prayer of quiet (which makes you think you have attained to union with God), believe me you have not yet reached it. Beg our Lord to grant you perfect love for your neighbour, and leave the rest to Him. He will give you more than you know how to desire if you constrain yourselves and strive with all your power to gain it, forcing your will as far as possible to comply in all things with your sisters' wishes although you may sometimes forfeit your own rights by so doing. Forget your self-interests for theirs, however much nature may rebel; when opportunity occurs take some burden upon yourself to ease your neighbour of it. Do not fancy it will cost you nothing and that you will find it all done for you: think what the love He bore for us cost our Spouse, Who to free us from death, Himself suffered the most painful death of all—the death of the Cross.

## CHAPTER IV.

FURTHER EXPLANATION OF THE SAME SUBJECT; EXPLAINS THIS PRAYER. THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING ON ONE'S GUARD, AS THE DEVIL EAGERLY DESIRES TO TURN SOULS BACK FROM THE RIGHT PATH.

1. *The spiritual espousals.* 2. *The prayer of union resembles a betrothal.* 3. *Before the spiritual nuptials temptations are dangerous.* 4. *The great good done by souls faithful to these graces.* 5. *Religious subject to the devil's deceptions.* 6. *Satan's stratagems.* 7. *Why they are permitted.* 8. *Prayer and watchfulness our safeguards.* 9. *God's watchfulness over such souls.* 10. *Progress in virtue.* 11. *Insignificance of our actions compared with their reward.* 12. *St. Teresa's motives for writing on prayer.*

1. You appear anxious to know what has become of the little dove and where she obtains rest, since obviously she can find it neither in spiritual consolations nor in earthly pleasures but takes a higher flight. I cannot tell you until we come to the last mansion: God grant I may remember or have leisure to write it. It is nearly five months since I began this work, and as my head is too weak to read it again, no doubt it will be very disconnected and full of repetitions: however, as it is only for my sisters, that will matter little. Yet I should like to express myself more fully about the prayer of union and will make use, to the best of my scanty wits, of a comparison. Later on we will speak of the little butterfly, which is never still, for it can find no true repose, yet always fertile, doing good both to itself and others.' You have often heard that God spiritually espouses souls: may He be

<sup>1</sup> Compare: 'habebit fructum in respectione animarum sanctarum' (*Breviar. Rom. Ant. ad Laudes de Com. Virg.*); 'quasi apis argumentosa Domino deservisti' (*Ibid.* Feast of St. Cæcilia.)

praised for His mercy in thus humbling Himself so utterly. Though but a homely comparison, yet I can find nothing better to express my meaning than the Sacrament of Matrimony although the two things are very different. In divine union everything is spiritual and far removed from anything corporal, all the joys our Lord gives and the mutual delight felt in it being celestial and very unlike human marriage, which it excels a thousand times. Here all is love united to love; its operations are more pure, refined, and sweet than can be described, though our Lord knows how to make the soul sensible of them.

2. I think this union does not attain as far as the spiritual espousals but resembles the preliminaries that take place when two people are contemplating a betrothal. Their suitability and willingness for the alliance are first discussed; then they may be allowed to see one another sometimes so as to come to a decision. Thus it is in the spiritual espousals: when the preliminary agreement has been made and the soul thoroughly understands what great advantages she will gain, having resolved to fulfil the will of her Spouse in all things and to do all she can to please Him, His Majesty Who knows well whether this is so in reality, wishes in return to gratify His bride. He therefore bestows this favour upon her, visits her and draws her into His presence, as He wishes her to know Him better. We might compare the prayer of union to a visit, for it lasts but a very little while.<sup>2</sup> There is no longer any

<sup>2</sup> *Life*, ch. xviii. 16.

question of deliberation, but the soul in a secret manner sees to what a Bridegroom it is betrothed; the senses and faculties could not, in a thousand years, gain the knowledge thus imparted in a very short time. The Spouse, being Who He is, leaves the soul far more deserving of completing the espousals, as we may call them; the enamoured soul in its love for Him makes every effort to prevent their being frustrated. Should it grow neglectful and set its affections on anything except our Lord, it will forfeit everything: this loss is as great as are the favours the soul has continually received, which are precious beyond description.<sup>3</sup>

3. O Christian souls! you whom God has brought thus far! I implore you for His dear sake not to grow careless, but to avoid all occasions of sin; you are not strong enough yet to undergo temptation, as you will be after the espousals which take place in the next mansion. Here the betrothed are, as they say, only acquainted by sight,<sup>4</sup> and the devil will spare no pains to oppose and prevent their nuptials. Afterwards, when he sees the Bride is wholly given to her Bridegroom, he is afraid to interfere, having learnt by experience that if he molests her, while he loses much, she will gain greatly in merit.

4. I can assure you, my daughters,<sup>5</sup> that I have known people far advanced in the spiritual life who had reached this state of prayer yet whom the devil reclaimed by his subtlety and wiles: as I

<sup>3</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. xxxi. 10.

<sup>4</sup> Phil. a SS. Trinit. *l.c.* p. iii. tract. i. disc. ii. art. 2.

<sup>5</sup> Contrast with this paragraph what the Saint says in her *Life*, ch. xix. § 8.



have often said, all hell leagues together against such souls because the loss of one of them entails the perdition of many more, as Satan is well aware. If we considered how many men God draws to Himself by means of one, we should praise Him fervently. Think of the multitudes converted by the martyrs or by one young maiden like St. Ursula! Again, of how many victims the evil one was deprived by St. Dominic, St. Francis, and other founders of religious orders. How many more he loses, even now, through Father Ignatius [Loyola], who founded the Company [of Jesus]! As we read their lives, we learn that they received such graces from God. How was this great good done except by their efforts not to forfeit, through any fault of theirs, these divine espousals? Oh, my daughters, how willing our Lord is to grant us the same graces! In fact, there is even more urgent need now for persons to prepare for such favours, since there are fewer who care for His honour. We love ourselves too much and are too prudent to give up any of our rights. What a deception! May God in His mercy give us light, lest we sink into such darkness.

5. You may question or be in doubt on two points. Firstly: if the soul is entirely united with the will of God, as I have stated, how can it be deceived, since it ever seeks to follow His pleasure? Secondly, how can the devil enter and work such havoc as to destroy your soul while you are so utterly withdrawn from the world and constantly frequent the Sacraments?<sup>6</sup> At the same time you enjoy the society

<sup>6</sup> *Lijè*, ch. xxxvi. 26 ; xxxix. 14. *Found.* ch. i. 1-4.

of angels (as we might call them) and by the mercy of God you desire nothing but to serve and please Him in all things?<sup>7</sup> It is not surprising that people in the world should run such risks. I admit you have the right to say this, for God has shown us signal mercy; but, as I said above, knowing as I do that Judas was amongst the Apostles and that he held constant intercourse with God Himself, to Whose words he listened, I learn that the state of religion does not make us safe.

6. To your first question I reply that doubtless if such a soul is always faithful to the will of God, it cannot be lost; the evil one, however, comes with his keen subtlety and, under the pretext of good, leads it astray in some trivial matter and causes it to commit small defects which he makes it believe are harmless. Thus, little by little, the reason is obscured and the will is weakened while the devil fosters his victim's self-love, until, by degrees, he succeeds in withdrawing it from union with the will of God and makes it follow its own will.

7. The answer to your first inquiry will serve for the second. No enclosure can be too strict for Satan to enter nor any desert too remote for him to visit. Besides, God may permit him to tempt the soul to prove its virtue; for as He intends it to enlighten others, it is better for it to fail in the beginning than when it might do them great harm.

8. We must beg God constantly in our prayers to uphold us by His hand; we should keep ever in our minds the truth that if He leaves us, most

<sup>7</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. i. 2; xiii. 5. *Found.* ch. i. 3.

certainly we shall fall at once into the abyss, for we must never be so foolish as to trust in ourselves. After this I think the greatest safeguard is to be very careful and to watch how we advance in virtue; we must notice whether we are making progress or falling back in it, especially as regards the love of our neighbour, the desire to be thought the least of all and how we perform our ordinary, everyday duties. If we attend to this and beg Our Lord to enlighten us, we shall at once perceive our gain or loss.

9. Do not suppose that after advancing the soul to such a state God abandons it so easily that it is light work for the devil to regain it. When His Majesty sees it leaving Him, He feels the loss so keenly that He gives it in many a way a thousand secret warnings which reveal to it the hidden danger.<sup>8</sup>

10. In conclusion, let us strive to make constant progress: we ought to feel great alarm if we do not find ourselves advancing, for without doubt the evil one must be planning to injure us in some way; it is impossible for a soul that has come to this state not to go still farther, for love is never idle. Therefore it is a very bad sign when one comes to a stand-still in virtue. She who aspires to become the spouse of God Himself, and has treated with His Majesty and come to such an understanding with Him, must not leave off and go to sleep.<sup>9</sup>

11. To show you, my daughters, how Christ treats the souls He takes for His brides, I will now speak

<sup>8</sup> *Life*, ch. xix. 9.

<sup>9</sup> *Life*, ch. xix. 7.

of the sixth mansions. You will then see how little in comparison is all that we can do or suffer in His service to prepare ourselves for the reception of such immense favours. Perhaps our Lord decreed that I should write this in order that the knowledge of the great reward to come, and of His infinite mercy in seeking to give and to manifest Himself to such worms as we are, might make us forget our wretched, petty, earthly pleasures and run on our way with eyes fixed on His grandeur, inflamed with love for Him.

12. May He enable me to explain some of these difficult matters; if our Lord and the Holy Ghost do not guide my pen, I know the task will prove impossible. I beg Him to prevent my saying anything unless it will profit you. His Majesty knows that, as far as I can judge, I have no other wish but that His Name may be glorified and that we may strive to serve a Lord Who thus recompenses our efforts even in this world. What, then, will be our joy in heaven where it will be continuous, without the interruptions, labours, and dangers of this tempestuous sea of life? Were it not for the fear of losing or offending Him, we should wish to live until the end of the world<sup>10</sup> in order to work for so great a God—our Lord and our Spouse. May His Majesty enable us to render Him some service free from the many faults we always commit, even in good works! Amen.

<sup>10</sup> *Rel.* ix. 19.

## THE SIXTH MANSIONS

### CHAPTER I.

THIS CHAPTER SHOWS HOW, WHEN GOD BESTOWS GREATER FAVOURS ON THE SOUL, IT SUFFERS MORE SEVERE AFFLICTIONS. SOME OF THE LATTER ARE DESCRIBED AND DIRECTIONS HOW TO BEAR THEM GIVEN TO THE DWELLERS IN THIS MANSION. THIS CHAPTER IS USEFUL FOR THOSE SUFFERING INTERIOR TRIALS.

1. *Love kindled by divine favours.* 2. *Our Lord excites the soul's longings.* 3. *Courage needed to reach the last mansions.* 4. *Trials accompanying divine favours.* 5. *Outcry raised against souls striving for perfection.* 6. *St. Teresa's personal experience of this.* 7. *Praise distasteful to an enlightened soul.* 8. *This changes to indifference.* 9. *Humility of such souls.* 10. *Their zeal for God's glory.* 11. *Perfect and final indifference to praise or blame.* 12. *Love of enemies.* 13. *Bodily sufferings.* 14. *St. Teresa's physical ills.* 15. *A timorous confessor.* 16. *Anxiety on account of past sins.* 17. *Fears and aridity.* 18. *Scruples and fears raised by the devil.* 19. *Bewilderment of the soul.* 20. *God alone relieves these troubles.* 21. *Human weakness.* 22. *Earthly consolations are of no avail.* 23. *Prayer gives no comfort at such a time.* 24. *Remedies for these interior trials.* 25. *Trials caused by the devil.* 26. *Other afflictions.* 27. *Preparatory to entering the seventh mansions.*

1. BY the aid of the Holy Ghost I am now about to treat of the sixth mansions, where the soul, wounded with love for its Spouse, sighs more than ever for solitude, withdrawing as far as the duties of its state permit from all that can interrupt it.

The sight it has enjoyed of Him is so deeply imprinted on the spirit that its only desire is to behold Him again. I have already said that,<sup>1</sup> even by the imagination, nothing is seen in this prayer that can be called sight. I speak of it as 'sight' because of the comparison I used.

2. The soul is now determined to take no other Bridegroom than our Lord, but He disregards its desires for its speedy espousals, wishing that these longings should become still more vehement and that this good, which far excels all other benefits, should be purchased at some cost to itself. And although for so great a gain all that we must endure is but a poor price to pay, I assure you, daughters, that this pledge of what is in store for us is needed to inspire us with courage to bear our crosses.

3. O my God, how many troubles both interior and exterior must one suffer before entering the seventh mansions! Sometimes, while pondering over this I fear that, were they known beforehand, human infirmity could scarcely bear the thought nor resolve to encounter them, however great might appear the gain. If, however, the soul has already reached the seventh mansions, it fears nothing: boldly undertaking to suffer all things for God,<sup>2</sup> it gathers strength from its almost uninterrupted union with Him.

4. I think it would be well to tell you of some of the trials certain to occur in this state. Possibly all souls may not be led in this way, but I think that those who sometimes enjoy such truly heavenly

<sup>1</sup> *Castle*, M. v. ch. i. 9. *Life*, ch. xxviii. 5.

<sup>2</sup> *Life*, ch. xl. 28. *sqq.*

favours cannot be altogether free from some sort of earthly troubles. Therefore, although at first I did not intend to speak on this subject, yet afterwards I thought that it might greatly comfort a soul in this condition if it knew what usually happens to those on whom God bestows graces of this kind, for at the time they really seem to have lost everything.

5. I shall not enumerate these trials in their proper order, but will describe them as they come to my memory, beginning with the least severe. This is an outcry raised against such a person by those amongst whom she lives, and even from others she has nothing to do with but who fancy that at some time in her life they recollect having seen her. They say she wants to pass for a saint, that she goes to extremes in piety to deceive the world and to depreciate people who are better Christians than herself without making such a parade of it. But notice that she does nothing except endeavour to carry out the duties of her state more perfectly. Persons she thought were her friends desert her, making the most bitter remarks of all. They take it much to heart that her soul is ruined—she is manifestly deluded—it is all the devil's work—she will share the fate of so-and-so who was lost through him, and she is leading virtue astray. They cry out that she is deceiving her confessors, and tell them so, citing examples of others who came to ruin in the same way and make a thousand scoffing remarks of the same sort.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> The Saint went through all this herself; every detail is taken from her own experience. See *Life*, ch. xxv. 20; xxviii. 20-24; xxx. 6; xxxiii. 2. Anton, a Sp. S. *l.c.* tract. ii. n. 268.

6. I know some one who feared she would be unable to find any priest who would hear her confession, to such a pass did things come; but as it is a long story, I will not stop to tell it now. The worst of it is, these troubles do not blow over but last all her life, for one person warns the other to have nothing to do with people of her kind. You will say that, on the other hand, some speak in her favour. O my daughters, how few think well of her in comparison with the many who hate her!

7. Besides this, praise pains such a soul more than blame because it recognizes clearly that any good it possesses is the gift of God and in no wise its own, seeing that but a short time ago it was weak in virtue and involved in grave sins.<sup>4</sup> Therefore commendation causes it intolerable suffering, at least at first, although later on, for many reasons, the soul is comparatively indifferent to either.

8. The first is that experience has shown the mind that men are as ready to speak well as ill of others, so it attaches no more importance to the one than to the other. Secondly, our Lord having granted it greater light, it perceives that no good thing in it is its own but is His gift, and becomes oblivious of self, praising God for His graces as if they were found in a third person.

9. The third reason is that, realizing the benefit reaped by others from witnessing graces given it by God, such a one thinks that it is for their profit He causes them to discover in her virtues that do not exist.

<sup>4</sup> *Life*, ch. xxviii. 19.



10. Fourthly, souls seeking God's honour and glory more than their own are cured of the temptation (which usually besets beginners) of thinking that human praise will cause them the injury they have seen it do to others. Nor do these souls care much for men's contempt if only, by their means, any one should praise God at least once—come what may afterwards.

11. These and other reasons to a certain extent allay the great distress formerly given by human praise which, however, still causes some discomfort unless the soul has become utterly regardless of men's tongues. It is infinitely more grieved at being undeservedly esteemed by the world than by any calumny; and when at last it becomes almost indifferent to praise, it cares still less for censure, which even pleases it and sounds like harmonious music to the ears.

12. This is perfectly true; the soul is rather strengthened than depressed by its trials, experience having taught it the great advantages derived from them. It does not think men offend God by persecuting it, but that He permits them to do so for its greater gain.<sup>5</sup> So strong is this belief that such a person bears a special affection for these people, holding them as truer friends and greater benefactors than those who speak well of her.<sup>6</sup>

13. Our Lord now usually sends severe bodily infirmity. This is a far heavier cross, especially if acute pain is felt: if this is violent, I think it is the

<sup>5</sup> *Rel.* ii. 4.

<sup>6</sup> Anton. a Sp. S. *l.c.* ii. n. 272. *Way of Perf.* ch. xv. 1; xvii. 4. *Found.* ch. xxvii. 19, 20. *Life*, ch. xix. 12; xxxi. 13-17, 25.

hardest of earthly trials. I speak of exterior trials; but corporal pains if of the worst kind enter the interior of our being also, affecting both spirit and body, so that the soul in its anguish knows not what to do with itself and would far rather meet death at once by some quick martyrdom than suffer thus. However, these paroxysms do not last long, for God never sends us more than we can bear and always gives us patience first.

14. Now to speak of other trials and illnesses of many kinds which generally occur to people in this state. I knew some one who, from the time when, forty years ago,<sup>7</sup> our Lord began to bestow on her the favour described, could not affirm with any truth that she had been a single day without pain and other kinds of suffering: I am speaking of physical infirmities besides heavy crosses sent her.<sup>8</sup> True, she had led a wicked life and therefore held these troubles very light in comparison with the hell she had deserved.<sup>9</sup> Our Lord leads those who have offended Him less by some other way, but I should always choose the way of suffering, if only for the sake of imitating our Lord Jesus Christ; though, in fact, it profits us in many other manners. Yet, oh! the rest would seem trifling in comparison could I relate the interior torments met with here, but they are impossible to describe.

15. Let us first speak of the trial of meeting with so timorous and inexperienced a confessor that

<sup>7</sup> 'Forty years ago.' The Saint seems to refer to her first experience in the mystical life, which took place during her illness in the winter of 1537-38. See *Life*, ch. iv. 9.

<sup>8</sup> *Life*, ch. iv. 6; v; vi; vii. 18; xi. 23; xxx. 9.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* ch. iii. 6, 7.

✓  
imitating

nothing seems safe to him; he dreads and suspects everything but the commonplace, especially in a soul in which he detects any imperfection, for he thinks people on whom God bestows such favours must be angels, which is impossible while we live in our bodies.<sup>10</sup> He at once ascribes everything to the devil or melancholy. As to the latter, I am not surprised; there is so much of it in the world and the evil one works such harm in this way that confessors have the strongest reasons for anxiety and watchfulness about it.

16. The poor soul, beset by the same fears, seeks its confessor as judge, and feels a torture and dismay at his condemnation that can only be realized by those who have experienced it themselves.<sup>11</sup> For one of the severe trials of these souls, especially if they have lived wicked lives, is their belief that God permits them to be deceived in punishment for their sins. While actually receiving these graces they feel secure and cannot but suppose that these favours proceed from the Spirit of God; but this state lasts a very short time, while the remembrance of their misdeeds is ever before them, so that when, as is sure to happen, they discover any faults in themselves, these torturing thoughts return.<sup>12</sup>

17. The soul is quieted for a time when the confessor reassures it although it returns later on to its former apprehensions, but when he augments its fears they become almost unbearable. Especially is this the case when such spiritual dryness ensues

<sup>10</sup> *Life*, ch. xiii. 21-27. *Way of Perf.* ch. v. 1, 2.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, ch. xxx. 15.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, ch. xxxviii. 21. *Rel.* ii. 15.

that the mind feels as if it never had thought of God nor ever will be able to do so. When men speak of Him, they seem to be talking of some person heard of long ago.

18. All this is nothing without the further pain of thinking we cannot make our confessors understand the case and are deceiving them.<sup>13</sup> Although such a person may examine her conscience with the greatest care, and may know that she reveals even the first movement of her mind to her director, it does not help her. Her understanding being too obscure to discern the truth, she believes all that the imagination, which now has the upper hand, puts before her mind, besides crediting the falsehoods suggested to her by the devil, whom doubtless our Lord gives leave to tempt her. The evil spirit even tries to make her think God has rejected her. Many are the trials which assault this soul, causing an internal anguish so painful and so intolerable that I can compare it to nothing save that suffered by the lost in hell, for no comfort can be found in this tempest of trouble.<sup>14</sup>

19. If the soul seeks for consolation from its confessor, all the demons appear to help him to torment it more. A confessor who dealt with a person suffering in this manner thought that her state must be very dangerous as so many things were troubling her; therefore, after she had recovered from her trials, he bade her tell him whenever they

<sup>13</sup> *Life*, ch. xxviii. 20 *sqq.*

<sup>14</sup> Anton. a Sp. S. *l.c.* tr. ii. n. 313. On this subject which is commonly called the passive purgation of the intellect, it would be advisable to consult some good author such as Philippus a SS. Trinitate, *l.c.* part. i. tr. iii. disc. iii.-v., especially disc. iv. art. 5, 6.

recurred: however, he found this made matters worse than ever. She lost all control over herself: although she had learnt to read, yet she could no more understand a book in the vulgar tongue than if she had not known the alphabet, for her mind was incapable of acting.<sup>15</sup>

20. In short, there is no other remedy in such a tempest except to wait for the mercy of God Who, unexpectedly, by some casual word or unforeseen circumstance, suddenly dispels all these sorrows; then every cloud of trouble disappears and the mind is left full of light and far happier than before.<sup>16</sup> It praises our Lord God like one who has come out victorious from a dangerous battle, for it was He Who won the victory. The soul is fully conscious that the conquest was not its own as all weapons of self-defence appeared to be in the enemies' hands. Thus it realizes its weakness and how little man can help himself if God forsake him.

21. This truth now needs no demonstration, for past experience has taught the soul its utter incapacity; it realizes the nothingness of human nature and what miserable creatures we are. Although in a state of grace from which it has not fallen—for, in spite of these torments, it has not offended God, nor would it do so for any earthly thing<sup>17</sup>—yet so hidden is this grace, that the sufferer believes that neither now, nor in the past, has she ever possessed the faintest spark of love for God.<sup>18</sup> If at any time she has done good, or if His Majesty ever bestowed

<sup>15</sup> *Life*, ch. xxv. 21.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.* ch. xxv. 23.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.* ch. xxiv. 3. *Way of Perf.* ch. xli. 5. *Castle*, M. vii. ch. iv. 1.

<sup>18</sup> *Excl.* xvi. 4.

any favours on her, they seem to have been but a dream or a fancy, while her sins stand clearly before her.

22. O Jesus! how sad it is to see a soul thus forsaken, and how little, as I said, can any earthly comfort avail! Do not imagine, sisters, if you are ever brought to such a state, that rich and independent people have more resources than yourselves in these troubles. No, no! to offer such consolations would be like setting all the joys of the world before people condemned to death: far from mitigating, it would increase their torture. So with the souls I spoke of: their comfort must come from above—nothing earthly can help them. This great God wishes us to acknowledge His sovereignty and our own misery—an important point for those who are to advance still farther.

23. What can the poor soul do if such a trial lasts for many days? Prayer makes no difference as far as comforting the heart, which no consolation can enter, nor can the mind even grasp the meaning of the words of vocal prayer: mental prayer is out of the question at such a time, since the faculties are unequal to it. Solitude harms the soul, yet society or conversation is a fresh torment. Strive as the sufferer may to hide it, she is so wearied and out of sorts with all around that she cannot but manifest her condition.

24. How can the soul possibly tell what ails it? Its pains are indescribable; it is wrung with nameless anguish and spiritual suffering. The best remedy for these crosses (I do not mean for gaining deliver-

ance from them, for I know of nothing that will do that, but for enabling one to bear them) is to perform external works of charity and to trust in the mercy of God, which never fails those who hope in Him.<sup>19</sup> May He be for ever blessed ! Amen

25. The devils also bring about exterior trials which being more unusual need not be mentioned. They are far less painful, for whatever the demons may do, I believe they never succeed in paralysing the faculties or disturbing the soul in the former manner. In fact, the reason is able to discern that the evil spirits can do no more harm than God permits; and while the mind has not lost its powers, all sufferings are comparatively insignificant.

26. I shall treat of other internal afflictions met with in this mansion when describing the different kinds of prayer and favours bestowed here by our Lord. Although some of these latter pains are harder to endure, as appears by their bodily effects, yet they do not deserve the name of crosses, nor have we the right to call them so. Indeed, they are great graces from God as the soul recognizes amidst its pangs, realizing how far it is from meriting such graces.

27. This severe torture felt by souls just at the entrance of the seventh mansion is accompanied by many other sufferings, some of which I will mention: to speak of them all would be impossible, nor could I portray them because they come from another and far higher source than the rest. If I have succeeded so ill in writing of trials of a lower kind, much less could I treat of the others. May

<sup>19</sup> *Life*, ch. xxxi. 27.

God assist me in all things, through the merits of His Son! Amen.

## CHAPTER II.

TREATS OF SEVERAL WAYS WHEREBY OUR LORD QUICKENS THE SOUL; THERE APPEARS NO CAUSE FOR ALARM IN THEM ALTHOUGH THEY ARE SIGNAL FAVOURS OF A VERY EXALTED NATURE.

1. *Our Lord excites the love of His spouse.*
2. *The wound of love.*
3. *The pain it causes.*
4. *The call of the Bridegroom.*
5. *Effect on the soul.*
6. *A spark of the fire of love.*
7. *The spark dies out.*
8. *This grace evidently divine.*
9. *One such wound repays many trials.*
10. *First reason of immunity from deception.*
11. *Second and third reasons.*
12. *The imagination not concerned in it.*
13. *St. Teresa never alarmed at this prayer.*
14. *'The odour of Thine ointment.'*
15. *No reason to fear deception here.*

1. IT seems as if we had deserted the little dove for a long time, but this is not the case, for these past trials cause her to take a far higher flight. I will now describe the way in which the Spouse treats her before uniting her entirely to Himself. He increases her longing for Him by devices so delicate that the soul itself cannot discern them; nor do I think I could explain them except to people who have personally experienced them. These desires are delicate and subtle impulses springing from the inmost depths of the soul; I know of nothing to which they can be compared.

2. These graces differ entirely from anything we ourselves can gain, and even from the spiritual consolation before described.<sup>1</sup> In the present case, even when the mind is not recollected or even thinking of God, although no sound is heard, His

<sup>1</sup> Mansion iv. ch. i. *Life*, ch. xxix. 10-15. *Rel.* ch. viii. 15.



Majesty arouses it suddenly as if by a swiftly flashing comet or by a clap of thunder.<sup>2</sup> Yet the soul thus called by God hears Him well enough—so well, indeed, that sometimes, especially at first, it trembles and even cries out, although it feels no pain. It is conscious of having received a delicious wound but cannot discover how, nor who gave it, yet recognizes it as a most precious grace and hopes the hurt will never heal.

3. The soul makes amorous complaints to its Bridegroom, even uttering them aloud; nor can it control itself, knowing that though He is present He will not manifest Himself so that it may enjoy Him. This causes a pain, keen although sweet and delicious from which the soul could not escape even if it wished; but this it never desires.<sup>3</sup> This favour is more delightful than the pleasing absorption of the faculties in the prayer of quiet which is unaccompanied by suffering.<sup>4</sup>

4. I am at my wits' end, sisters, as to how to make you understand this operation of love: I know not how to do so. It seems contradictory to say that the Beloved clearly shows He dwells in the soul and calls by so unmistakable a sign and a summons so penetrating, that the spirit cannot choose but hear it, while He appears to reside in the seventh mansion. He speaks in this manner, which is not a set form of speech, and the inhabitants of the other

<sup>2</sup> The saint first wrote 'relampago,' flash of lightning, but afterwards altered it to 'trueno,' clap of thunder.

<sup>3</sup> *Rel.* viii. 16. St. John of the Cross, *Spiritual Cant.* st. i. 22 *sqq.* *Poems* 7, 8.

<sup>4</sup> *Life*, ch. xxix. 18.

mansions, the senses, the imagination and the faculties, dare not stir.<sup>5</sup>

5. O Almighty God! how profound are Thy secrets and how different are spiritual matters from anything that can be seen or heard in this world! I can find nothing to which to liken these graces, insignificant as they are compared with many others Thou dost bestow on souls. This favour acts so strongly upon the spirit that it is consumed by desires yet knows not what to ask, for it realizes clearly that its God is with it. You may inquire, if it realizes this so clearly, what more does it desire and why is it pained? What greater good can it seek? I cannot tell: I know that this suffering seems to pierce the very heart, and when He Who wounded it draws out the dart He seems to draw the heart out too, so deep is the love it feels.<sup>6</sup>

6. I have been thinking that God might be likened to a burning furnace<sup>7</sup> from which a small spark flies into the soul that feels the heat of this great fire, which, however, is insufficient to consume it. The sensation is so delightful that the spirit lingers in the pain produced by its contact. This seems to me the best comparison I can find, for the pain is delicious and is not really pain at all, nor does it always continue in the same degree; sometimes it lasts for a long time; on other occasions it passes quickly. This is as God chooses, for no human means can obtain it; and though felt at times for a long while, yet it is intermittent.

<sup>5</sup> *Life*, ch. xv. 1.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* ch. xxix. 17, 18.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* ch. xv. 6; xviii. 4; xxi. 9.

7. In fact it is never permanent and therefore does not wholly inflame the spirit; but when the soul is ready to take fire, the little spark suddenly dies out, leaving the heart longing to suffer anew its loving pangs. No grounds exist for thinking this comes from any natural cause or from melancholy, or that it is an illusion of the devil or the imagination. Undoubtedly this movement of the heart comes from God Who is unchangeable; nor do its effects resemble those of other devotions in which the strong absorption of delight makes us doubt their reality.

8. There is no suspension here of the senses or other faculties: they wonder at what is happening, without impeding it. Nor do I think that they can either increase or dispel this delightful pain. Any one who has received this favour from our Lord will understand my meaning on reading this: let her thank Him fervently: there is no need to fear deception but far more fear of not being sufficiently grateful for so signal a grace. Let her endeavour to serve Him and to amend her life in every respect; then she will see what will follow and how she will obtain still higher and higher gifts.

9. A person on whom this grace was bestowed passed several years without receiving any other favour, yet was perfectly satisfied, for even had she served God for very many years in the midst of severe trials, she would have felt abundantly repaid. May He be for ever blessed! Amen.

10. Perhaps you wonder why we may feel more secure against deception concerning this favour

than in other cases. I think it is for these reasons. Firstly, because the devil cannot give such delicious pain; he may cause pleasure or delight which appears spiritual but is unable to add suffering, especially suffering of so keen a sort, united to peace and joy of soul. His power is limited to what is external; suffering produced by him is never accompanied with peace, but with anxieties and struggles. ✓

11. Secondly, because this welcome storm comes from no region over which Satan has control. ✓ Thirdly, because of the great benefits left in the soul which, as a rule, is resolute to suffer for God and longs to bear many crosses. It is also far more determined than before to withdraw from worldly pleasures and intercourse and other things of the same sort. ✓

12. It is very clear that this is no fiction: the imagination may counterfeit some favours but not this, which is too manifest to leave room for doubt. Should any one still remain uncertain, let her know that hers were not genuine impulses;<sup>8</sup> that is, if she is dubious as to whether or no she experienced them, for they are as certainly perceived by the soul as is a loud voice by the ears. It is impossible for these experiences to proceed from melancholy whose whims arise and exist only in the imagination, whereas this emotion comes from the interior of the soul.

13. I may be mistaken, but I shall not change my opinion until I hear reasons to the contrary from

<sup>8</sup> *Life*, ch. xv. 15, 16.

those who understand these matters. I know some one who has always greatly dreaded such deceptions, yet could never bring herself to feel any alarm about this state of prayer.<sup>9</sup>

14. Our Lord also uses other means of rousing the soul; for instance—when reciting vocal prayer without seeking to penetrate the sense, a person may be seized with a delightful fervour<sup>10</sup> as if suddenly encompassed with a fragrance powerful enough to diffuse itself through all the senses. I do not assert that there really is any perfume but use this comparison because it somewhat resembles the manner by which the Spouse makes His presence understood, moving the soul to a delicious desire of enjoying Him and thus disposing it to heroic acts, and causing it to render Him fervent praise.

15. This favour springs from the same source as the former, but causes no suffering here, nor are the soul's longings to enjoy God painful: this is what is more usually experienced by the soul. For the reasons already given there appears no cause here for fear, but rather for receiving it with thanksgiving.

<sup>9</sup> *Life*, ch. xxix. 6-10.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.* ch. xv. 12. On the matter treated by St. Teresa in this chapter, compare St. John of the Cross, *Spiritual Canticle*, stanza i. (*circa finem*), stanza ix.; *The Living Flame of Love*, stanza ii.

## INTRODUCTORY NOTE TO CHAPTER III.

BY THE EDITOR

THE readers, especially those not well acquainted with Scholastic philosophy, will, perhaps, be glad to find here a short explanation of the various kinds of Vision and Locution, Corporal, Imaginary, and Intellectual. The senses of Taste, Touch, and Smell are not so often affected by mystical phenomena, but what we are about to say in respect of Sight and Hearing applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to these also.

I. A CORPORAL VISION is when one sees a bodily object. A Corporal Locution is when one hears words uttered by a human tongue. In both cases the respective senses are exercising their normal function, and the phenomenon differs from ordinary seeing or hearing merely by the fact that in the latter the object seen is a real body, the words perceived come from a real tongue, whereas in the Vision or Locution the object is either only apparent or at any rate is not such as it seems to be. Thus, when young Tobias set out on a journey, his companion, Azarias, was not a real human being, but an archangel in human form. Tobias did really see and hear him, and felt the grip of his hand; Sara and her parents, as well as Tobias's parents, saw and heard him too, but all the time the archangel made himself visible and audible by means of an assumed body, or perhaps of an apparent body. It would be more correct to describe such a phenomenon as an APPARITION than as a Vision, and in fact the apparitions of our Risen Lord to the holy women and the apostles belong to this category. For, though His was a real body, it was glorified and therefore no longer subject to the same laws which govern purely human things. (St. Thomas, *Summa theol.* III., qu. 54, art. 1-3).

St. Teresa tells us more than once that she never

beheld a Corporal Vision, nor heard a Corporal Locution.

II. AN IMAGINARY VISION OR LOCUTION is one where nothing is seen or heard by the senses of seeing or hearing, but where the same impression is received that would be produced upon the imagination by the senses if some real object were perceived by them. For, according to the Scholastics, the Imagination stands half-way between the senses and the intellect, receiving impressions from the former and transmitting them to the latter. This is the reason why imaginary Visions and Locutions are so dangerous that, according to St. Teresa, St. John of the Cross, and other spiritual writers, they should not only never be sought for, but as much as possible shunned and under all circumstances discountenanced. For the Imagination is closely connected with the Memory, so that it is frequently impossible to ascertain whether a Vision, etc., is not perhaps a semi-conscious or unconscious reproduction of scenes witnessed. It is here also that deception, wilful or unwilful, self-deception or deception by a higher agency, is to be feared. Hence the general rule that such Visions or Locutions should only be trusted upon the strongest grounds. According to St. Thomas Aquinas, (*Summa theol. IIa IIæ*, qu. 175, art. 3 ad 4) the visions of Isaias, St. John in the Apocalypse etc., were Imaginary.

As an example of Imaginary Visions we may mention St. Stephen, who saw 'the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God'; or St. Peter, who saw 'the heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending, as it were a great linen sheet, let down by the four corners from heaven to the earth . . . and there came a voice to him: Arise, Peter, kill and eat.' (Acts, vii. 55; x. 11-13).

These Visions, Locutions, etc., are not hallucinations. The latter are due to physical disorder which affects the memory and causes it to represent impressions formerly received by it, in a disorderly and often grotesque manner. The Imaginary Vision takes place independently of a

morbid state, is caused by an extraneous power, good or evil, and has for its object things of which the memory neither has nor ever has had cognizance.

III. AN INTELLECTUAL VISION OR LOCUTION is one where nothing is seen or heard by the eyes and ears, and where no sensation is received by the imagination. But the impression which would be delivered by the imagination to the intellect, had it come through the senses and been handed on to the imagination, is directly imprinted upon the intellect. To understand this it is necessary to bear in mind that the impressions we receive through the senses must undergo a transformation—must be spiritualized—before they reach the intellect. This is one of the most difficult problems of psychology; none of the solutions offered by various schools of philosophy seem to render it entirely free from obscurity. According to St. Thomas Aquinas, the impression received by the eye (*Species sensibilis*) is spiritualized by a faculty called *Intellectus agens* by means of abstraction (*Species impressa*), and is treasured up in the memory, like lantern slides, available at demand. The mind, identifying itself with the *Species impressa*, produces the 'Word of the mind' (*Verbum mentis*), wherein consists the act of Understanding or Mental Conception. In the Intellectual Vision or Locution, God, without co-operation on the part of the senses, the imagination, or the memory, produces directly on the mind the *Species impressa*. As this is supernatural with regard to its origin, and often also with respect to its object, it stands to reason that it is too exalted for the memory to receive it, so that such Visions and Locutions are frequently only imperfectly remembered and sometimes altogether forgotten, as St. Teresa tells us. On the other hand they are far less dangerous than Corporal or Imaginary Visions and Locutions, because the senses and imagination have nothing to do with them, whilst evil spirits are unable to act directly upon the mind, and self-deception is altogether excluded for the reasons stated by St. Teresa.



An instance of such a vision is mentioned by St. Paul : 'I know a man in Christ above fourteen years ago (whether in the body I know not, or out of the body I know not : God knoweth), such an one rapt even to the third heaven. And I know such a man (whether in the body or out of the body, I know not : God knoweth) : that he was caught up into paradise, and heard secret words, which it is not granted to man to utter' (2 Cor. xii 2-4).

### CHAPTER III.

TREATS OF THE SAME SUBJECT AND OF THE WAY GOD IS SOMETIMES PLEASED TO SPEAK TO THE SOUL. HOW WE SHOULD BEHAVE IN SUCH A CASE, IN WHICH WE MUST NOT FOLLOW OUR OWN OPINION. GIVES SIGNS TO SHOW HOW TO DISCOVER WHETHER THIS FAVOUR IS A DECEPTION OR NOT: THIS IS VERY NOTEWORTHY.

1. Locutions. 2. Sometimes caused by melancholia. 3. Caution needed at first. 4. Locutions frequently occur during prayer. 5. Resist those containing false doctrine. 6. First sign of genuine locutions. 7. Effect of the words: 'Be not troubled.' 8. 'It is I, be not afraid.' 9. 'Be at peace.' 10. Second sign. 11. Third sign. 12. The devil suggests doubts about true locutions. 13. Confidence of the soul rewarded. 14. Its joy at seeing God's words verified. 15. Its zeal for God's honour. 16. Locutions coming from the fancy. 17. Imaginary answers given to prayer. 18. A confessor should be consulted about locutions. 19. Interior locutions. 20. First sign of genuine interior locutions. 21. Second sign. 22. Third sign. 23. Fourth sign. 24. Fifth sign. 25. Results of true locutions. 26. They should remove alarm. 27. Answer to an objection.

I. GOD arouses the soul in another manner which, though in some ways apparently a greater favour than the above mentioned, yet may prove more dangerous, therefore I will give some particulars about it. He does this by means of words addressed to the soul in many different ways; sometimes they appear to come from without; at other times

from the inner depths of the soul; or again, from its superior part; while other speeches are so exterior as to be heard by the ears like a real voice.

2. At times, indeed very often, this may be only a fancy; especially with persons of a lively imagination or who are afflicted with melancholy to any marked extent. I think that no attention should be paid to either class of people when they say they see, hear, or learn anything supernaturally. Do not disturb them by saying that it comes from the devil,<sup>1</sup> but listen to them as if they were sick persons. Let the prioress or confessor to whom they tell their story bid them think no more of it as such matters are not essential in the service of God: the devil has deceived many Christians thus, although perhaps it is not so in their case; therefore they need not trouble themselves about it. Thus we must accomodate ourselves to their humour: if we tell them their fancies proceed from melancholia, there will be no end to the matter, for they will persist in maintaining they have seen and heard these things, for so it seems to them.

3. The truth is, care should be taken to keep such people from too much prayer and to persuade them, as far as possible, to take no notice of their fancies: the devil makes use of these weak souls to injure others, even if they themselves escape unhurt. There is need for caution both with feeble and strong souls at first, until it is certain from what spirit these things proceed. I maintain that, in the beginning, it is always wiser to resist these

<sup>1</sup> *Life*, ch. xxiii. 114.

communications; if they come from God this is the best way to receive more, for they increase when discouraged. At the same time the soul should not be too strictly controlled or disquieted, for it cannot help itself in the matter.

4. To return to discuss the words addressed to the soul: any kind I mentioned may come either from God, the devil, or the imagination. By the help of God I will endeavour to describe the signs distinguishing the one from the other, and when these locutions are dangerous, for they occur to many persons who practise prayer. I do not wish you to think, sisters, that there is any harm either in believing or in disregarding them. When they only console you, or warn you of your faults, it matters not whence they come or whether they are only fancies.

5. I caution you on one point—although they may come from God, you must not esteem yourself more highly, for He often spoke to the Pharisees<sup>2</sup>—all the good consists in profiting by His words. Take no more notice of any speeches you hear which disagree with the Holy Scriptures than if you heard them from Satan himself. Though they may only rise from your vivid imagination, look upon them as a temptation against the faith. Always resist them; then they will leave you, and cease, for they have little strength of their own.<sup>3</sup>

6. Now let us return to the first point—whether these communications come from the inferior or

<sup>2</sup> Antonius a Sp. S. *l.c.* tr. iii. n. 323. St. John of the Cross, *Ascent of Mount Carmel*, bk. ii. ch. xxvii.

<sup>3</sup> *Life*, ch. xxv. 13, 18.

the superior part of the soul, or from without, does not affect their originating from God.

7. In my opinion these are the most certain signs of their being divine. The first and truest is the power and authority they carry with them, for these words are operative.<sup>4</sup> For example: a soul is suffering all the sorrow and disquiet I have described: the mind is darkened and dry; but it is set at peace, freed from all trouble and filled with light merely by hearing the words: 'Be not troubled.' These deliver it from all its pains, although it felt as though, if the whole world and all its theologians had united in trying to persuade it there was no cause for grief, it could not, in spite of all their efforts, have been delivered from its affliction.<sup>5</sup>

8. Again, a person is troubled and greatly terrified at being told by her confessor and other people that her soul is under the influence of the evil one: she hears a single sentence which says, 'It is I, be not afraid,'<sup>6</sup> and is at once freed from all fears and filled with consolation; indeed, she believes it would be impossible for any one to disturb her confidence.<sup>7</sup>

9. Again, when exceedingly anxious about important business, not knowing whether or not it will be successful, on hearing words bidding her

<sup>4</sup> Ps. cxlviii. 5: 'Ipse dixit et facta sunt.' *Life*, ch. xxv. 5. Anton. a Sp. S. *l.c.* tr. iii. n. 353. St. John of the Cross, *Ascent of Mount Carmel*, bk. ii. ch. xxxi. calls these 'substantial words.'

<sup>5</sup> *Life*, ch. xxvi. 6; xxx. 17. *Rel.* i. 26.

<sup>6</sup> St. Luke xxiv. 36.

<sup>7</sup> *Life*, ch. xxv. 22; xxxiii. 10. *Rel.* vii. 22. St. John of the Cross, *Ascent of Mount Carmel*, bk. ii. ch. xxxi. 1.

‘Be at peace; all will go well,’ she feels reassured and free from all care in the matter.<sup>8</sup> Many other instances of the same sort could be mentioned.

10. The second sign is a great calm and a devout and peaceful recollection which dwell in the soul together with a desire to praise God. They say that communications, at any rate in this mansion, are not uttered directly by God but are transmitted by an angel.<sup>9</sup> Then, O my God, if a word sent to us by Thee through Thy messenger has such force, what effects wilt Thou not leave in the soul united to Thee in a mutual bond of love?<sup>10</sup>

11. The third proof is that these words do not pass from the memory but remain there for a very long time; sometimes they are never forgotten. This is not the case with what *men* may utter, which, however grave and learned they may be, is not thus impressed on our memory. Neither, if they prophesy of things to come, do we believe them as we do these divine locutions which leave us so convinced of their truth that, although their fulfilment sometimes seems utterly impossible and we vacillate and doubt about them, there still

<sup>8</sup> *Life*, ch. xxxv. 7. *Rel.* ix. 6. St. John of the Cross, *Ascent of Mount Carmel*, bk. iii. ch. ii. 7.

<sup>9</sup> *Rel.* v. 14.

<sup>10</sup> *Life*, ch. xxv. 23-25. See also Schram, *Instit. theol. myst.* 528 schol.; 529 schol. ii. and iii.; 531 schol. ii.; 532 schol. ii. Exterior locutions may proceed direct from God, but generally are due to the ministry of angels; the same holds good with regard to the imaginary ones. Intellectual locutions, in which the words are merely impressed upon the substance of the soul without intervention of the imagination, can only proceed from God, Who alone is able to act upon the substance of the soul. See also *Life*, ch. xxvii. 7 (end), 8, 9, and 10, and the corresponding chapters in St. John’s *Ascent of Mount Carmel*.

remains in the soul a certainty of their verity which cannot be destroyed. Perhaps everything may seem to militate against what was heard and years pass by, yet the spirit never loses its belief that God will make use of means unknown to men for the purpose and that finally what was foretold must surely happen; as indeed it does.<sup>11</sup>

12. Still, as I said, the soul is troubled at seeing many obstacles in the way of the accomplishment of the prophecy. The words, their effects, and the assurance they carry with them convinced the soul at the moment that they came from God. Afterwards, however, doubts arise as to whether the locutions came from the devil or from the imagination, although while hearing them the person would have died to defend their truth.<sup>12</sup> But, as I said, these misgivings must be suggested by the evil one to afflict and intimidate her, especially if by carrying out a command thus given great good will result to souls and some work be done conducing notably to the honour and service of God, concerning which great difficulties have to be overcome. In such cases, where will Satan stop short? At least, he weakens faith, and it is a terrible evil to doubt that God has power to work in a way far beyond our understanding.

13. Despite all these difficulties and although the confessors consulted on these matters say the words were but fancies, while events take such an unfavourable turn as to make the realization of these predictions seem impossible, yet there remains so

<sup>11</sup> *Life*, ch. xxv. 3, 10. *Rel.* ii. 17.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, ch. xxv. 10.

lively a spark of certainty in the mind (I know not whence it comes) that, although all other hopes die out, it cannot, if it would, quench this ardent spark of confidence. At last, as I said, our Lord's words are accomplished, at which the soul is so satisfied and joyful that it can do nothing but praise His Majesty—more because it sees His words prove true than on account of the thing itself, even though it may be of consequence to the person concerned.

14. I know not why the soul attaches such importance to these communications being verified. I think that if the person herself were detected in telling falsehoods, she would not be so grieved as at these locutions proving untrue—as if she could do anything in the matter beyond repeating what has been said to her! A certain person was frequently reminded in such a case of the Prophet Jonas, when he found Ninive was not to be destroyed.”

15. In fact, as these words come from the Spirit of God, it is right thus to trust them and to desire that He Who is supreme truth should not be thought a deceiver. Justly, therefore, does their hearer rejoice when, after a thousand delays and enormous difficulties, they are accomplished. Although this success may entail great suffering on herself, she prefers it to the nonfulfilment of what she knows our Lord most certainly foretold. Possibly every one is not so weak as this, if indeed it

<sup>13</sup> Jonas iv. 1: ‘Et afflicto est Jonas afflictione magna et iratus est; et oravit ad Dominum et dixit: Obsecro, Domine, numquid non hoc est verbum meum cum adhuc essem in terra mea?’

is a weakness, though I cannot myself condemn it as an evil.

16. If these locutions proceed from the imagination<sup>14</sup> they show no such signs, bringing neither conviction, peace, nor interior joy with them. But in some cases I have come across, on account of a very weak constitution or vivid imagination or of other causes I do not know, persons while absorbed in the prayer of quiet and in spiritual slumber are so entirely carried out of themselves by their deep state of recollection as to be unconscious of anything external. All their senses being thus dormant, as if asleep—as indeed, at times they really are—they thus, in a sort of dream, fancy they are spoken to or see things they imagine come from God, but which leave no more effect than dreams.

17. Again, one who very lovingly asks something of our Lord may fancy that an answer comes from Him.<sup>15</sup> This often occurs, but I think that no one accustomed to receive divine communications could be deceived on this point by the imagination.

18. The devil's deceptions are more dangerous; but if the foregoing signs are present, we may feel fairly confident that these locutions are from God, though not so certain but that, if they refer to some weighty matter in which we are called upon to act or if they concern a third person, we should consult some confessor who is both learned and a servant of God, before attempting or thinking of acting on them, although we may have heard them repeated several times and are convinced of their

<sup>14</sup> *Life*, ch. xxv. 4 (end) and 5 (beginning).

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.* ch. xxv. 4 (beginning).



truth and divine origin.<sup>16</sup> His Majesty wishes us to take this course; it is not disobedience to His commands, for He has bidden us hold our confessor as His representative even where there is no doubt that the communications come from Him: thus we shall gain courage if the matter is a very difficult one. Our Lord will reassure our confessor, whom, when He so chooses, He will inspire with faith that these locutions are from the Holy Ghost.<sup>17</sup> If not, we are freed from all further obligations in the matter. I think it would be very dangerous to act against our confessor's advice and to prefer our own opinions in such a matter. Therefore, sisters, I admonish you in the name of our Lord, never to do anything of the sort.

19. God speaks to the soul in another way by a certain intellectual vision which I think undoubtedly proceeds from Him; it will be described later on.<sup>18</sup> It takes place far within the innermost depths of the soul which appears to hear distinctly in a most mysterious manner, with its spiritual hearing, the words spoken to it by our Lord Himself. The way in which the spirit perceives these words and the results produced by them, convince us that they cannot in any way come from the devil. Their powerful after-effects force us to admit this and plainly show they do not spring from the imagination.<sup>19</sup> Careful consideration will assure us of this for the following reasons;—

20. Firstly, the clearness of the language varies

<sup>16</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. xxxix. 6. *Life*, ch. xxvi. 4, 5. St. John of the Cross, *Ascent of Mount Carmel*, bk. ii. ch. xxii. 14-18.

<sup>17</sup> *Rel.* vii. 15.

<sup>18</sup> *Infra.* ch. viii.

<sup>19</sup> *Life*, ch. xxvii. 8.

in the different kinds of locutions. Those that are divine are so distinct that the hearer remembers if there were a syllable missing, and what words were made use of even though a whole sentence was spoken. But if the speech were only a freak of fancy, it would not be so audible nor would the words be so distinct but would be only half articulated.<sup>20</sup>

21. The second reason is that often the person was not thinking of what is heard; sometimes the locution even comes unexpectedly during conversation, though at times it refers to some thought that passed quickly through the mind or to a subject it was before engaged upon. Frequently it concerns things of whose existence the hearer knew nothing nor even imagined such events could ever come to pass; therefore it is impossible for the imagination to have framed such speeches and deceived the mind by fancies about what it had never wished, nor sought for, nor even thought about.<sup>21</sup>

22. The third reason is that in a genuine case the soul seems to listen to the words, whereas when the imagination is at work, little by little it composes what the person wishes to hear.<sup>22</sup>

23. The fourth reason is because divine locutions differ immensely from others, a single word comprising a depth of meaning which our understanding could not thus quickly condense into one phrase.<sup>23</sup>

24. Fifthly because, in a manner I cannot explain, these communications, without any further explanations, frequently give us to understand far

<sup>20</sup> *Life*, ch. xxv. 6 and 10 (end).

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.* ch. xxv. 9, 16.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.* ch. xxv. 4, 6.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.* ch. xxv. 12 (beginning).

more than is implied by the words themselves. I shall speak farther on of this way of understanding hidden things which is very subtle and a favour for which we should thank God. Some people are exceedingly suspicious about these and other communications of the same kind. I speak particularly of some one<sup>24</sup> who experienced them herself, though there may be others who cannot understand them. I know that she has considered the subject very carefully, God having often bestowed this grace on her. Her principal difficulty was to discover whether the locutions were merely fancied. It is easier to know when they come from the devil although being so wily, he can with facility imitate the spirit of light. However, he would do this in a form of words pronounced so distinctly that there would be no more doubt as to their reality than if they came from the spirit of truth, while those coming from the imagination leave us uncertain whether we heard the words or not. But Satan could never counterfeit the effects I spoke of;<sup>25</sup> he leaves neither peace nor light in the soul, only anxiety and confusion. In any case, he can do little or no harm to one who is humble and who, as I advised, does not act on what is heard.

25. If the soul receives favours and caresses from our Lord, let it examine carefully whether it rates itself more highly in consequence; unless self-abasement increases with God's expressions of love,

<sup>24</sup> The whole of this chapter as well as chapter xxv. of the *Life* prove clearly that the Saint speaks about herself and that she investigated the subject with the greatest care.

<sup>25</sup> *Life*, ch. xxv. 15.

they do not come from the Holy Spirit. Inevitably, when they are divine, the greater the favours, the less the soul esteems itself and the more keenly it remembers its sins.<sup>26</sup> It becomes more oblivious of self-interest: the will and memory grow more fervent in seeking solely God's honour with no thought of self. It also becomes unceasingly careful not to deviate deliberately from the will of God and feels a keener conviction that instead of meriting such favours, it deserves hell.

26. When these results follow, no graces or gifts received during prayer need alarm the soul which should rather trust in the mercy of God, Who is faithful and will not allow the devil to deceive it; but it is always well to be on one's guard.

27. Those our Lord does not lead by this path may suppose that the soul can avoid listening to these locutions and that even if they are interior it is at least possible to distract the attention from them so as not to hear them and thus escape danger. This cannot be done: I am not speaking of freaks of fancy which may be prevented by ceasing to desire certain things or by paying no attention to its inventions. This is not feasible when these communications come from the Holy Ghost Who, when He speaks, stops all other thoughts and compels the mind to listen.<sup>27</sup> Mark this: that I believe it would be easier for a person with very keen ears to avoid hearing a loud voice, for he could occupy

<sup>26</sup> *Life*, ch. xii. 5: 'The nearer we draw unto God the more this virtue (humility) should grow'; xv. 16; xix. 2; xx. 38. *Rel.* ii. 15; vii. 17; viii. 7, 9. *Way of Perf.* ch. xvii. 3.

<sup>27</sup> *Life*, ch. xxv. 21.

his thoughts and mind in other things. Not so here; the soul can do nothing, nor has it ears to stop, nor power to think of aught but what is said to it. For He Who could stay the sun on its course (at the prayer of Josue,<sup>28</sup> I believe) can so quiet the faculties and the interior of the spirit as to make it perceive that another and a stronger Lord than itself governs this castle; it is thus affected with profound devotion and humility, seeing that it cannot but listen. May the divine Majesty vouchsafe that, forgetting ourselves, our only aim may be to please Him, as I said. Amen. God grant I have succeeded in explaining what I wished and that it may be some guide to those who may experience such favours.

<sup>28</sup> Josue x. 12. 13: 'Tunc locutus est Josue: . . . sol contra Gabaon ne movearis; steteruntque sol et luna.'

## CHAPTER IV.

TREATS OF HOW GOD SUSPENDS THE SOUL IN PRAYER BY A TRANCE, ECSTASY OR RAPTURE, WHICH I BELIEVE ARE ALL THE SAME THING. GREAT COURAGE REQUIRED TO RECEIVE EXTRAORDINARY FAVOURS FROM HIS MAJESTY.

1. *Courage required by the soul for the divine espousals.*
2. *Raptures.*
3. *Rapture caused by the spark of love.*
4. *The powers and senses absorbed.*
5. *Mysteries revealed during ecstasies.*
6. *These mysteries are unspeakable.*
7. *Moses and the burning bush.*
8. *Simile of the museum.*
9. *St. Teresa's visit to the Duchess of Alva.*
10. *Joy of the soul during raptures.*
11. *No imaginary vision.*
12. *True and false raptures.*
13. *Revelations of future bliss.*
14. *The soul's preparation.*
15. *The soul blinded by its faults.*
16. *God ready to give these graces to all.*
17. *Faculties lost during ecstasy.*
18. *Spiritual inebriation.*
19. *Fervour and love of suffering left in the soul.*
20. *Scandal caused to spectators by such favours.*
21. *Our Lord's predeliction for such a soul.*
22. *Illusionary raptures.*

I. WHAT rest can the poor little butterfly find, with all the trials I have told you of and many more? They serve to make her desire the Bridegroom more ardently. His Majesty, well aware of our weakness, fortifies her by these and other means in order that she may obtain courage for union with a Lord so great and may take Him for her Spouse. Perhaps you will laugh and think I am talking foolishly: there can be no call for courage here; there is no woman, however low her class, who would not dare to wed a king. So I think, were he an earthly monarch, but there is need of more fortitude than you suppose in order to espouse the King of heaven.<sup>1</sup> Our nature appears too timid and base for anything so high; without doubt, unless God gave us the grace it would be

<sup>1</sup> *Life*, ch. xxxix. 30.

impossible for us, however much we might appreciate its benefits. You will learn how His Majesty ratifies these espousals; probably this is done when He ravishes the soul by ecstasies, thus depriving it of its faculties; if the use of these were retained, I think the sight of its close vicinity to so mighty a Sovereign would probably deprive the body of life. I am speaking of genuine raptures, not fancies that come from women's weakness—which so often occur nowadays—making them imagine everything to be a rapture or an ecstasy. As I think I said, some are so feebly constituted as to die of a single prayer of quiet.<sup>2</sup>

2. I should like to describe here several kinds of raptures of which I have learnt from spiritual persons with whom I have discussed the subject, but I am not sure whether I shall succeed in explaining them as I did elsewhere.<sup>3</sup> It has been decided that it will not be amiss to repeat what was said about these and other things that happen in this state, if only that I may treat of all the mansions contain in proper order.

3. In one sort of rapture the soul, although perhaps not engaged in prayer at the time, is struck by some word of God which it either remembers or hears.<sup>4</sup> His Majesty, touched with pity by what He has seen it suffer for so long past in its longing for Him, appears to increase the spark I described in the interior of the spirit until it entirely inflames the soul which rises with new life like a phœnix from the flames. Such a one may piously believe

<sup>2</sup> *Castle*, M. iv. ch. iii. 11.

<sup>3</sup> *Life*, ch. xx. *passim*.

<sup>4</sup> Philippus a SS. Trinitate, *Lc.* p. iii. tr. i. disc. iii. art. 3.

her sins are now forgiven,<sup>5</sup> supposing that she is in the disposition and has made use of the means required by the Church. The soul being thus purified, God unites it to Himself in a way known only to Him and the spirit, nor does even the latter so understand what happens as to be able to explain it to others afterwards. Yet the mind had not lost the use of its faculties, for this ecstasy does not resemble a swoon or a fit in which nothing either interior or exterior is felt.

4. What I do understand is that the soul has never been more alive to spiritual things nor so full of light and of knowledge of His Majesty as it is now. This might seem impossible; if the powers and senses were so absorbed that we might call them dead, how does the soul understand this mystery? I cannot tell; perhaps no one but the Creator Himself can say what passes in these places—I mean this and the following mansions which may be treated as one, the door leading from one to the other being wide open. However, as some things in the last rooms are only shown to those who get thus far, I thought it better to treat the mansions separately.

5. While the soul is in this suspension, our Lord favours it by discovering to it secrets such as heavenly mysteries and imaginary visions, which admit of description afterwards because they remain so imprinted on the memory that it never forgets them. But when the visions are intellectual they are not thus easily related, some of those received at such

<sup>5</sup> *Rel.* ix. 4. *Way of Perf.* ch. xix. 8.



a time being so sublime that it is not fitting for man, while living in this world, to understand them in a way that can be told, although when the use of the faculties returns much can be described of what was seen in intellectual vision. Possibly you do not know what a vision is, especially an intellectual one. Since I have been bidden by one who has authority, I will tell you at the proper time. Although seemingly superfluous, it may prove useful to certain people.

6. 'But,' you will ask me, 'if the very sublime favours our Lord bestows in this mansion cannot afterwards be remembered, what profit do they bring?'<sup>6</sup> O daughters! their value cannot be over-rated; for though the recipient is incapable of describing them, they are deeply imprinted in the centre of the soul and are never forgotten. 'How can they be remembered if no image is seen and the powers of the soul do not comprehend them?' I, too, do not understand this, but I know that certain truths of the greatness of God remain so impressed on the spirit by this favour that, did not faith teach Who He is and that it is bound to believe He is God, the soul would henceforth worship Him as such, as did Jacob when he saw the ladder.<sup>7</sup> Doubtless the Patriarch learnt other secrets he was unable to reveal, for unless he had received more interior light he could never have discovered such sublime mysteries merely by watching angels ascending and descending the steps. I am not certain whether this quotation is correct;

<sup>6</sup> Philippus a SS. Trinitate, *l.c.*

<sup>7</sup> Gen. xxviii. 12.

although I have heard the passage, I cannot feel sure of recalling it exactly.

7. Neither was Moses able to relate more than God willed of what he had seen in the burning bush;<sup>8</sup> but unless the Almighty had clearly revealed certain mysteries to his soul, causing it to see and know its God was present, the lawgiver could never have undertaken so many and such great labours. Such sublime revelations were shown him amidst the thorns of the bush as to give him the needful courage for his great deeds on behalf of the Children of Israel. We must not, sisters, search out reasons for understanding the hidden things of God, but, believing Him to be Almighty, we should be convinced that such worms as ourselves, with our limited power of intelligence, are unable to comprehend His wonders. Let us praise Him fervently for allowing us to understand something of them.

8. I wish I could find some simile for my subject: none seem to suit the purpose, but I will make use of the following. Imagine that you are in an apartment—I fancy it is termed *camarin* (or private museum)—belonging to a king or a great nobleman, in which are placed numberless kinds of articles of glass, porcelain, and other things, so arranged that most of them are at once seen on entering the room.

9. While on a visit to the house of the Duchess of Alva (where at her request I was bidden by obedience to stay during a journey)<sup>9</sup> I was taken

<sup>8</sup> Exod. iii. 2.

<sup>9</sup> Doña Maria Enriquez, wife of Ferdinand de Toledo, Duke of Alva. This visit took place in February, 1574, and lasted two days

into such a room. I stood amazed on entering it and wondered what could be the use of such a jumble of knick-knacks; then I thought that the sight of so many different things should lead one to praise God. It is fortunate I saw them, for they offer me a suitable comparison in this case. Although I was in the room some time, there were so many objects in it that I forgot what I had seen and could no more remember each object, nor of what it was made, than if I had never seen it, though I recalled the sight of the whole collection.

10. Something of this sort occurs when the spirit is very closely united to God. It is introduced into this mansion of the empyrean heaven which must be in the centre of our souls—for since God resides in them, He must own one of the mansions. While the soul is in ecstasy, our Lord does not appear to wish it to apprehend these mysteries and its inebriation of joy in Him suffices it. But sometimes He is pleased to withdraw it from this rapture when it at once perceives what the mansion contains. On returning to itself, the mind can recall what has been seen but is unable to describe it, nor can it, by its natural abilities, attain to see more of the supernatural than God has chosen to show it.

11. Do I seem to own that the soul really sees something and that this is an imaginary vision? I mean nothing of the sort: I am speaking of an intellectual vision, but being so ignorant and dull I can explain nothing and am well aware that if any—the Saint being then on her journey from Salamanca to Alva de Tormes. (*Found.* ch. xxi.)

thing is rightly stated, it does not come from myself.

12. I think that if the soul learns no mysteries at any time during raptures, they are no true raptures but some natural weakness that may occur to people of delicate constitutions, such as women, when by its strenuous efforts the spirit overpowers physical nature, and produces stupor, as I think I said in connection with the prayer of quiet.<sup>10</sup>

13. This is not so in genuine raptures, for then I believe God ravishes the soul wholly to Himself, as being His very own and His bride, and shows her some small part of the kingdom she has thus won. However little this may be, all is great that is in this great God. He will allow of no obstacle from the powers or the senses but bids that the doors of all the mansions should be closed at once, only leaving open the one He is in, so that we may enter it. Blessed be such mercy—well may men be accursed who do not seek to profit by it, but who forfeit it!

14. O, my sisters! what nothingness is all we have given up, or that we do, or ever could do for a God who thus wills to communicate Himself to a worm! If we hope to enjoy this favour even during our mortal life, what are we doing? Why do we delay? What can repay the loss of the time of a 'Memento'<sup>11</sup> in searching for this Lord, like the

<sup>10</sup> *Castle*, M. iv. ch. iii. 2.

<sup>11</sup> The Saint wrote here and elsewhere *Memento*, and not *momento* as is commonly printed. It refers, of course, to that short interruption at Mass when the priest makes a Memento of those for whom he intends to pray. Likewise St. Teresa often speaks of the 'space of a Credo or an Ave Maria' always implying a very short duration.

bride through the streets and squares?<sup>12</sup> Oh, what a mockery is everything in this world that does not lead towards and help us to attain to this state! Even though all the earthly pleasures, riches, and happiness that can be imagined could last for eternity, they would be disappointing and base contrasted with the treasures which are to be enjoyed for ever—and yet even *these* are nothing compared with the possession for our own of the Lord of all treasures in heaven and earth.

15. Oh, human blindness! When, oh, when shall this dust be taken from our eyes? Although we think it insufficient to blind us, yet I see some little motes or grains of dust which, if left to spread, will suffice to harm us greatly. At least, for the love of God, my sisters, let these faults convince us of our misery, serving to clear our sight as did the clay the eyes of the blind man who was cured by the Spouse.<sup>13</sup> Then, realizing our imperfections, we shall beg Him more fervently to let us benefit by our defects so as to please Him in all things.

16. I have unconsciously wandered far from my subject: forgive me, sisters. Believe me, when I come to these wonders of God's greatness (I mean when I come to speak of them) I cannot but feel keenly grieved at seeing what we lose by our own fault. It is true that His Majesty grants such favours to whom He chooses; yet if we sought Him as He seeks us, He would give them to us all. He only longs for souls on whom He may bestow them, for His gifts do not diminish His riches.

<sup>12</sup> Cant. iii. 2: 'Per vicus et plateas quæram quem diligit anima mea.'

<sup>13</sup> St. John ix. 6.

17. To return to what I was describing. By the commands of the Bridegroom, the doors of the mansions and even those of the keep and of the whole castle are closed; for when He intends ravishing the soul He takes away the power of speech, and although occasionally the other faculties are retained rather longer, no word can be uttered.<sup>14</sup> Sometimes the person is at once deprived of all the senses, the hands and body becoming as cold as if the soul had fled; occasionally no breathing can be detected.<sup>15</sup> This condition lasts but a short while; I mean in the same degree,<sup>16</sup> for when this profound suspension diminishes the body seems to come to itself and gain strength to return again to this *death* which gives more vigorous *life* to the soul.

18. This supreme state of ecstasy never lasts long, but although it ceases, it leaves the will so inebriated,<sup>17</sup> and the mind so transported out of itself that for a day, or sometimes for several days, such a person is incapable of attending to anything but what excites the will to the love of God;

<sup>14</sup> *Life*, ch. xx. 18. 'Like a person who, having a rope around his neck and being strangled, tries to breathe.'

<sup>15</sup> *Life*, ch. xx 23, 29. *Way of Perf.* ch. xxxii. *Rel.* viii. 8, 11. 'The first effect of ecstatic prayer concerns the body, which remains as if the soul had departed; it grows cold from a deficiency of natural heat, the eyes close gently, and the other senses are suspended; and yet a weak body recovers health in this prayer.' (Anton. a Spiritu Sancto, *Direct. Mystic.* tr. iv. d. 2, § 4, n. 150).

<sup>16</sup> 'Digo para estar in un ser.'

<sup>17</sup> Christusque nobis sit cibus,  
Potusque noster sit fides;  
Læti bibamus sobriam  
Ebrietatem Spiritus.

Hymn for Lauds, Feria secunda, old version.

(Compare Anton. a Sp. S. *l.c.* tr. iv. n. 30.)

although wide awake enough to this, she seems asleep as regards all earthly matters.

19. Oh, when the soul wholly returns to itself, how abashed does it feel at having received this favour and how passionate are its desires of serving God in any way He asks of it! If the former states of prayer caused the powerful effects described, what will not such a signal grace as this do? Such a person wishes she had a thousand lives<sup>18</sup> to spend for God; she would have all earthly creatures changed into as many tongues to praise Him on her account. She longs to perform most severe penances,<sup>19</sup> nor do they cost her much, for the power of her love almost prevents their being felt. She realizes how little the martyrs suffered during their tortures, for pain is easy when our Lord thus aids us: therefore such a soul complains to His Majesty when He gives her no suffering.<sup>20</sup>

20. She considers it a great favour when God sends her this rapture in secret, for when others see it the shame and confusion she feels are so great as somewhat to diminish her transport. Knowing the malice of the world, she fears her ecstasy will not be attributed to its proper cause but may give rise to rash judgment instead of the praise due for it to God. Although this pain and distress are unavoidable, they seem to me to show a certain want of humility, for if she wished to be despised, what would she care?<sup>21</sup>

<sup>18</sup> *Life*, ch. xx. 30.

<sup>19</sup> *Castle*, M. vii. ch. iii. 4. *Way of Perf.* ch. xxxviii. 1. *Excl.* xiv. 3. *Life*, ch. xl. 27.

<sup>20</sup> *Life*, ch. xvi. 6. *Rel.* i. 4.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.* ch. xx. 5, 6.

21. Our Lord once said to some one who was troubled by such thoughts: Do not be disturbed; people will either praise Me or condemn thee; in either case thou wilt be the gainer.'<sup>22</sup> I learnt afterwards that she was greatly encouraged and comforted by this speech; I speak of it in case others may suffer in the same way. Apparently our Lord would have all men know that this soul is His own and that none may molest it, for it is all His. Men are welcome to attack, if they will, the body, the honour, and the possessions of such a person, for glory will accrue to His Majesty from all they do; but the soul they may not assail; unless by a most culpable presumption it withdraws from the protection of its Spouse, He will defend it against the whole world and against all hell besides.

22. I do not know whether I have succeeded in teaching you what a rapture is; to explain it fully would, as I said, be impossible. Still I do not think time has been lost in describing a genuine rapture. The effects in false raptures are very different. I do not call them 'false' because people who experience them intentionally deceive others, but because they are themselves unwittingly deceived. As the signs and effects do not correspond with this great grace,

<sup>22</sup> *Life*, ch. xxxi. 15. St. John of the Cross in stanza xiii. 8. of the *Spiritual Canticle*, refers to this and the following chapters. 'This,' he says, 'is an appropriate opportunity for discussing the difference between raptures, ecstasies, and other elevations and subtle flights of the spirit, to which spiritual persons are liable; but as my object is to do nothing more than explain this canticle, I leave the subject for those who are better qualified than I am. I do this the more readily because our mother, the blessed Teresa of Jesus, has written admirably on this matter, whose writings I hope to see soon published.'



the favour itself becomes so discredited that naturally, when our Lord afterwards bestows it on any soul, nobody believes in it. May He be for ever blessed and praised! Amen, Amen!

## CHAPTER V.

TREATS OF THE SAME SUBJECT AS THE LAST CHAPTER AND DESCRIBES THE FLIGHT OF THE SPIRIT, WHICH IS ANOTHER WAY BY WHICH GOD ELEVATES THE SOUL: THIS REQUIRES GREAT COURAGE IN ONE EXPERIENCING IT. THIS FAVOUR, BY WHICH GOD GREATLY DELIGHTS THE SOUL IS EXPLAINED. THIS CHAPTER IS VERY PROFITABLE.

*1. The flight of the spirit. 2. Self-control completely lost. 3. Symbol of the two cisterns. 4. Obligations following these favours. 5. Humility produced by them. 6. How our crucified Lord comforted such a soul. 7. A humble soul fears these favours. 8. Mysteries learnt during the flight of the spirit. 9. Imaginary visions sometimes accompany intellectual ones. 10. How the flight of the spirit takes place. 11. The soul fortified by it. 12. Three great graces left in the soul. 13. The third grace. 14. Fear caused by this favour.*

1. THERE is another form of rapture, which, though essentially the same as the last, yet produces very different feelings in the soul. I call it the 'flight of the spirit,'<sup>1</sup> for the soul suddenly feels so rapid a sense of motion that the spirit appears to hurry it away with a speed which is very alarming, especially at first. Therefore I said that the soul on whom God bestows this favour requires strong courage, besides great faith, trust, and resignation, so that God may do what He chooses with it.

2. Do you suppose a person in perfect possession of her senses feels but little dismay at her soul's being drawn above her, while sometimes, as we

<sup>1</sup> *Rel.* viii. 10, 11. *Life*, ch. xviii. 8; xx. 3.

read, even the body rises with it?<sup>2</sup> She does not know where the spirit is going, who is raising her, nor how it happens; for at the first instant of this sudden movement one does not feel sure it is caused by God. Can it possibly be resisted? No; resistance only accelerates the motion, as some one told me. God now appears to be teaching the soul, which has so often placed itself absolutely in His hands and offered itself entirely to Him, that it no longer belongs to itself; thus it is snatched away more vehemently in consequence of its opposition. Therefore this person resolved to resist no more than does a straw when attracted by amber (a thing you may have seen); she yielded herself into the hands of Him who is Almighty, seeing it is best to make a virtue of necessity. Speaking of straw, doubtless it is as easy for a stalwart, strapping fellow to lift a straw as for our mighty and powerful Giant to elevate our spirit.<sup>3</sup>

3. It seems that the cistern of water of which I spoke (but I cannot quite remember where) in the fourth mansion,<sup>4</sup> was formerly filled gently and

<sup>2</sup> *Life*, ch. xx. 9. St. John of the Cross, *Spiritual Canticle*, stanzas xiv.-xv. 23 *sqq.* Philippus a SS. Trinit. *l.c.* p. iii. tr. i. disc. iii. art. 3. 'This prayer of rapture is superior to the preceding grades of prayer, as also to the ordinary prayer of union, and leaves much more excellent effects and operations in many other ways.' St. Catherine of Siena (*Dialogue*, ch. lxxix. 1) says: 'Wherefore, oftentimes, through the perfect union which the soul has made with Me, she is raised from the earth almost as if the heavy body became light. But this does not mean that the heaviness of the body is taken away, but that the union of the soul with Me is more perfect than the union of the body with the soul; wherefore the strength of the spirit, united with Me, raises the body from the earth.' (Transl. by Algar Thorold.)

<sup>3</sup> *Life*, ch. xxii. 20.

<sup>4</sup> *Castle*, M. iv. ch. ii. 3.

quietly, without any movement; but now this great God Who restrains the springs and the waters and will not permit the ocean to transgress its bounds,<sup>5</sup> lets loose the streams, which with a powerful rush flow into the cistern and a mighty wave rises, strong enough to uplift on high the little vessel of our soul. Neither the ship herself nor her pilot and sailors can at their choice control the fury of the sea and stop its carrying the boat where it will: far less can the interior of the soul now stay where it chooses or force its senses or faculties to act more than He Who holds them in His dominion decrees; as for the exterior powers, they are here quite useless.

4. Indeed I am amazed, sisters, while merely writing of this manifestation of the immense power of this great King and Monarch. Then what must be felt by those who actually experience it? I am convinced that if His Majesty were to reveal Himself thus to the greatest sinners on earth, they would never dare to offend Him again—if not through love at least through fear of Him. What obligations bind those taught in so sublime a manner to strive with all their might not to displease such a Master! In His Name I beg of you, sisters, who have received these or the like favours, not to rest content with merely receiving them but to remember that she who owes much has much to pay!<sup>6</sup>

5. This thought terrifies the soul exceedingly:

<sup>5</sup> Prov. viii. 29,

<sup>6</sup> St. Luke xii. 48: 'Cui multum datum est, multum quaeretur ab eo, et cui commendaverunt multum, plus petent ab eo.'

unless the great courage needed was given it by our Lord, it would suffer great and constant grief; for looking first at what His Majesty has done for it and then upon itself, it sees how little good it has performed compared with what it was bound to do, and that the paltry service it has rendered was full of faults, failures and tepidity. To efface the remembrance of the many imperfections of all its good deeds (if indeed it has ever performed any) it thinks best to forget them altogether and to be ever mindful of its sins, casting itself on the mercy of God since it cannot repay its debt to Him and begging for the pity and compassion He ever shows to sinners.

6. Perhaps He will answer as He did to some one who was kneeling before a crucifix in great affliction on this account, for she felt she had never had anything to offer God nor to sacrifice for His sake. The Crucified One consoled her by saying that He gave her for herself all the pains and labours He had borne in His passion, that she might offer them as her own to His Father.<sup>7</sup> I learnt from her that she at once felt comforted and enriched by these words which she never forgets but recalls whenever she realizes her own wretchedness and feels encouraged and consoled. I could relate several other incidents of the same kind learnt in conversation with many holy people much given to prayer, but I will not recount them lest you might imagine they relate to myself.

7. I think this example is very instructive; it

<sup>7</sup> *Rel.* ix. 8. This happened at Seville in 1575 or 1576.

shows that we please our Lord by self-knowledge, by the constant recollection of our poverty and miseries, and by realizing that we possess nothing but what we have received from Him.<sup>8</sup> Therefore courage is needed, sisters, in order to receive this and many other favours which come to a soul elevated to this state by our Lord; I think that if the soul is humble it requires more valour than ever for this last mercy. May God grant us humility for His Name's sake.

8. To return to this sudden rapture of the spirit. The soul really appears to have quitted the body, which however is not lifeless, and though, on the other hand, the person is certainly not dead, yet she herself cannot, for a few seconds, tell whether her spirit remains within her body or not.<sup>9</sup> She feels that she has been wholly transported into another and a very different region from that in which we live, where a light so unearthly is shown<sup>10</sup> that, if during her whole lifetime she had been trying to picture it and the wonders seen, she could not possibly have succeeded. In an instant her mind learns so many things at once that if the imagination and intellect spent years in striving to enumerate them, it could not recall a thousandth part of them.

9. This vision is not intellectual but imaginary and is seen by the eyes of the soul more clearly

<sup>8</sup> 1 Cor. iv. 7: 'Quid autem habes quod non accepisti?'

<sup>9</sup> 2 Cor. xii. 2: 'Sive in corpore nescio, sive extra corpus nescio, Deus scit.'

<sup>10</sup> This is called 'lumen prophetiæ' and is a transient form of the 'lumen gloriæ.' See St. Thomas Aquinas, *Sum. theol.* 2a 2æ, q. 175, art. 3 ad 2.

than earthly things are seen by our bodily eyes. Although no words are pronounced, the spirit is taught many truths; for instance, if it beholds any of the saints, it knows them at once as well as if intimately acquainted with them for years.<sup>11</sup> Occasionally, besides what the eyes of the soul perceive in intellectual vision, other things are shown it. In an imaginary vision it usually sees our Lord accompanied by a host of angels; yet neither the bodily eyes nor the eyes of the soul<sup>12</sup> see anything, for these visions and many other things impossible to describe, are revealed by some wonderful intuition that I cannot explain. Perhaps those who have experienced this favour and possess more ability than myself may be able to describe it, although it seems to me a most difficult task.

10. I cannot tell whether the soul dwells in the body meanwhile or not: I would neither affirm that it does nor that the body is deprived of it. I have often thought that as, though the sun does not leave his place in the heavens yet his rays have power to reach the earth instantaneously, so the soul and the spirit, which make one and the same thing (like the sun and its rays) may, while remaining in its own place, through the strength of the ardour coming to it from the true Sun of Justice, send up some higher part of it above itself. In fact I do not understand what I am talking about, but the truth is that, with the swiftness of a bullet fired

<sup>11</sup> The same thing is related of some Saints while on earth, *e.g.* St Paul the first hermit and St. Anthony, who greeted each other by name though neither knew nor had heard of the other.

<sup>12</sup> These words, though necessary for the context, were only begun, but not completed by St. Teresa.

from a gun, an upward flight takes place in the interior of the soul. (I know no other name for it but 'flight.') Although noiseless, it is too manifest a movement to be any illusion<sup>13</sup> and the soul is quite outside itself; at least that is the impression made upon it. Great mysteries are revealed to it meanwhile, and when the person returns to consciousness she is so greatly benefited that she holds all this world's goods as filth compared with what she has seen. Henceforth earthly life is grievous to her and what used to please her now remains uncared for and unnoticed.<sup>14</sup>

11. Those children of Israel who were sent on first to the Land of Promise brought back tokens from it;<sup>15</sup> so here our Lord seems to seek to show the soul something of the land to which it is travelling, to give it courage to pass through the trials of its painful journey, now that it knows where it must go to find rest. You may fancy that such profit could not thus quickly be obtained, yet only those who have experienced what signal benefits

<sup>13</sup> *Life*, ch. xx. 32. *Castle*, M. iv. ch. i. 10.

<sup>14</sup> Compare §§ 8-10 with Philippus a SS. Trinitate, *l.c.* p. iii. tr. i. disc. iii. art. 3.

‘Muchas veces he pensado, si como el sol estándose en el cielo, que sus rayos tienen tanta fuerza, que no mudándose él de allí, de presto llegan acá; si el alma y el espíritu (que son una misma cosa, como le es el sol y sus rayos) puede, quedándose ella en su puesto, con la fuerza de calor que le viene del verdadero Sol de justicia, alguna parte superior salir sobre sí misma. En fin, yo no sé lo que digo, lo que es verdad es, que con la presteza que sale la pelota de un arcabuz, cuando le ponen el fuego, se levanta en lo interior un vuelo (que yo no sé otro nombre que le poner) que aunque no hace ruido, hace movimiento tan claro, que no puede ser antojo en ninguna manera; y muy fuera de sí misma, á todo lo que puede entender, se le muestran grandes cosas.’

<sup>15</sup> Num. xiii. 24.

this favour leaves in the soul can realize its value.

12. This clearly shows it to be no work of the devil; neither the imagination nor the evil one could represent what leaves such peace, calm, and good fruits in the soul, and particularly the following three graces of a very high order.<sup>16</sup> The first of these is a perception of the greatness of God which becomes clearer to us as we witness more of it. Secondly, we gain self-knowledge and humility from seeing how creatures so base as ourselves in comparison with the Creator of such wonders have dared to offend Him in the past or venture to gaze on Him now.

13. The third grace is a contempt for all earthly things unless they are consecrated to the service of so great a God. With such jewels the Bridegroom begins to deck His Bride; they are too valuable for her to keep them carelessly.<sup>17</sup> These visions are so deeply engraved in her memory that I believe she can never forget them until she enjoys them for evermore, for to do so would be the greatest misfortune.<sup>18</sup> But the Spouse Who gave her these gifts has power to give her grace not to lose them.

14. I told you that courage was required by the soul, for do you think it is a trifling matter for the spirit to feel literally separated from the body, as it does when perceiving that it is losing its senses without understanding the reason? There is need that

<sup>16</sup> *Life*, ch. xx. 31. The same distinctions with respect to divine and diabolical locutions may be found in *Life*, ch. xxv. 5.

<sup>17</sup> 'Dexteram meam et collum meum cinxit lapidibus pretiosis; tradidit auribus meis inestimabiles margaritas.' From the Office of St. Agnes.

<sup>18</sup> This is undoubtedly the correct rendering of this difficult and obscure passage.



He Who gives all the rest should include fortitude. You will say this fright is well rewarded, and so say I. May He Who can bestow such graces be for ever praised and may His Majesty vouchsafe that we may be worthy to serve Him. Amen.

## CHAPTER VI.

DESCRIBES AN EFFECT WHICH PROVES THE PRAYER SPOKEN OF IN THE LAST CHAPTER TO BE GENUINE AND NO DECEPTION, TREATS OF ANOTHER FAVOUR OUR LORD BESTOWS ON THE SOUL TO MAKE IT PRAISE HIM FERVENTLY.

1. *The soul longs for death.* 2. *The soul cannot help desiring these favours.* 3. *St. Teresa bewails her inability to serve God.* 3. *Fervour resulting from ecstasies.* 5. *Excessive desires to see God should be restrained.* 6. *They endanger health.* 7. *Tears often come from physical causes.* 8. *St. Teresa's own experience.* 9. *Works, not tears, are asked by God.* 10. *Confide entirely in God.* 11. *The jubilee of the soul.* 12. *Impossibility of concealing this joy.* 13. *The world's judgment of this jubilee.* 14. *Which is often felt by the nuns of St. Joseph's.* 15. *The Saint's delight in this jubilee.*

I. THESE sublime favours leave the soul so desirous of fully enjoying Him Who has bestowed them that life becomes a painful though delicious torture, and death is ardently longed for. Such a one often implores God with tears to take her from this exile where everything she sees wearies her.<sup>1</sup> Solitude alone brings great alleviation for a time, but soon her grief returns and yet she cannot bear to be without it. In short, this poor little butterfly can find no lasting rest. So tender is her love that at the slightest provocation it flames forth and the soul takes flight. Thus in this mansion raptures

<sup>1</sup> *Excl. ii.* See poem 4, 'Cuan triste es, Dios mio'; and the two versions of 'Vivir sin vivir en mi.' (Poems 3 and 4. *Minor Works.*)

occur very frequently, nor can they be resisted even in public. Persecutions and slanders ensue;<sup>2</sup> however she may try, she cannot keep free from the fears suggested to her by so many people, especially by her confessors.

2. Although in one way she feels great confidence within her soul, especially when alone with God, yet on the other hand, she is greatly troubled by misgivings lest she is deceived by the devil and so should offend Him Whom she deeply loves. She cares little for blame, except when her confessor finds fault with her as if she could help what happens. She asks every one to pray for her<sup>3</sup> since she has been told to do so, and begs His Majesty to direct her by some other way than this which is so full of danger. Nevertheless, so great are the benefits left by these favours that she cannot but see that they lead her on the way to heaven,<sup>4</sup> of which she has read and heard and learnt in the law of God. As, strive how she may, she cannot resist desiring to receive these graces, she resigns herself into God's hands. Yet she is grieved at finding herself forced to wish for these favours which appears to be disobedience to her confessor, for she believes that in obedience, and in avoiding any offence against God, lies her safeguard against deception. Thus she feels she would prefer to be cut in pieces rather than wilfully commit a venial sin, yet is greatly grieved at seeing that she cannot avoid unwittingly falling into a great number.

<sup>2</sup> *Life*, ch. xxv. 18.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* ch. xxv. 20. *Rel.* vii. 7.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* ch. xxvii. 1, 2.

God bestows on such people so intense a desire neither ever to displease Him in however small a matter, nor to commit any avoidable imperfection, that, were there no other reason, they would try to avoid society and they greatly envy those who live in deserts.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, they seek to live amidst men in the hopes of helping if but one soul to praise God better.<sup>6</sup> In the case of a woman, she grieves over the impediment offered by her sex<sup>7</sup> and envies those who are free to proclaim aloud to all Who is this mighty God of hosts.<sup>8</sup>

3. O poor little butterfly! chained by so many fetters that stop thee from flying where thou wouldst!—Have pity on her, O my God, and so dispose her ways that she may be able to accomplish some of her desires for Thy honour and glory! Take no account of the poverty of her merits, nor of the vileness of her nature, Lord, Thou Who hast the power to compel the vast ocean to retire, and didst force the wide river Jordan to draw back so that the Children of Israel might pass through!<sup>9</sup> Yet spare her not, for aided by Thy strength she can endure many trials. She is resolved to do so—she desires to suffer them. Stretch forth Thine arm, O Lord, to help her lest she waste her life on trifles! Let Thy greatness appear in this Thy creature, womanish and weak as she is, so that men, seeing the good in her is not her own, may praise Thee

<sup>5</sup> *Rel.* i. 6.

<sup>6</sup> *Life*, ch. xxxii. 14; xxxv. 13. *Castle*, M. vii. ch. iv. 21. *Found.* ch. i 6, 7.

<sup>7</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. i.

<sup>8</sup> III Reg. xix. 10.

<sup>9</sup> Ps. cxiii. 3; Exod. xiv. and Jos. iii.

for it! Let it cost her what it may and as dear as she desires, for she longs to lose a thousand lives to lead one soul to praise Thee but a little better. If as many lives were hers to give, she would count them well spent in such a cause, knowing as a truth most certain that she is unworthy to bear the lightest cross, much less to die for Thee.

4. I cannot tell why I have said this, sisters, nor what made me do so; indeed I never intended it. You must know that these effects are bound to follow from such trances or ecstasies: they are not transient, but permanent desires; when opportunity occurs of acting on them, they prove genuine. How can I say that they are permanent, when at times the soul feels cowardly in the most trivial matters and too timorous to undertake any work for God?

5. I believe it is because our Lord, for its greater good, then leaves the soul to its natural weakness, which at once convinces it so thoroughly that any strength it possessed came from His Majesty as to destroy its self-love, enduing it with a greater knowledge of the mercy and greatness of God which He deigned to show forth in one so vile. However, the soul is usually in the former state. Beware of one thing, sisters; these ardent desires to behold our Lord are sometimes so distressing as to need rather to be checked than to be encouraged—that is, if feasible, for in another kind of prayer of which I shall speak later, it is not possible as you will see.

6. In the state I speak of these longings can sometimes be arrested, for the reason is at liberty

to conform to the will of God and can quote the words of St. Martin;<sup>10</sup> should these desires become very oppressive, the thoughts may be turned to some other matter. As such longings are generally found in persons far advanced in perfection, the devil may excite them in order to make us think we are of their number—in any case it is well to be cautious. For my part, I do not believe he could cause the calm and peace given by this pain to the soul, but would disturb it by such uneasiness as we feel when afflicted concerning any worldly matter. A person inexperienced in both kinds of sorrow cannot understand the difference, but thinking such grief an excellent thing, will excite it as much as possible which greatly injures the health, as these longings are incessant or at least very frequent.

7. You must also notice that bodily weakness may cause such pain, especially with people of sensitive characters who cry over every trifling trouble.<sup>11</sup> Times without number do they imagine they are mourning for God's sake when they are doing no such thing. If for a considerable space of time, whenever such a person hears the least mention of God or thinks of Him at all, these fits of uncon-

<sup>10</sup> 'When St. Martin was dying, his brethren said to him: 'Why, dear Father, will you leave us? Or to whom can you commit us in our desolation? We know, indeed, that you desire to be with Christ, but your reward above is safe and will not be diminished by delay; rather have pity on us whom you are leaving desolate.' Then Martin, always pitiful, moved by these lamentations, is said to have burst into tears. Turning to God, he replied to the mourners around him only by crying: 'O Lord, if I am still necessary to Thy people, I do not shrink from toil; Thy will be done.' (Sulpitius Severus, *Life of St. Martin*, letter 3.)

<sup>11</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. xvii. 4; xix. 6.

trollable weeping occur,<sup>12</sup> the cause may be an accumulation of humour round the heart, which has a great deal more to do with such tears than has the love of God. Such persons seem as if they would never stop crying: believing that tears are beneficial, they do not try to check them nor to distract their minds from the subject, but encourage them as much as possible. The devil seizes this opportunity of weakening nuns so that they become unable to pray or to keep their Rule.

8. I think you must be puzzling over this and would like to ask what I would have you do, as I see danger in everything. If I am afraid of delusions in so good a thing as tears, perhaps I myself am deluded, and may be I am! But believe me, I do not say this without having witnessed it in other people although not in my own case, for there is nothing tender about me and my heart is so hard as often to grieve me.<sup>13</sup> However, when the fire burns fiercely within, stony as my heart may be, it distils like an alembic.<sup>14</sup> It is easy to know when tears come from this source, for they are soothing and gentle rather than stormy and rarely do any harm. This delusion, when it is one, has the advantage, with a humble person, of only injuring the body and not the soul. But if one is not humble, it is well to be ever on one's guard.

9. Let us not fancy that if we cry a great deal we have done all that is needed—rather we must

<sup>12</sup> *Life*, ch. xxix. 12.

<sup>13</sup> Compare with this what we have said in note 1 to the second chapter of the Fourth Mansions. *Rel.* ii. 12.

<sup>14</sup> *Life*, ch. xix. 1-3.

work hard and practise the virtues: that is the essential—leaving tears to fall when God sends them, without trying to force ourselves to shed them. Then, if we do not take too much notice of them, they will leave the parched soil of our souls well watered, making it fertile in good fruit; for this is the water which falls from heaven.<sup>15</sup> However we may tire ourselves in digging to reach it, we shall never get any water like this; indeed, we may often work and search until we are exhausted without finding as much as a pool, much less a springing well!

10. Therefore, sisters, I think it best for us to place ourselves in the presence of God, contemplate His mercy and grandeur and our own vileness and leave Him to give us what He will, whether water or drought, for He knows best what is good for us; thus we enjoy peace and the devil will have less chance to deceive us.

11. Amongst these favours, at once painful and pleasant, Our Lord sometimes causes in the soul a certain jubilation<sup>16</sup> and a strange and mysterious kind of prayer. If He bestows this grace on you, praise Him fervently for it; I describe it so that you may know that it is something real. I believe that the faculties of the soul are closely united to God but that He leaves them at liberty to rejoice in their happiness together with the senses, although they do not know what they are enjoying nor how they do so. This may sound nonsense but it really

<sup>15</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. xix. 6. *Life*, ch. xviii. 12 *sqq.*

<sup>16</sup> Philippus a SS. Trinit. *l.c.* p. iii. tr. i. disc. iv. art. 5. Antonius a Sp. S. *l.c.* tr. iv. n. 156.

happens. So excessive is its jubilee that the soul will not enjoy it alone but speaks of it to all around so that they may help it to praise God, which is its one desire.<sup>17</sup>

12. Oh, what rejoicings would this person utter and what demonstrations would she make, if possible, so that all might know her happiness! She seems to have found herself again and wishes, like the father of the prodigal son, to invite all her friends to feast with her<sup>18</sup> and to see her soul in its rightful place, because (at least for the time being) she cannot doubt its security. I believe she is right, for the devil could not possibly infuse a joy and peace into the very centre of her being which make her whole delight consist in urging others to praise God. It requires a painful effort to keep silent and to dissemble such impulsive happiness. St. Francis must have experienced this when, as the robbers met him rushing through the fields crying aloud, he told them in answer to their questions that he was the 'herald of the great King.'<sup>19</sup> So felt other saints who retired into the deserts so that, like St. Francis, they might proclaim the praises of their God.

<sup>17</sup> *Rel.* ii. 12.

<sup>18</sup> St. Luke xv. 23.

<sup>19</sup> 'He plunged into a large forest, and there in a loud voice and in French, he made the echoes resound with the praises of God. Some robbers, attracted by his singing, rushed out upon him. But the sight of so poor a man destroyed their hopes of booty. They questioned him, and Francis gave them no answer beyond saying in allegorical language: 'I am the herald of the great King!' The robbers considered themselves insulted by these words. They threw themselves upon him, beat him severely, and went off after having thrown him into a ditch full of snow. This treatment only added fire to the zeal of Francis. He sang his holy canticles with greater love than before.' (Rev. Father Léon, *Lives of the Saints of the Order of St. Francis*, vol. 1, ch. i.)



13. I knew Fray Peter of Alcantara who used to do this. I believe he was a saint on account of the life he led, yet people often took him for a fool when they heard him.<sup>20</sup> Oh happy folly, sisters! Would that God might let us all share it! What mercy He has shown you in placing you where, if He gave you this grace and it were perceived by others, it would rather turn to your advantage than bring on you contempt as it would do in the world, where men so rarely hear God praised that it is no wonder they take scandal at it.

14. Oh miserable times and wretched life spent in the world! How blest are those whose happy lot it is to be freed from them!<sup>21</sup> It often delights me, when in my sisters' company to see how the joy of their hearts is so great that they vie with one another in praising our Lord for placing them in this convent: it is evident that their praises come from the very depths of their souls. I should like you to do this often, sisters, for when one begins she incites the rest to imitate her. How can your tongues be better employed when you are together than in praising God, Who has given us so much cause for it?

15. May His Majesty often grant us this kind of prayer which is most safe and beneficial; we cannot acquire it for ourselves as it is quite superna-

<sup>20</sup> 'St. Peter of Alcantara, in the jubilation of his soul through the impetuosity of divine love, was occasionally unable to refrain from singing the divine praises aloud in a wonderful manner. To do this more freely, he sometimes went into the woods where the peasants who heard him sing took him for one who was beside himself.' (Rev. Alban Butler, *Lives of the Saints*.)

<sup>21</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. ii. 8; iii. 1; viii. 1.

tural. Sometimes it lasts for a whole day and the soul is like one inebriated, although not deprived of the senses;<sup>22</sup> nor like a person afflicted with melancholia,<sup>23</sup> in which, though the reason is not entirely lost, the imagination continually dwells on some subject which possesses it and from which it cannot be freed. These are coarse comparisons to make in connection with such a precious gift, yet nothing else occurs to my mind. In this state of prayer a person is rendered by this jubilee so forgetful of self and everything else that she can neither think nor speak of anything but praising God, to which her joy prompts her. Let us all of us join her, my daughters, for why should we wish to be wiser than she? What can make us happier? And may all creatures unite their praises with ours for ever and ever. Amen, amen, amen!

<sup>22</sup> Compare with this what has been said in the fourth chapter of this Mansion, § 17, note 17.

<sup>23</sup> Melancholia here as elsewhere means hysteria.

## CHAPTER VII.

DESCRIBES THE GRIEF FELT ON ACCOUNT OF THEIR SINS BY SOULS ON WHOM GOD HAS BESTOWED THE BEFORE-MENTIONED FAVOURS. SHOWS THAT HOWEVER SPIRITUAL A PERSON MAY BE, IT IS A GREAT ERROR NOT TO KEEP BEFORE OUR MIND THE HUMANITY OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST AND HIS SACRED PASSION AND LIFE, AS ALSO THE GLORIOUS MOTHER OF GOD AND THE SAINTS. THE BENEFITS GAINED BY SUCH A MEDITATION. THIS CHAPTER IS MOST PROFITABLE.

1. *Sorrow for sin felt by souls in the Sixth Mansion.*
2. *How this sorrow is felt.*
3. *St. Teresa's grief for her past sins.*
4. *Such souls, centred in God, forget self-interest.*
5. *The remembrance of divine benefits increases contrition.*
6. *Meditation on our Lord's Humanity.*
7. *Warning against discontinuing it.*
8. *Christ and the saints our models.*
9. *Meditation of contemplatives.*
10. *Meditation during aridity.*
11. *We must search for God when we do not feel His presence.*
12. *Reasoning and mental prayer.*
13. *A form of meditation on our Lord's Life and Passion.*
14. *Simplicity of contemplatives' meditation.*
15. *Souls in every state of prayer should think of the Passion.*
16. *Need of the example of Christ and the saints.*
17. *Faith shows us our Lord as both God and Man.*
18. *St. Teresa's experience of meditation on the sacred Humanity.*
19. *Evil of giving up such meditation.*

1. IT may seem to you, sisters, that souls to whom God has communicated Himself in such a special manner may feel so sure of enjoying Him for ever as no longer to require to fear or to mourn over their past sins. Those of you will be most apt to hold this opinion who have never received the like favours; souls to whom God has granted these

graces will understand what I say. This is a great mistake, for sorrow for sin increases in proportion to the divine grace received and I believe will never quit us until we come to the land where nothing can grieve us any more. Doubtless we feel this pain more at one time than at another and it is of a different kind. A soul so advanced as that we speak of does not think of the punishment threatening its offences but of its great ingratitude towards Him to Whom it owes so much<sup>1</sup> and Who so justly deserves that it should serve Him, for the sublime mysteries revealed have taught it much about the greatness of God.

2. This soul wonders at its former temerity and weeps over its irreverence; its foolishness in the past seems a madness which it never ceases to lament as it remembers for what vile things it forsook so great a Sovereign. The thoughts dwell on this more than on the favours received, which, like those I am about to describe, are so powerful that they seem to rush through the soul at times like a strong, swift river. Yet the sins remain like the mire in the river bed and dwell constantly in the memory, making a heavy cross to bear.

3. I know some one who, though she had ceased to wish for death in order to see God,<sup>2</sup> yet desired it that she might be freed from her continual regret for her past ingratitude towards Him to Whom she owed, and always would owe, so much. She thought no one's guilt could be compared to her own, for she felt there could be none with whom

<sup>1</sup> *Life*, ch. vi. 7.

<sup>2</sup> *Excl.* vi. 4, 5. *Supra*, M. v. ch. ii, 5; *Poems* 2, 3, 4. *Minor Works*.

God had borne so patiently nor on whom He had bestowed such graces.

4. Souls that have reached the state I speak of have ceased to fear hell. At times, though very rarely, they grieve keenly over the possibility of their losing God; their sole dread is lest He should withdraw His hand, allowing them to offend Him, and so they might return to their former miserable condition. They care nothing for their own pain or glory; if they are anxious not to stay long in Purgatory, it is more on account of its keeping them from the Presence of God than because of its torments. Whatever favours God may have shown a soul, I think it is dangerous for it to forget the unhappy state it was once in; painful as the remembrance may be, it is most beneficial.

5. Perhaps I think so because I have been so wicked and that may be the reason why I never forget my sins; people who have led good lives have no cause for grief; yet we always fall at times whilst living in this mortal body. This pain is not lessened by reflecting that our Lord has already forgiven and forgotten our faults; our grief is rather increased at seeing such kindness and favours bestowed on one who deserves nothing but hell. I think St. Paul and the Magdalen must thus have suffered a cruel martyrdom;<sup>3</sup> their love was intense, they had received many mercies and realized the greatness and the majesty of God and so must have found it very hard to bear the remembrance

<sup>3</sup> *Life*, ch. xxi. 9. All editions have 'Peter'. St. Teresa only wrote 'P' but the parallel passage proves she meant Pablo, and not Pedro. See also M. i. ch. i. 5.

of their sins, which they must have regretted with a most tender sorrow.

6. You may fancy that one who has enjoyed such high favours need not meditate on the mysteries of the most sacred Humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ but will be wholly absorbed in love. I have written fully about this elsewhere.<sup>4</sup> I have been contradicted and told that I was wrong and did not understand the matter; that our Lord guides souls in such a way that after having made progress it is best to exercise oneself in matters concerning the Godhead and to avoid what is corporeal; yet nothing will make me admit that this latter is a good way.

7. I may be mistaken; we may all really mean the same thing but I found the devil was trying to lead me astray in this manner. Having been warned by experience in this respect, I have decided to speak again about it here although I have very often done so elsewhere.<sup>5</sup> Be most cautious on the subject; attend to what I venture to say about it and do not believe any one who tells you the contrary. I will endeavour to explain myself more clearly than I did before. If the person who undertook to write on the matter had treated it more explicitly he would have done well, for it may do much harm to speak of it in general terms to us women, who have scanty wits.

8. Some souls imagine they cannot meditate even on the Passion, still less on the most blessed Virgin or on the saints, the memory of whose lives greatly

<sup>4</sup> *Life*, ch. xxii. 9-11.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* ch. xxii. 1; xxiii. 18; xxiv. 2.

benefits and strengthens us.<sup>6</sup> I cannot think what such persons are to meditate upon, for to withdraw the thoughts from all corporeal things like the angelic spirits who are always inflamed with love, is not possible for us while in this mortal flesh; we need to study, to meditate upon and to imitate those who, mortals like ourselves, performed such heroic deeds for God. How much less should we wilfully endeavour to abstain from thinking of our only good and remedy, the most sacred Humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ? I cannot believe that any one really does this; they misunderstand their own minds and so harm both themselves and others. Of this at least I can assure them: they will never thus enter the last two mansions of the castle. If they lose their Guide, our good Jesus, they cannot find the way and it will be much if they have stayed safely in the former mansions. Our Lord Himself tells us that He is 'the Way'; He also says that He is 'the Light'; that no man cometh to the Father but by Him; and that 'He that seeth Me, seeth the Father also.'<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> 'Deliberate forgetfulness and rejection of all knowledge and of form must never be extended to Christ and His sacred Humanity. Sometimes, indeed, in the height of contemplation and pure intuition of the Divinity the soul does not remember the Sacred Humanity, because God raises the mind to this, as it were, confused and most supernatural knowledge; but for all this, studiously to forget it is by no means right, for the contemplation of the sacred Humanity and loving meditation upon it will help us up to all good, and it is by it we shall ascend most easily to the highest state of union. It is evident at once that, while all visible and bodily things ought to be forgotten, for they are a hindrance in our way, He, Who for our salvation became man, is not to be accounted among them, for He is the truth, the door, and the way, and our guide to all good.' (St. John of the Cross *Ascent of Mount Carmel*, bk. iii. ch. i. 12-14.)

<sup>7</sup> St. John viii. 12; xiv. 6, 9.

9. Such persons tell us that these words have some other meaning; I know of no other meaning but this, which my soul has ever recognized as the true one and which has always suited me right well. Some people (many of whom have spoken to me on the subject) after our Lord has once raised them to perfect contemplation, wish to enjoy it continually. This is impossible; still, the grace of this state remains in their souls in such a way that they cannot reason as before on the mysteries of the Passion and the Life of Christ. I cannot account for it but it is very usual for the mind thus to remain less apt for meditation. I think it must be because, as the one end of meditation is to seek God, after He has once been found and the soul is accustomed to seek Him again by means of the will, it no longer wearies itself by searching for Him with the intellect.

10. It also appears to me that as the will is already inflamed with love, this generous faculty would, if it could, cease to make use of the reason. This would be well, were it not impossible, especially before the soul has reached the last two mansions.<sup>8</sup> Time spent in prayer would thus be lost as the will often needs the use of the understanding to rekindle its love. Notice this point, sisters, which as it is important I will explain more fully. Such a soul

<sup>8</sup> *Life*, ch. xv. 20. St. John of the Cross treats the subject most carefully. He shows how and when meditation becomes impossible: *Ascent of Mount Carmel*, bk. ii. ch. xii. (*circa finem*) ch. xiii. (*per totum*). *Living Flame of Love*, stanza iii. 35. *Obscure Night*, bk. i. ch. x. 8, and bk. ii. ch. viii. That it should be procured whenever possible: *Ibid.* bk. i. ch. x. (*in fine*); that it should be resumed: *Ascent of Mount Carmel*, bk. ii. ch. xv.



desires to spend all its time in loving God and wishes to do nothing else; but it cannot succeed, for though the will is not dead yet the flame which kindled it is dying out and the spark needs fanning into a glow. Ought the soul to remain quiescent in this aridity, waiting like our father Elias for fire to descend from heaven<sup>9</sup> to consume the sacrifice which it makes of itself to God? Certainly not; it is not right to expect miracles; God will work them for this soul when He chooses. As I have told you already and shall do again, His Majesty wishes us to hold ourselves unworthy of their being wrought on our account and desires us to help ourselves to the best of our abilities.

11. In my opinion we ought during our whole life, to act in this manner, however sublime our prayer may be. True, those whom our Lord admits into the seventh mansion rarely or never need thus to help their fervour, for the reason I will tell you of, if I recollect it when I come to write of this room where, in a wonderful manner, souls are constantly in the company of Christ our Lord both in His Humanity and His Divinity.<sup>10</sup> Thus, when the fire in our hearts, of which I spoke does not burn in the will, nor do we feel the presence of God, we must search for Him as He would have us do, like the Bride in the Canticles,<sup>11</sup> and must ask all creatures 'who it was that made them;' as St. Augustine (either in his *Soliloquies* or his

<sup>9</sup> III Reg. xviii. 30-39.

<sup>10</sup> Continual sense of the presence of God: *Life*, ch. xxvii. 6. *Rel.* xi. 3: 'The intellectual vision of the Three Persons and of the Sacred Humanity seems ever present.' *Castle*, M. vii. ch. iv. 15.

<sup>11</sup> Cant. iii. 3: 'Num quem diligit anima mea, vidistis?'

*Confessions*) tells us that he did.<sup>12</sup> Thus we shall not stand like blockheads, wasting our time in waiting for what we before enjoyed. At first, it may be that our Lord will not renew His gift again for a year or even for many years; His Majesty knows the reason which we should not try to discover since there is no need for us to understand it. ✓

12. As most certainly the way to please God is to keep the commandments and counsels, let us do so diligently, while meditating on His life and death and all we owe Him; then let the rest be as God chooses. Some may answer that their mind refuses to dwell on these subjects; and for the above causes, this to a certain extent is true. You know that it is one thing to reason and another thing for the memory to bring certain truths before the mind. Perhaps you may not understand me; possibly I fail to express myself rightly but I will do my ✓

<sup>12</sup> 'I asked the earth, and it answered me: 'I am not He'; and whatsoever it contains confessed the same. I asked the sea and the depths, and the living, creeping things, and they answered: 'We are not thy God, seek above us.' I asked the heavens, I asked the moving air; and the whole air with its inhabitants answered: 'Anaximenes was deceived, I am not God.' I asked the heavens, sun, moon, stars. 'Nor,' say they, 'are we the God Whom thou seekest.' And I replied unto all things which encompass the door of my flesh: 'Ye have told me of my God, that ye are not He; tell me something of Him.' And they cried out with a loud voice: 'He made us.' By my thought of them I questioned them, and their beauty gave their answer.' (*St. Augustine's Confessions*, bk. x. ch. 6.)

St. Teresa may have read this in St. Augustine's *Confessions*, (see above, p. 78), or in the *Soliloquies*, a collection of extracts from St. Augustine, St. Bernard, St. Anselm, etc., which was printed in Latin at Venice in 1512, translated into Spanish and brought out at Valladolid in 1515, and again at Medina del Campo in 1553, and at Toledo in 1565. The words quoted by St. Teresa occur in chapter xxxi. See *Life*, ch. xl. 10.

best. Using the understanding much in this manner is what I call meditation.

13. Let us begin by considering the mercy God showed us by giving us His only Son; let us not stop here but go on to reflect upon all the mysteries of His glorious life; or let us first turn our thoughts to His prayer in the garden, then allow them to continue the subject until they reach the crucifixion. Or we may take some part of the Passion such as Christ's apprehension and dwell on this mystery, considering in detail the points to be pondered and thought over, such as the treachery of Judas, the flight of the Apostles, and all that followed. This is an admirable and very meritorious kind of prayer.<sup>13</sup>

14. Souls led by God in supernatural ways and raised to perfect contemplation are right in declaring they cannot practise this kind of meditation. As I said, I know not why, but as a rule they are unable to do so. Yet they would be wrong in saying that they cannot dwell on these mysteries nor frequently think about them, especially when these events are being celebrated by the Catholic Church. Nor is it possible for the soul which has received so much from God to forget these precious proofs of His love which are living sparks to inflame the heart with greater love for our Lord, nor can the mind fail to understand them. Such a soul comprehends these mysteries, which are brought before the mind and stamped on the memory in a more perfect way than with other people, so that the mere sight of our Lord prostrate

<sup>13</sup> *Life*, ch. xiii. 17-23.

in the garden, covered with His terrible sweat, suffices to engross the thoughts not merely for an hour but for several days. The soul looks with a simple gaze upon Who He is and how ungratefully we treat Him in return for such terrible sufferings. Then the will, although perhaps without sensible tenderness, desires to render Him some service for such sublime mercies and longs to suffer something for Him Who bore so much for us, employing itself in similar considerations in which the memory and understanding also take their part.

15. I think this is why such souls cannot reason connectedly about the Passion and fancy they are unable to meditate on it. Those who do not meditate on this subject had better begin to do so; for I know that it will not impede the most sublime prayer nor is it well to omit practising this often. If God then sees fit to enrapture them, well and good; even if they are reluctant, He will make them cease to meditate. I am certain that this way of acting is most helpful to the soul and not the hindrance it would become were great efforts made to use the intellect. This, as I said, I believe cannot be done when a higher state of prayer is attained. It may be otherwise in some cases, for God leads souls in many different ways. Let not those be blamed, however, who are unable to discourse much in prayer, nor should they be judged incapable of enjoying the great graces contained in the mysteries of Jesus Christ, our only Good, which no one, however spiritual he may be, can persuade me it is well to omit contemplating.

16. There are souls who, having made a beginning, or advanced half-way, when they begin to experience the prayer of quiet and to taste the sweetness and consolations God gives, think it is a great thing to enjoy these spiritual pleasures continually. Let them, as I advised elsewhere, cease to give themselves up so much to this absorption. Life is long and full of crosses and we have need to look on Christ our pattern, to see how He bore His trials, and even to take example by His Apostles and saints if we would bear our own trials perfectly. Our good Jesus and His most blessed Mother are too good company to be left and He is well pleased if we grieve at His pains, even though sometimes at the cost of our own consolations and joys.<sup>14</sup> Besides, daughters, consolations are not so frequent in prayer that we have no time for this as well. If any one should tell me she continually enjoys them, and that she is one of those who can never meditate on the divine mysteries, I should feel very doubtful about her state. Be convinced of this; keep free from this deception and to the utmost of your power stop yourselves from being constantly immersed in this intoxication. If you cannot do so, tell the Prioress so that she may employ you too busily for you to think of the matter; thus you will be free from this danger which, if it does no more, when it lasts long, greatly injures the health and brain. I have said enough to prove to those who require it that, however spiritual their state, it is an error so to avoid thinking of corporeal things

<sup>14</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. xxv. 7.

as to imagine that meditation on the most sacred Humanity can injure the soul.

17. People allege, in defence, that our Lord told His disciples that it was expedient for them that He should go from them.<sup>15</sup> This I cannot admit. He did not say so to His blessed Mother, for her faith was firm. She knew He was both God and man; and although she loved Him more dearly than did His disciples, it was in so perfect a way that His bodily presence was a help to her. The faith of the Apostles must have been weaker than it was later on, and than ours has reason to be. I assure you, daughters, that I consider this a most dangerous idea whereby the devil might end by robbing us of our devotion to the most blessed Sacrament.

18. The mistake I formerly made<sup>16</sup> did not lead me as far as this, but I did not care so much about meditating on our Lord Jesus Christ, preferring to remain absorbed, awaiting spiritual consolations. I recognized clearly that I was going wrong, for as I could not always keep in this state, my thoughts wandered hither and thither and my soul seemed like a bird, ever flying about and finding no place for rest. Thus I lost much time and did not advance in virtue nor make progress in prayer.

19. I did not understand the reason, and as I believed that I was acting wisely I think I should never have learnt it but for the advice of a servant

<sup>15</sup> St. John xvi. 7: 'Expediit vobis ut ego vadam; si enim non abiero, Paraclitus non veniet ad vos.' *Life*, ch. xxii. 1, 2 and note.

<sup>16</sup> *Life*, ch. xxii. 11. Although the Saint defends herself against the charge of self-contradiction, there can be no doubt from this avowal that she too was at one time mistaken on this point.

of God whom I consulted about my mode of prayer. Then I perceived plainly how mistaken I had been and I have never ceased regretting that there was a time when I did not realize how difficult it would be to gain by so great a loss. Even if I could, I would seek for nothing save by Him through Whom comes all the good we possess. May He be for ever praised! Amen.

## CHAPTER VIII.

SPEAKS OF THE MANNER IN WHICH GOD COMMUNICATES WITH THE SOUL BY INTELLECTUAL VISION AND GIVES ADVICE UPON THE SUBJECT. OF THE EFFECTS PRODUCED BY THIS VISION WHEN GENUINE. SECRECY ABOUT THESE FAVOURS IS ENJOINED.

*1. Our Lord's presence accompanying the soul. 2. St. Teresa's experience of this. 3. Confidence and graces resulting from this vision. 4. Its effects. 5. It produces humility. 6. And prepares the soul for other graces. 7. Consciousness of the presence of the saints. 8. Obligations resulting from this grace. 9. Signs that this favour is genuine. 10. A confessor should be consulted. 11. Our Lord will enlighten our advisers. 12. Cautions about this vision.*

1. To prove to you more clearly, sisters, the truth of what I have been saying and to show that the more the soul advances, the closer does this good Jesus bear it company, it would be well for me to tell you how, when He so chooses, it cannot withdraw from His presence. This is clearly shown by the manners and ways in which His Majesty communicates Himself to us, manifesting His love by wonderful apparitions and visions which, if He is pleased to aid me, I will describe to you so that you may not be alarmed if any of these favours are granted you. We ought, even if we do not receive

them ourselves, to praise Him fervently for thus communing with creatures, seeing how sovereign are His majesty and power.

2. For example, a person who is in no way expecting such a favour nor has ever imagined herself worthy of receiving it, is conscious that Jesus Christ stands by her side although she sees Him neither with the eyes of the body nor of the soul.<sup>1</sup> This is called an intellectual vision; I cannot tell why. I knew a person to whom God granted both this grace and others I shall describe later on. At first it distressed her, for she could not understand it; she could see nothing, yet so convinced did she feel that Jesus Christ was thus in some way manifesting Himself that she could not doubt that it was some kind of vision, whether it came from God or no. Its powerful effects were a strong argument that it was from Him; still she was alarmed, never having heard of an intellectual vision, nor was she aware that such a thing could be. She however felt certain of our Lord's presence,<sup>2</sup> and He spoke to her several times in the way that I described. Before she had received this favour, she had heard words spoken but had never known who uttered them.

3. She was frightened by this vision which, unlike an imaginary one, does not pass away quickly but lasts for several days and even sometimes for more than a year. She went, in a state of great anxiety, to her confessor<sup>3</sup> who asked her how, if she saw

<sup>1</sup> *Life*, ch. xxvii. 3, 5. *Rel.* vii. 26.

<sup>2</sup> *Life*, ch. xxvii. 7.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid. l.c.* 4. Father Juan de Pradanos was then the Saint's confessor.



nothing, she knew that our Lord was near her, and bade her describe His appearance. She said that she was unable to do so, nor could she see His face nor tell more than she had already done, but that she was sure it was the fact that it was He Who spoke to her and it was no trick of her imagination. Although people constantly cautioned her against this vision, as a rule she found it impossible to disbelieve in it, especially when she heard the words: 'It is I, be not afraid'<sup>4</sup>

4. The effect of this speech was so powerful that for the time being she could not doubt its truth. She felt much encouraged and rejoiced at being in such good company, seeing that this favour greatly helped her to a constant recollection of God and an extreme care not to displease in any way Him Who seemed ever by her side, watching her. Whenever she desired to speak to His Majesty in prayer, or even at other times, He seemed so close that He could not fail to hear her though He did not speak to her whenever she wished, but unexpectedly, when necessity arose. She was conscious of His being at her right hand, although not in the way we know an ordinary person to be beside us but in a more subtle manner which cannot be described. Yet this presence is quite as evident and certain, and indeed far more so, than the ordinary presence of other people about which we may be deceived; not so in this, for it brings with it graces and spiritual effects which could not come from melancholia. Nor could the devil thus fill the soul with peace,

<sup>4</sup> *Life*, ch. xxv. 22; xxx. 17. *Supra*, M. vi. ch. iii. 5. *Rel.* vii. 22. St. John of the Cross, *Ascent of Mount Carmel*, bk. ii. ch. xxxi. 1.

with a constant desire to please God, and such utter contempt of all that does not lead to Him. As time went on, my friend recognized that this was no work of the evil one, as our Lord showed her more and more clearly.

5. However, I know that she often felt great alarm and was at times overcome with confusion, being unable to account for so high a favour having been granted her. She and I were so very intimate<sup>5</sup> that I knew all that passed in her soul, hence my account is thoroughly true and reliable. This favour brings with it an overwhelming sense of self-abasement and humility; the reverse would be the case, did it come from Satan.<sup>6</sup> It is evidently divine; no human effort could produce such feelings nor could any one suppose that such profit came from herself, but must needs recognize it as a gift from the hand of God.

6. Although I believe some of the former favours are more sublime, yet this brings with it a special knowledge of God; a most tender love for Him results from being constantly in His company, while the desires of devoting one's whole being to His service are more fervent than any hitherto described. The conscience is greatly purified by the knowledge of His perpetual and near presence, for although we know that God sees all we do, yet nature inclines us to grow careless and forgetful of it. This is impossible here since our Lord makes the soul conscious that He is close at hand, thus preparing it to receive the other graces men-

<sup>5</sup> In fact, one and the same person.

<sup>6</sup> *Life*, ch. xix. 2; xx. 38. *Way of Perf.* ch. xxxvi. 10.

tioned by constantly making acts of love to Him Whom it sees or feels at its side. In short, the benefits caused by this grace prove how great and how valuable it is. The soul thanks our Lord for bestowing it on one unworthy of it, but who would refuse to exchange it for any earthly riches or delight.

7. When our Lord chooses to withdraw His presence, the soul in its loneliness makes every possible effort to induce Him to return. This avails but little, for this grace comes at His will and not by our endeavours. At times we may enjoy the company of some saint,<sup>7</sup> which also brings us great profit. You will ask me, if we see no one, how can we know whether it is Christ, or His most glorious Mother, or a saint? Such a person cannot answer this question or know how she distinguishes them, but the fact remains undoubted. It seems easy to recognize our Lord when He speaks, but it is surprising how the soul can, without hearing a word from him, recognize which saint has been sent by God to be its companion and helper.

8. There are other spiritual matters which cannot be explained. Our inability to grasp them should teach us how incapable is our nature of understanding the sublime mysteries of God. Those on whom these favours are bestowed should marvel at and praise God's mercy for them. As these particular graces are not granted to everybody, any one who receives them should esteem them highly and strive to serve God more zealously, since He has given her such special aid. Therefore such a person does

<sup>7</sup> *Life*, ch. xxix 6.

not rate herself more highly on this account, but rather thinks she serves Him less than any one else in the world; feeling herself to be under greater obligations to Him than others, any fault she commits pierces her to the heart, as indeed it ought under the circumstances.

9. When the effects described are felt, any of you whom our Lord leads by this way may be certain that it is neither deception nor fancy in her case. I believe it to be impossible for the devil to produce an illusion lasting so long, neither could he benefit the soul so remarkably nor cause such interior peace. It is not his custom, nor, if he would, could such an evil creature bring about so much good; the soul would soon be clouded by self-esteem and the idea that it was better than others. The mind's continual keeping in the presence of God<sup>8</sup> and the concentration of its thoughts on Him would so enrage the fiend that, although he might try the experiment once, he would not often repeat it. God is too faithful to permit him so much power over one whose sole endeavour is to please His Majesty and to lay down her life for His honour and glory; He would soon unmask the demon's artifices.

10. I contend, as I always shall, that if the soul reaps the effects described from these divine graces, although God may withdraw these special favours, His Majesty will turn all things to its advantage; even should He permit the devil to deceive it at any time, the evil spirit will only reap his own confusion. Therefore, as I told you, daughters,

<sup>8</sup> Gen. xvii. 1: 'Ambula coram me et esto perfectus.'

none of you who are led by this way need feel alarm. Fear is good and we should be cautious and not over-confident, for if such favours made you careless, it would prove they were not from God as they did not leave the results I described. It would be well at first to tell your case, under the seal of confession, to a thoroughly qualified theologian (for that is the source whence we must obtain light) or to some highly spiritual person. If your confessor is not very spiritual, a good theologian would be preferable;<sup>9</sup> best of all, one who unites both qualities.<sup>10</sup> Do not be disturbed if he calls it mere fancy; if it is, it can neither harm nor benefit your soul much. Recommend yourself to the divine Majesty and beg Him not to allow you to be misled.

11. It would be worse should he tell you the devil is deceiving you, although no learned man would say so if he sees in you the effects described. Even should your adviser say this, I know that the same Lord Who is beside you will comfort and reassure you and will go to your counsellor and give him light that he may impart it to you.<sup>11</sup> If the director, though given to prayer, has not been led by God in this way, he will at once take fright and condemn it. Therefore I advise you to choose

<sup>9</sup> 'Magni doctores scholastici, si non sint spirituales, vel omni rerum spiritualium experientia careant, non solent esse magistri spirituales idonei—nam theologia scholastica est perfectio intellectus; mystica, perfectio intellectus et voluntatis: unde bonus theologus scholasticus potest esse malus theologus mysticus. In rebus tamen difficilibus, dubiis, spiritualibus, præstat mediocriter spirituales theologum consulere quam spirituales idiotam.' (Schram, *Theol. Myst.* § 483.)

<sup>10</sup> *Life*, ch. v. 6.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.* ch. xxv. 18 *sqq.* *Way of Perf.* ch. iv. 11; v. 3.

a qualified theologian and, if possible, one who is also spiritual. The Prioress ought to allow you this, for although she may feel sure that you are safe from delusion because you lead a good life, yet she is bound to permit you to consult some one for your mutual security. When you have conferred with these persons, be at peace; trouble yourself no more about the matter, for sometimes when there is no cause for fear, the demon gives rise to such immoderate scruples that the person cannot be satisfied with consulting her confessor only once on the subject, especially if he is inexperienced and timid or if he bids her consult him again.

12. Thus that which should have been kept strictly private becomes public;<sup>12</sup> such a person is persecuted and tormented and finds that what she believed to be her own secret has become public property. Hence she suffers many troubles which may even devolve upon the Order in such times as these. Consequently I warn all Prioresses that great caution is required in such matters; also they must not think a nun more virtuous than the rest because such favours are shown her. Our Lord guides every one in the way He knows to be best. This grace, if made good use of, prepares one receiving it to become a great servant of God, but sometimes our Lord bestows it on the weakest souls; therefore in itself it is neither to be esteemed nor condemned. We must look to the virtues; she who is most mortified, humble and single-minded in serving God is the most holy. However, we can never feel very certain about such matters until the true

<sup>12</sup> *Life*, ch. xxiii. 14-15. *Rel.* vii. 17.

Judge rewards each one according to his merits. Then we shall be surprised to find how very different is His judgment from that of this world. May He be for ever praised. Amen.

## CHAPTER IX.

THIS CHAPTER SPEAKS OF THE MANNER IN WHICH GOD COMMUNICATES WITH THE SOUL BY IMAGINARY VISIONS. STRONG REASONS ARE GIVEN FOR NOT DESIRING TO BE LED IN THIS WAY; THIS IS VERY PROFITABLE READING.

*1. The jewel in the locket. 2. The simile explained. 3. The apparition explained. 4. Awe produced by this vision. 5. False and genuine visions. 6. Illusive visions. 7. Effects of a genuine vision. 8. Conviction left by a genuine vision. 9. Its effects upon the after conduct. 10. A confessor should be consulted. 11. How to treat visions. 12. Effects of seeing the face of Christ. 13. Reasons why visions are not to be sought. 14. The second reason. 15. Third reason. 16. Fourth reason. 17. Fifth reason. 18. Sixth reason. 19. Additional reasons. 20. The virtues more meritorious than consolations. 21. Fervent souls desire to serve God for Himself alone.*

1. Now we come to treat of imaginary visions, whereby it is held that the devil is more liable to deceive people than by the other visions I have already described. This is probably true. Yet when imaginary visions are divine, they seem, in a certain manner, more profitable for us than the others, as being more suited to our nature—with the exception of the visions sent by our Lord in the seventh mansion which far surpass all others. The presence of our Lord described in the last chapter may thus be symbolized. Let us suppose that we have in our possession a gold locket containing a precious stone of the highest value and powers, which, though we have not seen it, we are certain

is in the case, and its virtues benefit us when we wear the pendant. Although we have never gazed on it we value it highly, knowing by experience that it has cured us of maladies for which it is remedial. However, we dare not look at it nor open the locket nor could we do so even if we wished, for the owner of the jewel alone knows the secret of unfastening its casket. Although he lent it us for our use, yet he kept the key for himself; he will open the trinket when he chooses to show us its contents and close it again when he sees fit to do so.

2. Our Lord treats us here in this way. Now, suppose the owner of this locket suddenly opened it at times for the benefit of the person to whom he has entrusted it; doubtless the latter would value the diamond more highly through remembering its wonderful lustre. This may be compared to what happens when our Lord is pleased to caress the soul. He shows it in vision His most sacred Humanity under whatever form He chooses; either as He was during His life on earth<sup>1</sup> or after His resurrection.<sup>2</sup> The vision passes as quickly as a flash of lightning, yet this most glorious picture makes an impression on the imagination that I believe can never be effaced until the soul at last sees Christ to enjoy Him for ever. Although I call it a 'picture,' you must not imagine that it looks like a painting; Christ appears as a living Person Who sometimes speaks and reveals deep mysteries. You must understand that though the soul sees this for a certain space of time, it is no more possible to continue

<sup>1</sup> *Life*, ch. vii. 11.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, xxix. 4.



looking at it than to gaze for a very long time on the sun; therefore this vision passes very quickly, although its brightness does not pain the interior sight in the same way as the sun's glare injures our bodily eyes.

3. The image is seen by the interior sight alone; but of bodily apparitions I can say nothing, for the person I know so intimately never having experienced anything of the kind herself could not speak about them with certainty.<sup>3</sup> The splendour of Him Who is revealed in the vision resembles an infused light like that of the sun covered with a veil as transparent as a diamond, if such a texture could be woven, while His raiment looks like fine linen. The soul to whom God grants this vision almost always falls into an ecstasy, nature being too weak to bear so dread a sight. I say 'dread,' though this apparition is more lovely and delightful than anything that could be imagined even though any one should live a thousand years and spend all that time in trying to picture it, for it far surpasses our limited imagination and understanding; yet the presence of such surpassing majesty inspires the soul with great fear.

4. There is no need to ask how the soul knew Who He was or who declared with absolute certainty that He was the Lord of heaven and earth. This is not so with earthly kings; unless we were told their names or saw their attendant courtiers, they would attract little notice. O Lord, how little do we Christians know Thee! What will that day be in which Thou comest as our Judge, since now,

<sup>3</sup> *Life*, ch. vii. 11, 12.

when Thou comest as a Friend to Thy spouse, the sight of Thee strikes us with such awe? O daughters! what will it be when He says in wrath: 'Go, accursed of my Father?'<sup>4</sup> Let this impression be the result of this favour granted by God to the soul and we shall reap no little benefit from it, since St. Jerome, saint as he was, ever kept the thought of the last judgment before his eyes.<sup>5</sup> Thus we shall care nothing what sufferings we endure from the austerities of our Rule, for long as they may last, the time is but a moment compared to this eternity of pain. I sincerely assure you that, wicked as I am, I have never feared the torments of hell<sup>6</sup> for they have seemed to me as nothing when I remembered that the lost would see the beautiful, meek and pitiful eyes of our Lord turned on them in wrath.<sup>7</sup> I have thought all my life that this would be more than my heart could bear.

5. How much more must any one fear this to whom our Lord so revealed Himself in vision here as to overcome her feelings and produce unconsciousness! This must be the reason that the soul remains in a rapture: our Lord strengthens its weakness so as to unite it to His greatness in this sublime communion with God. When any one

<sup>4</sup> St. Matt. xxv. 41: 'Discedite a me, maledicti, in ignem æternum.'

<sup>5</sup> 'Whenever I ponder on the Day of Judgment I am overwhelmed by the thought and tremble from head to foot.' (St. Jerome). The following saying is by some attributed to St. Jerome, though not to be found in his works: 'Whether I eat or drink, or whatever else I do, the dreadful trumpet of the last day seems always sounding in my ears: Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment.' (Alban Butler, *Life of St. Jerome*). The *Life of Christ* by Ludolf of Saxony gives this quotation with the word *vox* instead of *tuba* (part ii. ch. lxxxvii. 9).

<sup>6</sup> *Life*, ch. iii. 7.

<sup>7</sup> *Excl.* xiii. 3.

can contemplate this sight of our Lord for a long time, I do not believe it is a vision but rather some overmastering idea which causes the imagination to fancy it sees something; but this illusion is only like a dead image in comparison with the living reality of the other case.

6. As not only three or four, but a large number of people have spoken to me on the subject, I know by experience that there are souls which, either because they possess vivid imaginations or active minds, or for some other reason of which I am ignorant, are so absorbed in their own ideas as to feel certain they see whatever their fancy imagines. If they had ever beheld a genuine vision, they would recognize the deception unmistakably. They themselves fabricate, piece by piece, what they fancy they see: no after effects are produced on the mind, which is less moved to devotion than by the sight of a sacred picture. It is clear that no attention should be paid to such fancies, which pass more quickly than dreams from the memory.

7. In the favour of which I speak, the case is very different. A person is far from thinking of seeing anything, no idea of which has crossed the mind, when suddenly the vision is revealed in its entirety, causing within the powers and senses of the soul a fright and confusion soon changed into a blissful peace. Thus, after St. Paul was thrown to the ground, a great tempest and noise followed from heaven;<sup>8</sup> so, in the interior world of the soul, there is a violent tumult followed instantly, as I said, by

<sup>8</sup> Acts ix. 3, 4.

perfect calm. Meanwhile certain sublime truths have been so impressed on the mind that it needs no other master, for with no effort of its own, Wisdom Himself has enlightened its former ignorance.

8. The soul for some time afterwards possesses such certainty that this grace comes from God that whatever people may say to the contrary it cannot fear delusion. Later on, when her confessor suggests doubts to her, God may allow such a person to waver in her belief for a time and to feel misgivings lest, in punishment for her sins, she may possibly have been left to go astray. However, she does not give way to these apprehensions, but (as I said in speaking of other matters)<sup>9</sup> they only affect her in the same way as the temptations of the devil against faith, which may disturb the mind but do not shake the firmness of belief. In fact, the more severe the assault,<sup>10</sup> the more certain is she that the evil one could never have produced the great benefits she is conscious of having received, because he exercises no such power over the interior of the soul. He may present a false apparition but it does not possess such truth, majesty, and efficacy.

9. As confessors cannot see these effects, which perhaps the person to whom God has shown the vision is unable to explain, they are afraid of deception, as indeed they have good reason to be. Therefore caution is necessary and time should be allowed to see what effects follow. Day by day, the progress of the soul in humility and in the virtues should be watched: if the devil is concerned in the matter, he will soon show signs of himself and will

<sup>9</sup> *Castle*, M. vi. ch. iii. 12.

<sup>10</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. xl. 4.

be detected in a thousand lies. If the confessor is experienced and has received such favours himself, he will not take long in discovering the truth. In fact, he will know immediately, on being told of the vision, whether it is divine or comes from the imagination or the demon: more especially if he has received the gift of discerning spirits—then, if he is learned, he will understand the matter at once even though he has not personally experienced the like.

10. The great point is, sisters, that you should be perfectly candid and straightforward with your confessor: I do not mean in declaring your sins—that is evident enough—but in giving him an account of your prayer.<sup>11</sup> Unless you do this, I cannot assure you of your safety nor that you are led by God. Our Lord desires that we should be as truthful and open with those who stand in His place as we should with Himself; that we should wish them to know not only our thoughts but especially all relating to our actions, however insignificant. Then you need feel no trouble nor anxiety<sup>12</sup> because even if your vision were not from God, it could do you no harm if you are humble and possess a good conscience, for His Majesty knows how to glean good from evil. What the devil intended to injure you will benefit you instead: believing that God has granted you such signal favours, you will strive to please Him better and will keep His image ever before your memory.

<sup>11</sup> *Life*, ch. xxvi. 5 ; xxviii. 21.

<sup>12</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. xl. 3.

11. A great theologian<sup>13</sup> once said that he should not trouble himself though the devil, who is a clever painter, should present before his eyes the living image of Christ, which would only kindle his devotion and defeat the evil one with his own weapons. However wicked an artist may be, we should reverence his picture if it represents Him Who is our only good. This great scholar held that it was very wrong to advise any one who saw a vision of our Lord to offer it signs of scorn,<sup>14</sup> because we are bound to show respect to the portrait of our King wherever we see it. I am sure that he was right, for even in the world any one who was on friendly terms with a person would take it as an offence were his portrait treated with contempt. How much more should we always show respect to a crucifix or a picture of our heavenly Sovereign wherever it meets our gaze! Although I have written about this elsewhere, I am glad of the opportunity of saying it now for I know some one who was deeply pained at being bidden to behave in this way. I know not who can have invented such a torture for one who felt bound to obey the counsel given by her confessor, for she would have thought her soul was at stake had she disobeyed him. My advice is, if you are given such an order, that humbly alleging the reasons I have set before you to your confessor, you should not carry it out. I am perfectly satisfied with the motives given for doing so by him who counselled me on this subject.

<sup>13</sup> This was Father Dominic Bañez. *Found.* ch. viii. 3. *Life*, ch. xxix. 6, 7 and note.

<sup>14</sup> *Letters of Blessed John of Avila* (translated by the Benedictines of Stanbrook), i. 5, p. 19.

12. One great advantage gained by the soul from this favour shown by our Lord is that when thinking of Him or of His life and Passion, the remembrance of His most meek and beautiful face brings with it the greatest consolation. In the same way, we feel happier after having seen a benefactor than if we had never known him personally. I can assure you that the remembrance of the joy caused by this vision gives us the greatest comfort and assistance.

13. Many other advantages result; but as I have written elsewhere<sup>15</sup> at length about the effect these visions produce, and must do so again later on, I will say no more now lest I weary us both. But I most earnestly advise you, when you know or hear of God's bestowing these graces on others, never to pray nor desire to be led by this way yourself though it may appear to you to be very good; indeed, it ought to be highly esteemed and revered, yet no one should seek to go by it for several reasons. Firstly, as it is a want of humility to desire what you have never deserved, I do not think any one who longs for these graces can be really humble: a common labourer never dreams of wishing to be made a king—the thing seems impossible and he is unfit for it; a lowly mind has the same feeling about these divine favours. I do not believe God will ever bestow these gifts on such a person, as before doing so He always gives thorough self-knowledge. How can that soul, while filled with such lofty aspirations, realize the truth that He has shown it great mercy in not casting it into hell?

14. The second reason is that such a one is certain

<sup>15</sup> *Life*, ch. xxviii. 13, 14.

to be deceived or at least is in great danger of delusion, for an entrance is thus left open to the devil, who only needs to see the door left ajar to slip in at once and play us a thousand tricks.

15. Thirdly: when people strongly desire a thing, the imagination makes them fancy they see or hear it, just as when a man's mind is set upon a subject all day he dreams of it at night.

16. Fourthly: it would be very presumptuous of me to choose a way for myself without knowing what is good for me.<sup>16</sup> I should leave our Lord, Who knows my soul, to guide me as is best for me so that His will may be done in all things.

17. Fifthly: do you think people on whom our Lord bestows these favours have little to suffer? No, indeed! their trials are most severe and of many kinds. How can you tell whether you would be able to bear them?

18. Sixthly: perhaps what you think would be your gain might prove your loss, as happened to Saul when he was made king.<sup>17</sup> In short, sisters, there are other reasons besides these; believe me, it is safer to wish only what God wishes, Who knows us better than we know ourselves and Who loves us. Let us place ourselves entirely in His hands so that His will may be done in us; we can never go astray if our will is ever firmly fixed on this.

19. Know that for having received many favours of this kind, you will not merit more glory but will

<sup>16</sup> St. Teresa, when led in this way, always asked to be delivered from favours so dangerous as visions, etc. See *Life*, ch. xxv. 20; xxvii. 3.

<sup>17</sup> I. Reg. xv. 26-28.



be the more stringently obliged to serve, since you have received more. God does not deprive us of anything by which we merit more, for this remains in our own control. There are many saints who never knew what it was to receive one such favour, while others who have received them are not saints at all. Do not imagine that these gifts are continually bestowed; indeed, for one that is granted, the soul bears many a cross, so that instead of longing to receive more favours, it only strives to use them better.

20. True, such a grace is a most powerful aid towards practising the virtues in their highest perfection, but it is far more meritorious to gain them at the cost of one's own toil. I was acquainted with some one,<sup>18</sup> indeed with two people (of whom one was a man), on whom our Lord had bestowed some of these gifts. They were both so desirous of serving His Majesty at their own cost without these great consolations and so longed to suffer for His sake; that they remonstrated with Him for giving them these favours, and if it had been possible would have refused to receive them. When I say 'consolations,' I do not mean these visions which greatly benefit the soul and are highly to be esteemed, but the delights given by God during contemplation.

21. I believe that these desires are supernatural and proper to very fervent souls who wish to prove to God that they do not serve Him for pay; so as I said, such people do not urge themselves to work

<sup>18</sup> *Life*, ch. xl. 27. She herself was one, and the other, no doubt, was St. John of the Cross.

harder for Him by the thought of the glory they will gain, but rather labour to satisfy their love, of which the nature is to toil for the Beloved in a thousand ways. Such souls would fain find a way to consume themselves in Him, and were there need that, for the sake of God's greater glory, they should be annihilated for ever, they would count it great gain. May He be for ever praised Who, in abasing Himself to hold converse with us miserable creatures, vouchsafes to manifest His greatness! Amen.

## CHAPTER X.

SPEAKS OF VARIOUS OTHER GRACES GOD BESTOWS ON THE SOUL IN DIFFERENT WAYS, AND OF THE GREAT BENEFITS CONFERRED BY THEM.

*1. Reasons for speaking of these supernatural favours. 2. An intellectual vision. 3. God compared to a palace in which His creatures dwell. 4. Forgive as we are forgiven. 5. The vision shows God to be Truth itself. 6. We should imitate God by truthfulness. 7. Why God reveals these truths.*

I. OUR Lord communicates with the soul by means of these apparitions on many occasions—sometimes when it is afflicted, at other times when it is about to receive some heavy cross, and again for the sake of the mutual delight of Himself and His beloved. There is no need for me to specify each different case nor do I intend to do so. I only wish to teach you (as far as I am acquainted with them myself) what are the different favours God shows a soul in this state so that you may understand their characteristics and the effects they produce.

Thus you will not mistake every idle fancy for a vision and if you really see one, knowing that such a thing is possible, you will not be disturbed nor unhappy. The devil, who gains greatly by it, is delighted to see a soul troubled and distressed, knowing how this hinders it from employing itself wholly in loving and serving God.

2. His Majesty has far higher ways of communicating Himself to the soul; they are less dangerous for I do not think the evil spirit can imitate them. They are more difficult to explain, being more abstruse; therefore imaginary visions are easier to describe. God is sometimes pleased, while a person is engaged in prayer and in perfect possession of her senses, to suspend them and to discover sublime mysteries to her which she appears to see within God Himself. This is no vision of the most sacred Humanity nor can I rightly say the soul 'sees,' for it sees nothing; this is no imaginary vision but a highly intellectual one, wherein is manifested how all things are beheld in God and how He contains them within Himself.<sup>1</sup> It is of great value, for although passing in an instant, it remains deeply engraved in the memory, producing a feeling of great shame in the mind which perceives more clearly the malice of offences against God, since these most heinous sins are committed within His very being since we dwell within Him. I will try to explain this truth to you by a comparison, for although it is obvious and has been often told us, we either never reflect upon it or do not wish to

<sup>1</sup> *Life*, ch. xl. 13-16.

understand it. If we realized it, we could not possibly behave with such audacity.

3. Let us compare God to a very spacious and magnificent mansion or palace and remember that this edifice is God Himself. Can the sinner withdraw from it in order to carry out his crimes? No, certainly not, for within this very palace, that is, within God Himself, are perpetrated all the abominations, impurities and evil deeds that sinners commit. Oh awful thought, well worthy to be pondered over! What profit it would bring to us, who know so little and understand these truths but partially or how could we possibly be so reckless in our daring? Let us, sisters, meditate on the infinite mercy and patience of God in not casting us down to hell at once and let us render Him hearty thanks. Surely we should be ashamed of resenting anything done or said against us—*we* who are the scum of the earth—when we see what outrages are offered to *God our Creator* within His very being, by us His creatures; yet we are wounded whenever we hear of an unkind word having been spoken of us in our absence, although perhaps with no evil intention.

4. Oh misery of mankind! When, daughters, shall we imitate Almighty God in any way? Oh, let us not think we are doing great things if we suffer injuries *patiently*: rather let us bear them with *alacrity*; let us love our enemies, since this great God has not ceased to love us in spite of our many sins! This is indeed the chief reason that all should forgive any harm done them. I assure you, daughters, that though this vision passes very quickly,

Compare  
God =  
= palace  
= mansion

our Lord has bestowed signal grace on her to whom He grants it, if she seeks to profit by keeping it constantly in mind.

5. Short as the time lasts, yet, in a manner impossible to describe, God also manifests that in Him there is a verity which makes all truth in creatures seem obscure. He convinces the soul that He alone is that Truth which cannot lie, thus demonstrating the meaning of David's words in the psalm: 'Every man is a liar,'<sup>2</sup> which could never be thus realized by any other means, however often we might hear that God is truth infallible. As I recall Pilate and how he besought our Lord in His Passion to answer his question: 'What is truth?'<sup>3</sup> I realize how little mortals know of that sublime veracity.

6. I wish I could explain this better but am unable to do so. Let us learn from it, sisters, that if we would bear any resemblance to our God and our Spouse, we must strive to walk ever in the truth. I do not merely mean that we should not tell falsehoods—thank God, I see that in these convents you are most careful never to do so on any account—but I desire that as far as possible we should act with perfect truth before God and man and above all that we should not wish to be thought better than we are; that in all our deeds we should ascribe to God what is His and attribute what is ours to ourselves, and that we should seek for verity in all things. Thus we shall care little for this world, which is but deception and falsehood, and there-

<sup>2</sup> Ps. cxv. 11. 'Omnis homo mendax.'

<sup>3</sup> St. John xviii. 38: Quid est veritas?

fore cannot last. Once, while I was wondering why our Lord so dearly loves the virtue of humility, the thought suddenly struck me, without previous reflection, that it is because God is the supreme Truth and humility is the *truth*, for it is most true that we have nothing good of ourselves but only misery and nothingness: whoever ignores this, lives a life of falsehood. They that realize this fact most deeply are the most pleasing to God, the supreme Truth, for they walk in the truth. God grant, sisters, that we may have the grace never to lose this self-knowledge! Amen.

7. Our Lord shows the soul these favours because she is now indeed His bride, resolute to do His will in all things; therefore He wishes to give her some idea how to accomplish it and to manifest to her some of His divine attributes. I need say no more about it, but I believe the two points above mentioned will prove very useful. These favours should cause no fear but lead us to praise God for bestowing these graces. I think neither the devil nor our own imaginations can have much to do with them, therefore the soul may rest in perfect peace.

## CHAPTER XI.

TREATS OF HOW GOD INSPIRES THE SOUL WITH SUCH VEHEMENT AND IMPETUOUS DESIRES OF SEEING HIM AS TO ENDANGER LIFE. THE BENEFITS RESULTING FROM THIS DIVINE GRACE.

1. *Favours increase the soul's desire for God.*
2. *The dart of love.*
3. *Spiritual sufferings produced.*
4. *Its physical effects.*
5. *Torture of the desire for God.*
6. *These sufferings are a purgatory.*
7. *The torments of hell.*
8. *St. Teresa's painful desire after God.*
9. *This suffering irresistible.*
10. *Effects of the dart of love.*
11. *Two spiritual dangers to life.*
12. *Courage needed here and given by our Lord.*

I. WILL all these graces bestowed by the Spouse upon the soul suffice to content this little dove or butterfly (you see I have not forgotten her after all!) so that she may settle down and rest in the place where she is to die? No indeed: her state is far worse than ever; although she has been receiving these favours for many years past, she still sighs and weeps because each grace augments her pain. She sees herself still far away from God, yet with her increased knowledge of His attributes her longing and her love for Him grow ever stronger as she learns more fully how this great God and Sovereign deserves to be loved. As, year by year her yearning after Him gradually becomes keener, she experiences the bitter suffering I am about to describe. I speak of 'years' because relating what happened to the person I mentioned, though I know well that with God time has no limits and in a single moment He can raise a soul to the most sublime state I have described. His Majesty has the power to do all He wishes and He wishes to do much for us. These longings, tears, sighs, and

violent and impetuous desires and strong feelings, which seem to proceed from our vehement love, are yet as nothing compared with what I am about to describe and seem but a smouldering fire, the heat of which, though painful, is yet tolerable.

2. While the soul is thus inflamed with love, it often happens that, from a passing thought or spoken word of how death delays its coming, the heart receives, it knows not how or whence, a blow as from a fiery dart.<sup>1</sup> I do not say that this actually is a 'dart,' but, whatever it may be, decidedly it does not come from any part of our being.<sup>2</sup> Neither is it really a 'blow' though I call it one, but it wounds us severely—not, I think, in that part of our nature subject to physical pain but in the very depths and centre of the soul, where this thunder-bolt, in its rapid course, reduces all the earthly part of our nature to powder. At the time we cannot even remember our own existence, for in an instant, the faculties of the soul are so fettered as to be incapable of any action except the power they retain of increasing our torture. Do not think I am exaggerating; indeed I fall short of explaining what happens which cannot be described.

3. This is a trance of the senses and faculties except as regards what helps to make the agony more intense. The understanding realizes acutely what cause there is for grief in separation from God and His Majesty now augments this sorrow by a vivid manifestation of Himself. This increases the anguish to such a degree that the sufferer gives vent

<sup>1</sup> *Life*, ch. xxix. 17. (Transverberation.)

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* ch. xxix. 13, 14. *Rel.* viii. 16-19.



to loud cries which she cannot stifle, however patient and accustomed to pain she may be, because this torture is not corporal but attacks the innermost recesses of the soul. The person I speak of learnt from this how much more acutely the spirit is capable of suffering than the body; she understood that this resembled the pains of purgatory, where the absence of the flesh does not prevent the torture's being far worse than any we can feel in this world.

4. I saw some one in this condition who I really thought would have died, nor would it have been surprising, for there is great danger of death in this state. Short as is the time it lasts, it leaves the limbs all disjoined and the pulse as feeble as if the soul were on the point of departure, which is indeed the case, for the natural heat fails, while that which is supernatural so burns the frame that were it increased ever so little God would satisfy the soul's desire for death. Not that any pain is felt by the body at the moment, although, as I said, all the joints are dislocated so that for two or three days afterwards the suffering is too severe for the person to have even the strength to hold a pen;<sup>3</sup> indeed I believe that the health becomes permanently enfeebled in consequence. At the time this is not felt, probably because the spiritual torments are so much more keen that the bodily ones remain unnoticed; just as when there is very

<sup>3</sup> St. John of the Cross, *Obscure Night*, bk. ii. ch. i. (*in fine*); *Spiritual Canticle*, stanza xiii; xiv-xv. (*in fine*). When this happened to St. Teresa she was unable to write for twelve days. Ribera, *Acta SS.* p. 555 (*in fine*). *Rel.* viii. 13. *Life*, ch. xx. 16.

severe pain in one part, slighter aches elsewhere are hardly perceived, as I know by experience. During this favour there is no physical suffering either great or small, nor do I think the person would feel it were she torn to pieces.

5. Perhaps you will say this is an imperfection, and you may ask why she does not conform herself to the will of God since she has so completely surrendered herself to it. Hitherto she has been able to do so and she consecrated her life to it; but now she cannot because her reason is reduced to such a state that she is no longer mistress of herself, nor can she think of anything but what tends to increase her torment—for why should she seek to live apart from her only Good? She feels a strange loneliness, finding no companionship in any earthly creature; nor could she, I believe, among those who dwell in heaven, since they are not her Beloved: meanwhile all society is a torture to her. She is like one suspended in mid-air, who can neither touch the earth nor mount to heaven; she is unable to reach the water while parched with thirst and this is not a thirst that can be borne, but one which nothing will quench nor would she have it quenched save with that water of which our Lord spoke to the Samaritan woman, but this is not given to her.<sup>4</sup>

6. Alas, O Lord, to what a state dost Thou bring those who love Thee! Yet these sufferings are as nothing compared with the reward Thou wilt give for them. It is right that great riches should be

<sup>4</sup> St. John iv. 15. *Life*, ch. xxx. 24. *Way of Perf.* ch. xix. 4 *sqq.* *Concept.* ch. vii. 7, 8. *Found.* ch. xxxi. 42. See note, *Life*, ch. i. 6.

dearly bought. Moreover, her pains purify her soul so that it may enter the seventh mansion, as purgatory cleanses spirits which are to enter heaven:<sup>5</sup> then indeed these trials will appear like a drop of water compared to the sea. Though this torment and grief could not, I think, be surpassed by any earthly cross (so at least this person said and she had endured much both in body and mind), yet they appeared to her as nothing in comparison with their recompense. The soul realizes that it has not merited anguish which is of such measureless value. This conviction, although bringing no relief, enables the sufferer to bear her trials willingly—for her entire lifetime, if God so wills,—although instead of dying once for all, this would be but a living death, for truly it is nothing else.

7. Let us remember, sisters, how those who are in hell lack this submission to the divine will and the resignation and consolation God gives such a soul and the solace of knowing that their pains benefit them, for the damned will continually suffer more and more; (*more and more*, I mean in regard to accidental pains<sup>6</sup>). The soul feels far more keenly than the body and the torments I have

<sup>5</sup> St. John of the Cross, *Obscure Night*, bk. ii. ch. xii.

<sup>6</sup> Marginal note in the Saint's handwriting. The 'substantial' pain of hell consists in the irrevocable loss of God, our last end and supreme Good; this is incurred from the first moment in its fullest intensity and therefore cannot increase. The physical pain with which the bodies will be afflicted when united to the souls after the general resurrection may vary, but will neither increase nor abate. The 'accidental' pain of the damned arises from various causes, for instance from the ever-increasing effects of evil actions, and therefore increases in the same proportion. Thus a heresiarch will suffer keener accidental pain as more and more souls are lost through his false teaching.

just described are incomparably less severe than those endured by the lost, who also know that their anguish will last for ever: what, then, will become of these miserable souls? What can we do or suffer during our short lives which is worth reckoning if it will free us from such terrible and endless torments? I assure you that, unless you have learned by experience, it would be impossible to make you realize how acute are spiritual pangs and how different from physical pain. Our Lord wishes us to understand this, so that we may realize what gratitude we owe Him for having called us to a state where we may hope, by His mercy, to be freed from and forgiven our sins.

8. Let us return to the soul we left in such cruel torment. This agony does not continue for long in its full violence—never, I believe, longer than three or four hours; were it prolonged, the weakness of our nature could not endure it except by a miracle. In one case, where it lasted only a quarter of an hour, the sufferer was left utterly exhausted; indeed, so violent was the attack that she completely lost consciousness. This occurred when she unexpectedly heard some verses to the effect that life seemed unending; she was engaged in conversation at the time, which was on the last day of Easter. All Eastertide she had suffered such aridity as hardly to realize what mystery was being celebrated.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> *Rel.* iv. 1. *Concept.* ch. vii. 2. Isabel of Jesus, in her deposition in the Acts of Canonisation (Fuente, *Obras*, vol. vi. 316) declares that she was the singer. The words were:

Véante mis ojos,  
Dulce Jesús bueno:  
Véante mis ojos,  
Y muérame yo luégo.

9. It is as impossible to resist this suffering as it would be to prevent the flame's having heat enough to burn us if we were thrown into a fire. These feelings cannot be concealed: all who are present recognize the dangerous condition of such a person although they are unable to see what is passing within her. True, she knows her friends are near, but they and all earthly things seem to her but shadows. To show you that, should you ever be in this state, it is possible for your weakness and human nature to be of help to you, I may tell you that at times, when a person seems dying from her desire for death<sup>8</sup> which so oppresses her soul with grief that it appears on the point of leaving her body, yet her mind, terrified at the thought, tries to still its pain so as to keep death at bay. Evidently this fear arises from human infirmity, for the soul's longings for death do not abate meanwhile nor can its sorrows be stilled or allayed until God brings it comfort.<sup>9</sup> This He usually does by a deep trance or by some vision whereby the true Comforter consoles and strengthens the heart, which thus becomes resigned to live as long as He wills.<sup>10</sup>

Fuente, *l.c.* vol. v. 143, note 1. *Œuvres*, ii. 231. (Poem 36, English version.) There is a slight difference in the two relations of this occurrence. In *Rel.* iv. St. Teresa seems to imply that it happened on Easter Sunday evening, but here she says distinctly: 'Pascua de Resurreccion, el postrer dia,' that is, on Easter Tuesday, April 17, 1571, at Salamanca.

<sup>8</sup> Compare the words 'Que muero porque no muero' in the *Glosa* of St. Teresa. *Way of Perf.* ch. xlii. 2. *Castle*, M. vii. ch. iii. 14.

<sup>9</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. xix. 10. *Excl.* vi.; xii. 2.; xiv.

<sup>10</sup> See the two versions of the poems written by the Saint on her recovery from the trance into which she was thrown, beginning 'Vivir sin vivir in me' and the poem, 'Cuan triste es, Dios mio (Poems 2, 3, and 4, English version). See also St. Teresa's poem, 'Ya toda me

10. This favour entails great suffering but leaves most precious graces within the soul, which loses all fear of any crosses it may henceforth meet with, for in comparison with the acute anguish it has gone through all else seems nothing. Seeing what she has gained, the sufferer would gladly endure frequently the same pains<sup>11</sup> but can do nothing to help herself in the matter. There are no means of reaching that state again until God chooses to decree it, when neither resistance nor escape is possible. The mind feels far deeper contempt for the world than before, realizing that nothing earthly can succour it in its torture; it is also much more detached from creatures, having learnt that no one but its Creator can bring it consolation and strength. It is more anxious and careful not to offend God, seeing that He can torment as well as comfort.<sup>12</sup>

11. Two things in this spiritual state seem to me to endanger life,—one is that of which I have just spoken which is a real peril and no small one; the other an excessive gladness and a delight so extreme ✓ that the soul appears to swoon away and seems on the point of leaving the body, which indeed would bring it no small joy.

entregué y dí.' (Poem 7, English version).

Struck by the gentle Hunter

And overthrown,

Within the arms of Love

My soul lay prone.

Raised to new life at last,

This contract 'tween us passed,

That the Beloved should be mine own,

I His alone.

<sup>11</sup> *Rel.* viii. 17.

<sup>12</sup> *Acta SS.* p. 64, n. 229.

12. Now you see, sisters, whether I had not reason to tell you that courage was needed for these favours and that when any one asks for them from our Lord He may well reply, as He did to the sons of Zebedee: 'Can you drink the chalice that I shall drink?'<sup>13</sup> I believe, sisters, we should all answer 'Yes'—and we should be perfectly right for His Majesty gives strength when He sees it needed: He ever defends such souls and answers for them when they are persecuted and slandered as He did for the Magdalen—if not in words, at least in deeds.<sup>14</sup> At last, ah, at last! before they die He repays them for all they have suffered, as you shall now learn. May He be for ever blessed and may all creatures praise Him! Amen.

<sup>13</sup> St. Matt. xx. 22: 'Potestis bibere calicem quem ego bibiturus sum?'

<sup>14</sup> St. Matt. xxvi. 10: St. Mark xiv. 6; St. John xii. 7. *Way of Perf.* ch. xvi. 7; xvii. 4. *Excl.* v. 2-4.

# THE SEVENTH MANSIONS

## CHAPTER I.

TREATS OF THE SUBLIME FAVOURS GOD BESTOWS ON SOULS WHICH HAVE ENTERED THE SEVENTH MANSIONS. THE AUTHOR SHOWS THE DIFFERENCE SHE BELIEVES TO EXIST BETWEEN SOUL AND SPIRIT ALTHOUGH THEY ARE BOTH ONE. THIS CHAPTER CONTAINS SOME NOTEWORTHY THINGS.

*1. Sublime mysteries of these mansions. 2. St. Teresa abashed at treating such subjects. 3. Our Lord introduces His bride into His presence chamber. 4. Darkness of a soul in mortal sin. 5. Intercession for sinners. 6. The soul an interior world. 7. The spiritual nuptials. 8. Former favours differ from spiritual nuptials. 9. The Blessed Trinity revealed to the soul. 10. Permanence of Its presence in the soul. 11. The effects. 12. This presence is not always equally realized. 13. It is beyond the soul's control. 14. The centre of the soul remains calm. 15. The soul and the spirit distinct though united. 16. The soul and its faculties not identical.*

1. You may think, sisters, that so much has been said of this spiritual journey that nothing remains to be added. That would be a great mistake: God's immensity has no limits, neither have His works; therefore, who can recount His mercies and His greatness?<sup>1</sup> It is impossible, so do not be amazed at what I write about them which is but a cipher of what remains untold concerning God. He has shown great mercy in communicating these mys-

<sup>1</sup> Ps. cxliv. 3: 'Magnitudinis ejus non est finis.'



teries to one who could recount them to us, for as we learn more of His intercourse with creatures, we ought to praise Him more fervently and to esteem more highly the soul in which He so delights. Each of us possesses a soul but we do not realize its value as made in the image of God, therefore we fail to understand the important secrets it contains. May His Majesty be pleased to guide my pen and to teach me to say *somewhat* of the *much* there is to tell of His revelations to the souls He leads into this mansion. I have begged Him earnestly to help me, since He sees that my object is to reveal His mercies for the praise and glory of His name. I hope He will grant this favour, if not for my own sake, at least for yours, sisters—so that you may discover how vital it is for you to put no obstacle in the way of the Spiritual Marriage of the Bridegroom with your soul which brings, as you will learn, such signal blessings with it.

2. O great God! surely such a miserable creature as myself should tremble at the thought of speaking on such a subject so far beyond anything I deserve to understand. Indeed I felt abashed and doubted whether it would not be better to finish writing about this Mansion in a few words, lest people might imagine that I am recounting my personal experience. I was overwhelmed with shame for, knowing what I am, it is a terrible undertaking. On the other hand, this fear seemed but a temptation and weakness: even if I should be misjudged, so long as God is but a little better praised and known, let all the world revile me.

Besides, I may be dead before this book is seen  
May He Who lives and shall live to all eternity  
be praised! Amen.

3. When our Lord is pleased to take pity on the sufferings, both past and present, endured through her longing for Him by this soul which He has spiritually taken for His bride, He, before consummating the celestial marriage, brings her into this His mansion or presence chamber. This is the seventh Mansion, for as He has a dwelling-place in heaven, so has He in the soul, where none but He may abide and which may be termed a second heaven.

4. It is important, sisters, that we should not fancy the soul to be in darkness. As we are accustomed to believe there is no light but that which is exterior, we imagine that the soul is wrapt in obscurity. This is indeed the case with a soul out of the state of grace,<sup>2</sup> not, however, through any defect in the Sun of Justice which remains within it and gives it being, but the soul itself is incapable of receiving the light, as I think I said in speaking of the first Mansion.<sup>3</sup> A certain person was given to understand that such unfortunate souls are, as it were, imprisoned in a gloomy dungeon, chained hand and foot and unable to perform any meritorious action: they are also both blind and dumb. Well may we pity them when we reflect that we ourselves were once in the same state and that God may show them mercy also.

<sup>2</sup> See the Saint's description of a soul in the state of sin, *Rel.* iii. 13. (towards the end).

<sup>3</sup> *Supra*, M. i. ch. ii. 1.

5. Let us, then, sisters, be most zealous in interceding for them and never neglect it. To pray for a soul in mortal sin is a far more profitable form of almsgiving than it would be to help a Christian whom we saw with hands strongly fettered behind his back, tied to a post and dying of hunger—not for want of food, because plenty of the choicest delicacies lay near him, but because he was unable to put them into his mouth, although he was extremely exhausted and on the point of dying, and that not a temporal death, but an eternal one. Would it not be extremely cruel of us to stand looking at him, and give him nothing to eat? What if by your prayers you could loose his bonds? Now you understand.

6. For the love of God I implore you constantly to remember in your prayers souls in a like case. We are not speaking now of them but of others who, by the mercy of God, have done penance for their sins and are in a state of grace. You must not think of the soul as insignificant and petty but as an interior world containing the number of beautiful mansions you have seen; as indeed it should, since in the centre of the soul there is a mansion reserved for God Himself.

7. When His Majesty deigns to bestow on the soul the grace of these divine nuptials, He brings it into His presence chamber and does not treat it as before, when He put it into a trance. I believe He then united it to Himself, as also during the prayer of union; but then only the superior part was affected and the soul did not feel called to

enter its own centre as it does in this mansion. Here it matters little whether it is in the one way or the other.

8. In the former favours our Lord unites the spirit to Himself and makes it both blind and dumb like St. Paul after his conversion,<sup>4</sup> thus preventing its knowing whence or how it enjoys this grace, for the supreme delight of the spirit is to realize its nearness to God. During the actual moment of divine union the soul feels nothing, all its powers being entirely lost. But now He acts differently: our pitiful God removes the scales from its eyes<sup>5</sup> letting it see and understand somewhat of the grace received in a strange and wonderful manner in this mansion by means of intellectual vision.

9. By some mysterious manifestation of the truth, the three Persons of the most Blessed Trinity reveal themselves, preceded by an illumination which shines on the spirit like a most dazzling cloud of light.<sup>6</sup> The three Persons are distinct from one

TRINITY

<sup>4</sup> Acts ix. 8: 'Surrexit autem Saulus de terra, apertisque oculis nihil videbat.' There is, however, nothing to imply that he was dumb as well as blind.

<sup>5</sup> Acts ix. 18: 'Et confestim ceciderunt ab oculis ejus tamquam squamæ, et visum recepit.' *Way of Perf.* ch. xxviii. 11.

<sup>6</sup> *Rel.* iii. 6; v. 6-8; viii. 20, 21; ix. 12, 17, 19. Deposition by Fr. Giles Gonzalez, S.J., Provincial of Old Castile, afterwards Assistant-General in Rome: 'While the holy Mother lived at the convent of the Incarnation of Avila [as prioress], I often spoke with her, and once I remember she asked me: "What am I to do, Father? Whenever I recollect myself I realize that already in this life the Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity may be seen, and that They accompany me and assist me in the management of my affairs."' (Fuente, *Obras*, vol. vi. p. 280.)

'Doña Maria Enriquez, Duchess of Alba, said that St. Teresa made known to her many revelations she had received from our Lord, and that she (the duchess) held in her possession three paintings of the

another; a sublime knowledge is infused into the soul, imbuing it with a certainty of the truth that the Three are of one substance, power, and knowledge and are one God. Thus that which we hold as a doctrine of faith, the soul now, so to speak, understands by sight, though it beholds the Blessed Trinity neither by the eyes of the body nor of the soul, this being no imaginary vision. All the Three Persons here communicate Themselves to the soul, speak to it and make it understand the words of our Lord in the Gospel that He and the Father and the Holy Ghost will come and make their abode with the soul which loves Him and keeps His commandments.<sup>7</sup>

10. O my God, how different from merely hearing and believing these words is it to realize their truth in this way! Day by day a growing astonishment takes possession of this soul, for the three Persons of the Blessed Trinity seem never to depart; it sees with certainty, in the way I have described, that They dwell far within its own centre and depths; though for want of learning it cannot describe how, it is conscious of the indwelling of these divine Companions.

11. You may fancy that such a person is beside herself and that her mind is too inebriated to care for anything else. On the contrary, she is far more

Blessed Trinity made according to the description of the holy Mother, who, while they were being done, effaced with her own hand those portions which the painter failed to design conformably to the vision she had had.' (Fuente, *l.c.* p. 297.)

<sup>7</sup> St. John xiv. 23: 'Si quis diligit me, sermonem meum servabit, et Pater meus diliget eum, et ad eum veniemus, et mansionem apud eum faciemus.'

active than before in all that concerns God's service, and when at leisure she enjoys this blessed companionship. Unless she first deserts God, I believe He will never cease to make her clearly sensible of His presence: she feels confident, as indeed she may, that He will never so fail her as to allow her to lose this favour after once bestowing it; at the same time, she is more careful than before to avoid offending Him in any way. ✓

12. This presence is not always so entirely realized, that is, so distinctly manifest, as at first, or as it is at times when God renews this favour, otherwise the recipient could not possibly attend to anything else nor live in society. Although not always seen by so clear a light, yet whenever she reflects on it she feels the companionship of the Blessed Trinity. This is as if, when we were with other people in a very well lighted room, some one were to darken it by closing the shutters; we should feel certain that the others were still there, though we were unable to see them.<sup>8</sup>

13. You may ask: 'Could she not bring back the light and see them again?'<sup>9</sup> This is not in her

<sup>8</sup> One of the Saint's favourite comparisons. See *Life*, ch. xxvii. 7. *Castle*, M. vi. ch. viii. 3. *Rel.* vii. 26.

<sup>9</sup> 'Though the soul be always in the high estate of marriage since God has placed it there, nevertheless, actual union in all its powers is not continuous, though the substantial union is. In this substantial union the powers of the soul are most frequently in union, and drink of His cellar, the understanding by knowledge, the will by love, etc. We are not therefore to suppose that the soul, when saying it went out, has ceased from its substantial or essential union with God, but only from the union of its faculties, which is not, and cannot be, permanent in this life.' (St. John of the Cross, *Spiritual Canticle*, stanza xxvi. 9. On the words: 'In the inner cellar of my Beloved have I drunk, and when I went forth').

power; when our Lord chooses, He will open the shutters of the understanding: He shows her great mercy in never quitting her and in making her realize it so clearly. His divine Majesty seems to be preparing His bride for greater things by this divine companionship which clearly helps perfection in every way and makes her lose the fear she sometimes felt when other graces were granted her.

14. A certain person so favoured found she had improved in all virtues: whatever were her trials or labours, the centre of her soul seemed never moved from its resting-place. Thus in a manner her soul appeared divided: a short time after God had done her this favour, while undergoing great sufferings, she complained of her soul as Martha did of Mary,<sup>10</sup> reproaching it with enjoying solitary peace while leaving her so full of troubles and occupations that she could not keep it company.

15. This may seem extravagant to you, daughters, yet though the soul is known to be undivided, it is fact and no fancy and often happens. Interior effects show for certain that there is a positive difference between the soul and the spirit, although they are one with each other.<sup>11</sup> There is an extremely

<sup>10</sup> St. Luke x. 40. *Excl.* v. 2, 3. *Way of Perf.* ch. xv. 4; xxxi. 4. *Rel.* viii. 6. *Concept.* ch. vii. 4.

<sup>11</sup> *Life*, ch. xviii. 4. The distinction between soul and spirit, to be found in the Epistle to the Hebrews, iv. 12, according to Cornelius a Lapide (*ad loc.*) consists in this, that the term *soul* comprises the faculties, senses, and passions, whereas the term *spirit* denotes the substance of the soul independently of its powers. In the inferior degrees of the Mystical life God operates through the faculties, while in the Mystical marriage He acts directly on the substance of the soul. St. Teresa is not quite

subtle distinction between them, so that sometimes they seem to act in a different manner from one another, as does the knowledge given to them by God.

16. It also appears to me that the soul and its faculties are not identical. There are so many and such transcendental mysteries within us, that it would be presumption for me to attempt to explain them. If by God's mercy we enter heaven we shall understand these secrets.

## CHAPTER II.

TREATS OF THE SAME SUBJECT: EXPLAINS, BY SOME DELICATELY DRAWN COMPARISONS, THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SPIRITUAL UNION AND SPIRITUAL MARRIAGE.

1. *The spiritual nuptials introduced by an imaginary vision.* 2. *Spiritual betrothal and marriage differ.* 3. *Spiritual marriage lasting.* 4. *Not so spiritual betrothal.* 5. *Spiritual marriage permanent.* 6. *St. Paul and spiritual marriage.* 7. *The soul's joy in union.* 8. *Its conviction of God's indwelling.* 9. *Its peace.* 10. *Christ's prayer for the divine union of the soul.* 11. *Its fulfilment.* 12. *Unalterable peace of the soul in the seventh Mansion.* 13. *Unless it offends God.* 14. *Struggles outside the seventh Mansion.* 15. *Comparisons explaining this.*

I. WE now come to speak of divine and spiritual nuptials, although this sublime favour cannot be received in all its perfection during our present life, for by forsaking God this great good would be lost. The first time God bestows this grace, He, by an imaginary vision of His most sacred Humanity, reveals Himself to the soul so that it may understand and realize the sovereign gift it is consistent in the use of these terms, which is not surprising, as she owns that she does not quite understand this subtle distinction.



receiving. He may manifest Himself in a different way to other people; the person I mentioned, after having received Holy Communion beheld our Lord, full of splendour, beauty, and majesty, as He was after His resurrection.<sup>1</sup> He told her that henceforth she was to care for His affairs as though they were her own and He would care for hers: He spoke other words which she understood better than she can repeat them. This may seem nothing new, for our Lord had thus revealed Himself to her at other times;<sup>2</sup> yet this was so different that it left her bewildered and amazed, both on account of the vividness of what she saw and of the words heard at the time, also because it took place in the interior of the soul where, with the exception of the one last mentioned, no other vision had been seen.

2. You must understand that between the visions seen in this and in the former mansions there is a vast difference; there is the same distinction between spiritual espousals and spiritual marriage as between people who are only betrothed and others who are united for ever in holy matrimony. I have told you<sup>3</sup> that though I make this comparison because there is none more suitable, yet this betrothal is no more related to our corporal condition than if the soul were a disembodied spirit. This is even more true of the spiritual marriage, for this secret union takes place in the innermost centre of the soul where God Himself must dwell: I believe that no door is required to enter it. I say, 'no door

<sup>1</sup> *Rel.* iii. 20; ix. 8 and 25.

<sup>3</sup> *Castle*, M. v. ch. iv. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Life*, ch. xxxix. 29.

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is required,' for all I have hitherto described seems to come through the senses and faculties as must the representation of our Lord's Humanity, but what passes in the union of the spiritual nuptials is very different. Here God appears in the soul's centre, not by an imaginary but by an intellectual vision far more mystic than those seen before, just as He appeared to the Apostles without having entered through the door when He said: 'Pax vobis.'<sup>4</sup>

3. So mysterious is the secret and so sublime the favour that God thus bestows instantaneously on the soul, that it feels a supreme delight, only to be described by saying that our Lord vouchsafes for the moment to reveal to it His own heavenly glory in a far more subtle way than by any vision or spiritual delight. As far as can be understood, the soul, I mean the spirit of this soul, is made one with God<sup>5</sup> Who is Himself a spirit, and Who has been pleased to show certain persons how far His love for us extends in order that we may praise His greatness. He has thus deigned to unite Himself to His creature: He has bound Himself to her as firmly as two human beings are joined in wedlock and will never separate Himself from her.

4. Spiritual betrothal is different and like the grace of union is often dissolved; for though two things are made one by union, separation is still possible and each part then remains a thing by itself. This favour generally passes quickly, and afterwards the soul, as far as it is aware, remains without His company.

<sup>4</sup> St. John xx. 19.

<sup>5</sup> *Rel.* xi. i. *sqq.*

5. This is not so in the spiritual marriage with our Lord, where the soul always remains in its centre with its God. Union may be symbolized by two wax candles, the tips of which touch each other so closely that there is but one light; or again, the wick, the wax, and the light become one, but the one candle can again be separated from the other and the two candles remain distinct; or the wick may be withdrawn from the wax. But spiritual marriage is like rain falling from heaven into a river or stream, becoming one and the same liquid, so that the river and rain water cannot be divided; or it resembles a streamlet flowing into the ocean, which cannot afterwards be disunited from it. This marriage may also be likened to a room into which a bright light enters through two windows—though divided when it enters, the light becomes one and the same.

6. Perhaps when St. Paul said, 'He who is joined to the Lord is one spirit,'<sup>6</sup> he meant this sovereign marriage, which presupposes His Majesty's having been joined to the soul by union. The same Apostle says: 'To me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.'<sup>7</sup> This, I think, might here be uttered by the soul, for now the little butterfly of which I spoke dies with supreme joy, for Christ is her life.

7. This becomes more manifest by its effects as time goes on, for the soul learns that it is God Who gives it 'life,' by certain secret intuitions too strong to be misunderstood, and keenly felt, although impossible to describe. These produce such over-

<sup>6</sup> 1 Cor. vi. 17: 'Qui adhæret Domino unus spiritus est.'

<sup>7</sup> Philip. i. 21: 'Mihi vivere Christus est, et mori lucrum.'

mastering feelings that the person experiencing them cannot refrain from amorous exclamations, such as: 'O Life of my life, and Power which doth uphold me!' with other aspirations of the same kind.<sup>8</sup> For from the bosom of the Divinity, where God seems ever to hold this soul fast clasped, issue streams of milk, which solace the servants of the castle. I think He wishes them to share, in some way, the riches the soul enjoys; therefore from the flowing river in which the little streamlet is swallowed up, some drops of water flow every now and then to sustain the bodily powers, the servants of the bride and Bridegroom.

8. A person who was unexpectedly plunged into water could not fail to be aware of it; here the case is the same, but even more evident. A quantity of water could not fall on us unless it came from some source—so the soul feels certain there must be some one within it who lances forth these darts and vivifies its own life, and that there is a Sun whence this brilliant light streams forth from the interior of the spirit to its faculties.

9. The soul itself, as I said, never moves from this centre, nor loses the peace He can give Who gave it to the Apostles when they were assembled together.<sup>9</sup> I think this salutation of our Lord contains far deeper meaning than the words convey, as

<sup>8</sup> Such exclamations, in considerable number, form the *Book of Exclamations* published by Fray Luis de Leon. De Fuente thinks it was written in 1569, but as St. Teresa's spiritual betrothal took place on November 18, 1572, it seems, at least in parts, of a later date. The spiritual nuptials must be placed between the aforementioned year and May 1575, but it is not possible to ascertain the exact date. (For the *Exclamations*, see *Minor Works*).

<sup>9</sup> St. John xx. 19.

also His bidding the glorious Magdalen to 'go in peace.'<sup>10</sup> Our Lord's words *act* within us,<sup>11</sup> and in these cases they must have wrought their effect in the souls already disposed to banish from within themselves all that is corporal and to retain only what is spiritual, in order to be joined in this celestial union with the uncreated Spirit. Without doubt, if we empty ourselves of all that belongs to the creature, depriving ourselves of it for the love of God, that same Lord will fill us with Himself.

10. Our Lord Jesus Christ, praying for His Apostles, (I cannot remember the reference), asked that they might be made one with the Father and with Himself, as Jesus Christ our Lord is in the Father and the Father in Him!<sup>12</sup> I do not know how love could be greater than this! Let none draw back from entering here, for His Majesty also said: 'Not only for them do I pray, but for them also who through their word shall believe in Me';<sup>13</sup> and He declared: 'I am in them.'<sup>14</sup>

11. God help me! how true these words are, and how clearly are they understood by the soul which in this state of prayer finds them fulfilled in itself! So should we all but for our own fault, for the words of Jesus Christ, our King and our Lord, cannot fail. It is *we* who fail by not disposing ourselves fitly, nor removing all that can obstruct this light,

<sup>10</sup> St. Luke vii. 50.

<sup>11</sup> *Supra*, M. vi. ch. iii. 6. *Life*, ch. xxv. 5.

<sup>12</sup> St. John xvii. 21: 'Ut omnes unum sint, sicut tu Pater in me, et ego in te, ut et ipsi in nobis unum sint.'

<sup>13</sup> St. John xvii. 20: 'Non pro eis autem rogo tantum, sed et pro eis, qui credituri sunt per verbum eorum in me.'

<sup>14</sup> St. John xvii. 23: 'Ego in eis.'

so that we do not behold ourselves in this mirror wherein our image is engraved.<sup>15</sup>

12. To return to what I was saying. God places the soul in His own mansion which is in the very centre of the soul itself. They say the empyreal heavens, in which our Lord dwells, do not revolve with the rest: so the accustomed movements of the faculties and imagination do not appear to take place in any way that can injure the soul or disturb its peace.

13. Do I seem to imply that after God has brought the soul thus far it is certain to be saved and cannot fall into sin again?<sup>16</sup> I do not mean this: whenever

<sup>15</sup> This idea is expressed in St. Teresa's poem: 'Alma, buscarte has en Mi' (Poem 10, *Minor Works*).

Such is the power of love, O soul,  
To paint thee in my heart  
No craftsman with such art  
Whate'er his skill might be, could there  
Thine image thus impart!  
'Twas love that gave thee life—  
Then, fair one, if thou be  
Lost to thyself, thou'lt see  
Thy portrait in my bosom stamped—  
Soul, seek thyself in Me.

<sup>16</sup> In a letter dated May 1581, addressed to Don Alonso Velasquez, then bishop of Osma, St. Teresa writes as follows:

'She [herself] has received such an assurance of coming one day to the fruition of God that she almost imagines she has already come into possession of Him, without, however, the joy that will accompany it. She is in the same position as one who by legal contract has received a splendid property which will become his, and whose fruit he will enjoy at a given date. Until then he only holds the title-deeds, without being able to take possession of the property. Nevertheless my soul would not like to come immediately into the possession of God, for it does not believe that it has deserved such a grace. It only desires to continue in His service, even at the cost of terrible sufferings. It would not mind thus serving Him to the end of the world, after having received such a pledge.' St. John of the Cross, in treating of this subject (*Spir.*

I say that the soul seems in security, I must be understood to imply for as long as His Majesty thus holds it in His care and it does not offend Him. At any rate I know for certain that though such a person realizes the high state she is in and has remained in it for several years, she does not consider herself safe, but is more careful than ever to avoid committing the least offence against God. As I shall explain later on, she is most anxious to serve Him and feels a constant pain and confusion at seeing how little she can do for Him compared with all she ought. This is no light cross but a severe mortification, for the harder the penances she can perform, the better is she pleased. Her greatest penance is to be deprived by God of health and strength to perform any. I told you elsewhere what keen pain this caused her, but now it grieves her far more. This must be because she is like a tree grafted on a stock growing near a stream which makes it greener and more fruitful.<sup>17</sup> Why marvel at the longings of this soul whose spirit has truly become one with the celestial water I described?

14. To return to what I wrote about. It is not intended that the powers, senses and passions should continually enjoy this peace. The soul does so, indeed, but in the other mansions there are still times of struggle, suffering, and fatigue, though as a general rule, peace is not lost by them. This 'centre of the soul' or 'spirit' is so hard to describe

*Cant.* stanza xxii. 3) says: 'I believe that no soul ever attains to this state without being confirmed in grace in it.' See also Ribera, in the *Acta Ss.* p. 554, *circa finem*.

<sup>17</sup> Ps. i. 3: 'Et erit tamquam lignum quod plantatum est secus decursus aquarum, quod fructum suum dabit in tempore suo.'

or even to believe in, that I think, sisters, my inability to explain my meaning saves your being tempted to disbelieve me; it is difficult to understand how there can be crosses and sufferings and yet peace in the soul.

15. Let me give you one or two comparisons—God grant they may be of use; if not, I know that what I say is true. A king resides in his palace; many wars and disasters take place in his kingdom but he remains on his throne. In the same way, though tumults and wild beasts rage with great uproar in the other mansions, yet nothing of this enters the seventh mansions, nor drives the soul from it. Although the mind regrets these troubles, they do not disturb it nor rob it of its peace, for the passions are too subdued to dare to enter here where they would only suffer still further defeat. Though the whole body is in pain, yet the head, if it be sound, does not suffer with it. I smile at these comparisons—they do not please me—but I can find no others. Think what you will about it—I have told you the truth.



## CHAPTER III.

THE GREAT FRUITS PRODUCED BY THE ABOVE-MENTIONED PRAYER. THE WONDERFUL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THESE EFFECTS AND THOSE FORMERLY DESCRIBED SHOULD BE CAREFULLY STUDIED AND REMEMBERED.

1. *Effects of the graces last received.* 2. *The soul only cares for God's honour.* 3. *But still performs its duties.* 4. *Other fruits of these favours.* 5. *The soul's fervent desire to serve God.* 6. *Christ dwells within this soul.* 7. *And recalls it to fervour if negligent.* 8. *God's constant care of such souls.* 9. *Their peace and silence.* 10. *Few ecstasies in the Seventh Mansions.* 11. *Probable reasons for this.* 12. *Allusions in Holy Scripture to this state.* 13. *Watchfulness of such souls.* 14. *Crosses suffered in this state.*

1. THE little butterfly has died with the greatest joy at having found rest at last, and now Christ lives in her.<sup>1</sup> Let us see the difference between her present and her former life, for the effects will prove whether what I told you was true. As far as can be ascertained they are these: first, a self-forgetfulness so complete that she really appears not to exist, as I said,<sup>2</sup> for such a transformation has been worked in her that she no longer recognizes herself; nor does she remember that heaven, or life, or glory are to be hers, but seems entirely occupied in seeking God's interests. Apparently the words spoken by His Majesty have done their work: 'that she was to care for His affairs, and He would care for hers.'<sup>3</sup>

2. Thus she recks nothing, whatever happens, but lives in such strange oblivion that, as I stated, she seems no longer to exist, nor does she wish to be of

<sup>1</sup> Gal. ii. 20.

<sup>2</sup> *Castle*, M. vii. ch. i. 11 and 15.

<sup>3</sup> *Castle*, M. vii. ch. ii. 1. Compare the references there given.

any account in anything—*anything*! unless she sees that she can advance, however little, the honour and glory of God, for which she would most willingly die.

3. Do not fancy I mean, daughters, that she neglects to eat and drink, though it brings no small torment to her, or to perform the duties of her state. I am speaking of her interior; as regards her exterior actions there is little to say, for her chief suffering is to see that she has hardly strength to do anything. For nothing in the world would she omit doing all she can which she knows would honour our Lord.

4. The second fruit is a strong desire for suffering, though it does not disturb her peace as before because the fervent wish of such souls for the fulfilment of God's will in them makes them acquiesce in all He does. If He would have her suffer, she is content; if not, she does not torment herself to death about it as she used to do. She feels a great interior joy when persecuted, and is far more peaceful than in the former state under such circumstances: she bears no grudge against her enemies, nor wishes them any ill. Indeed she has a special love for them, is deeply grieved at seeing them in trouble, and does all she can to relieve them,<sup>4</sup> earnestly interceding with God on their behalf. She would be glad to forfeit the favours His Majesty shows her, if they might be given to her enemies instead, to prevent their offending our Lord.

<sup>4</sup> Don Alvaro de Mendoza, Bishop of Avila, used to say that the best means of obtaining St. Teresa's friendship was to injure or insult her. *Acta Ss. n. 1233. Rel. vii. 20.*

5. The most surprising thing to me is that the sorrow and distress which such souls felt because they could not die and enjoy our Lord's presence<sup>5</sup> are now exchanged for as fervent a desire of serving Him, of causing Him to be praised, and of helping others to the utmost of their power. Not only have they ceased to long for death, but they wish for a long life and most heavy crosses, if such would bring ever so little honour to our Lord. Thus, if they knew for certain that immediately on quitting their bodies their souls would enjoy God, it would make no difference to them, nor do they think of the glory enjoyed by the saints, and long to share it. Such souls hold that their glory consists in helping, in any way, Him Who was crucified, especially as they see how men offend against Him, and how few, detached from all else, care for His honour alone. True, people in this state forget this at times, and are seized with tender longings to enjoy God and to leave this land of exile, especially as they see how little they serve Him. Then, returning to themselves and reflecting how they possess Him continually in their souls, they are satisfied, offering to His Majesty their willingness to live as the most costly oblation they can make.<sup>6</sup> They fear death no more than they would a delicious trance.

<sup>5</sup> *Rel.* viii. 15.

<sup>6</sup> Compare with the Saint's poem on self-oblation: 'Vuestro soy, para Vos naci' (Poem 1. *Minor Works*).

Long life bestow, or straightway let me die;  
 Let health be mine, or pain and sickness send;  
 Honour or foul dishonour—be my path  
 Beset by war or peaceful till the end.  
 My strength or weakness be as Thou dost choose,  
 Since naught Thou askest shall I e'er refuse.  
 Say, Lord, what is it Thou dost will for me?

7. Such a soul, thoroughly detached from all things, wishes to be either always alone or occupied on what benefits the souls of others: she feels neither aridity nor any interior troubles, but a constant tender recollection of our Lord Whom she wishes to praise unceasingly. When she grows negligent, the same Lord arouses her in the way that I told you, and it is easy to see that this impulse (I know not what term to use for it) comes from the interior of the soul, like the former impetuous desires.<sup>7</sup> It is now felt very sweetly, but is neither produced by the intellect nor the memory, nor is there reason to believe the soul itself has any share in it. This is so usual and so frequent that whoever has been in this state must have noticed it. However large a fire may be, the flame never burns downwards, but upwards, and so this movement is seen to come from the centre of the soul whose powers it excites. Indeed, were nothing else gained by this way of prayer but the knowledge of the special care God takes to communicate Himself to us and how He entreats us to abide with Him (for indeed I can describe it in no other way) I think that for the sake of these sweet and penetrating touches of His love all our past pains would be well spent.

8. You will have learnt this by experience, sisters, for I think that when our Lord has brought us to the prayer of union, He watches over us in this way unless we neglect to keep His commandments. When these impulses are given you, remember that they come from the innermost mansion, where

<sup>7</sup> *Castle*, M. vi. ch. vi. 6.

God dwells in our souls. Praise Him fervently, for it is He Who sends you this message, or love letter, so tenderly written, and in a cipher that only you can understand and know what He asks. By no means neglect to answer His Majesty, even though you may be occupied exteriorly and engaged in conversation. Our Lord may often be pleased to show you this secret favour in public; but it is very easy, as the reply should be entirely interior, to respond by an act of love or to ask with Saint Paul: 'Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?'<sup>8</sup> Jesus will show you in many ways how to please Him. It is a propitious moment, for He seems to be listening to us and the soul is nearly always disposed by this delicate touch to respond with a generous determination.<sup>9</sup> As I told you, this mansion differs from the rest in that, as I said,<sup>10</sup> the dryness and disturbance felt in all the rest at times hardly ever enter here, where the soul is nearly always calm. It does not fear that this sublime favour can be counterfeited by the devil, but feels a settled conviction that it is of divine origin because, as above stated, nothing is here perceived

<sup>8</sup> Acts ix. 6: 'Domine, quid me vis facere?'

<sup>9</sup> The words from 'know what He asks' to 'as I told you' are not in the original manuscript, but must have been written on a separate slip, as is proved by a marginal note in the handwriting of the Saint: 'Quando dice aqui: os pide, léase luego este papel.' This paper is now lost, but the passage it contained is preserved in the early manuscript copies of Toledo, Cordova and Salamanca, as well as in the first printed edition, and, through this, in the old translations; hence both Woodhead and Dalton have it in its proper place. It is, of course, not to be found in the autograph published in 1882, nor in Fuente's Spanish editions nor in translations based upon these. The Spanish text will be found in *Œuvres* vi, 297 note.

<sup>10</sup> *Supra* §§ 1 and 2.

by the senses or faculties but His Majesty reveals Himself to the spirit, which He takes to be with Himself in a place where I doubt not the devil dares not enter, nor would our Lord ever permit him.

9. All the graces here divinely bestowed on the soul come, as I said, through no action of its own except its total abandonment of itself to God. They are given in peace and silence, like the building of Solomon's Temple where no sound was heard.<sup>11</sup> It is thus with this temple of God, this mansion of His where He and the soul rejoice in each other alone in profound silence. The mind need not act nor search for anything, as the Lord Who created it wishes it to be at rest and only to watch through a little chink, what passes within. Though at times it cannot see this, yet such intervals are very short, I believe because the powers are not here lost but only cease to work, being, as it were, dazed with astonishment.

10. I, too, am astonished at seeing that when the soul arrives at this state it does not go into ecstasies except perhaps on rare occasions—even then they are not like the former trances and the flight of the spirit and seldom take place in public as they did before.<sup>12</sup> They are no longer produced by any special calls to devotion, such as by the sight of a religious picture, by hearing a sermon (were it only the first few words), or by sacred music; formerly, like the poor little butterfly, the soul

<sup>11</sup> III Reg. vi. 7.

<sup>12</sup> 'That is, so as to lose the senses' (marginal note in the Saints' handwriting). *Rel.* iii. 5.

was so anxious that anything used to alarm it and make it take flight. This may be either because the spirit has at last found repose, or that it has seen such wonders in this mansion that nothing can frighten it, or perhaps because it no longer feels solitary since it rejoices in such Company.

11. In short, sisters, I cannot tell the reason, but as soon as God shows the soul what this mansion contains, bringing it to dwell within the precincts, the infirmity formerly so troublesome to the mind and impossible to get over, disappears at once. Probably this is because our Lord has now strengthened, dilated, and developed the soul, or it may be that He wished to make public (for some end known only to Himself) what He was doing in secret within such souls, for His judgments are beyond our comprehension in this life.

12. These effects, with all the other good fruits I have mentioned of the different degrees of prayer, are given by God to the soul when it draws near Him to receive that 'kiss of His mouth' for which the bride asked,<sup>13</sup> and I believe her petition is now granted. Here the overflowing waters are given to the wounded hart: here she delights in the tabernacles of God<sup>14</sup>: here the dove sent out by Noe to see whether the flood had subsided, has plucked the olive branch, showing that she has found firm land amongst the floods and tempests of this world.<sup>15</sup> O Jesus! Who knows how much in Holy Scripture refers to this peace of soul? Since, O my God, Thou dost see of what grave import is this peace

<sup>13</sup> Cant. i. 1.<sup>14</sup> Ps. xli. 2, 5.<sup>15</sup> Gen. viii. 10, 11.

to us, do Thou incite Christians to strive to gain it! In Thy mercy do not deprive those of it on whom Thou hast bestowed it, for until Thou hast given them true peace and brought them to where it is unending, they must ever live in fear.

13. I do not mean that peace is unreal on earth because I say 'true peace,' but that such souls might have to begin all their struggles over again if they forsook God. What must these people feel at the thought that it is possible to lose so great a good? Their dread makes them more careful; they try to gather strength from their weakness lest, through their own fault, they should miss any opportunity of pleasing God better. The greater the favours they have received from His Majesty, the more diffident and mistrustful are they of themselves; the marvels they have witnessed having revealed more clearly to them their own miseries and the heinousness of their sins, so that often, like the publican, they dare not so much as lift up their eyes.<sup>16</sup>

14. Sometimes they long to die and be in safety, but then their love at once makes them wish to live in order to serve God, as I told you; therefore they commit all that concerns them to His mercy.<sup>17</sup> At times they are more crushed than ever by the thought of the many graces they have received lest, like an overladen ship, they sink beneath the burden. I assure you, sisters, such souls have their cross to bear, yet it does not trouble them nor rob them of their peace, but is quickly gone like a wave or a storm which is followed by a calm, for God's

<sup>16</sup> St. Luke. xviii. 13.

<sup>17</sup> *Rel.* ix. 19.



presence within them soon makes them forget all else. May He be for ever blessed and praised by all His creatures ! Amen.

## CHAPTER IV.

THE CONCLUSION SETS FORTH WHAT APPEARS TO BE OUR LORD'S PRINCIPAL INTENTION IN CONFERRING THESE SUBLIME FAVOURS ON SOULS, AND EXPLAINS HOW NECESSARY IT IS FOR MARY AND MARTHA TO GO TOGETHER. THIS CHAPTER IS VERY PROFITABLE.

1. *Vicissitudes of the Seventh Mansion.* 2. *Humility produced by them.* 3. *Such souls free from mortal and from wilful venial sins.* 4. *The fate of Solomon.* 5. *Holy fear.* 6. *These favours strengthen souls to suffer.* 7. *Crosses borne by the saints.* 8. *Effect of vision of our Lord on St. Peter.* 9. *Fruits of these favours.* 10. *Why the spiritual marriage takes place.* 11. *Love for Christ proved by our deeds.* 12. *True spirituality.* 13. *Humility and the virtues must combine with prayer.* 14. *Zeal of advanced souls.* 15. *Strengthened by the divine Presence within them.* 16. *Examples of the saints.* 17. *Both Martha and Mary must serve our Lord.* 18. *Christ's food.* 19. *Mary's mortification.* 20. *Her grief at the Passion.* 21. *Can we lead souls to God?* 22. *How to do so.* 23. *Love gives value to our deeds.* 24. *Conclusion.*

1. You must not suppose, sisters, that the effects I mentioned always exist in the same degree in these souls, for as far as I remember, I told you that in most cases our Lord occasionally leaves such persons to the weakness of their nature. The venomous creatures from the moat round the castle and the other mansions at once unite to revenge themselves for the time when they were deprived of their power.

2. True, this lasts but a short time—a day perhaps or a little longer—but during this disturbance, which generally arises from some passing event, these persons learn what benefits they derive from

the holy Company they are in. Our Lord gives them such great fortitude that they never desert His service nor the good resolutions they have made, which only seem to gather strength by trial, nor do their hearts ever turn from them, even by a slight movement of the will. This trouble rarely happens; our Lord wishes the soul to keep in mind its natural condition so that it may be humble and may better understand how much it owes Him, and how great a grace it has received, and so may praise Him.

3. Do not fancy that in spite of the strong desire and determination of these souls that they do not commit imperfections and even fall into many sins: that is, not *wilfully*; for such people are given special grace from God on this point: I mean venial sins. As far as they are aware, they are free from mortal sins, although they do not feel certain they may not be guilty of some of which they are ignorant.

4. This grieves their hearts sorely, as does the sight of the souls perishing around them; although on the one hand they have strong hopes of not being themselves among the number of the lost, yet remembering what we are told in Holy Scripture of the fate of men who, like Solomon, seemed the special favourites of God<sup>1</sup> and conversed so familiarly with His Majesty, they cannot help fearing for themselves.

5. Let that one among you who feels most confidence on this point fear the most, for: 'Blessed

<sup>1</sup> III. Reg. xi.

is the man who feareth the Lord,' as David said.<sup>2</sup> May His Majesty ever protect us. Let us beg Him never to permit us to offend Him: therein lies our greatest safety. May He be for ever praised. Amen.

6. It would be well to tell you, sisters, the reason why God bestows such favours on souls in this world, although you must have learned this by the effects produced if you have considered the matter. I return to the matter in order that none of you may think it is only for the sake of the pleasure such persons feel, which would be a great mistake on your part, for His Majesty can bestow no greater favour on us than to give us a life such as was led by His beloved Son. Therefore, as I have often told you, I feel certain that these graces are sent to strengthen our weakness so that we may imitate Him by suffering much.

7. We always find that those nearest to Christ our Lord bear the heaviest cross: think of what His glorious Mother and the Apostles bore. How do you think St. Paul went through such immense labours?<sup>3</sup> We learn from his conduct the fruits of genuine visions and contemplation which come from our Lord and not from our own imagination, or the devil's fraud. Do you suppose that St. Paul hid himself to enjoy these spiritual consolations at

<sup>2</sup> Ps. cxi. 1. 'Beatus vir qui timet Dominum.'

<sup>3</sup> Though thou shouldst have been rapt up to the third heaven with Saint Paul, thou art not thereby secured that thou shalt suffer no adversity. 'I,' said Jesus, 'will shew him how great things he must suffer for My name's sake' (Acts. ix. 16). To suffer, therefore, is what waits for thee, if thou wilt love Jesus and constantly serve Him. . . . For our merit and the advancement of our state consist not in having many sweetnesses and consolations, but rather in bearing great afflictions and tribulations' (*Imitation*, bk. ii. ch. xii. 12).

leisure and did nothing else? You know that he never took a day's rest so far as we can learn, nor could he have slept much since he worked all night to get his living.<sup>4</sup>

8. I am delighted with St. Peter, who when fleeing from prison was met by our Lord, Who told him He was going to Rome to be crucified again. I never recite the Office in which this is commemorated without feeling a special joy.<sup>5</sup> What effect did this vision have on St. Peter, and what did he do? He went at once to meet his death—and our Lord did him no small favour in finding him an executioner!

9. Oh, my sisters, how forgetful of her ease, how unmindful of honours, and how far from seeking men's esteem should she be whose soul God thus chooses for His special dwelling-place! For if her mind is fixed on Him, as it ought to be, she must needs forget herself: all her thoughts are bent on how to please Him better and when and how she can show the love she bears Him.

10. *This* is the end and aim of prayer, my daughters; *this* is the reason of the spiritual marriage whose children are always good works. *Works* are the unmistakable sign which shows these favours come from God, as I told you. It will do me little

<sup>4</sup> 1 Thess. ii. 9.

<sup>5</sup> The Antiphon of the Magnificat at first Vespers of the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul, June 29, in the Carmelite Breviary used by St. Teresa is: 'Beatus Petrus Apostolus vidit sibi Christum occurrere. Adorans eum ait: "Domine, quo vadis?"—"Venio Romam iterum crucifigi." 'The Blessed Apostle Peter saw Christ come to meet him. Adoring Him, he asked "Lord, where art Thou going?"—"I go to Rome to be crucified anew." The saint at once returned to Rome and was taken by the soldiers and crucified. See *Letter* of Jan. 17. 1577, note 4. Vol. II.

good to be deeply recollected when alone, making acts of the virtues, planning and promising to do wonders in God's service, if afterwards, when occasion offers, I do just the opposite. I did wrong in saying, 'It will do me *little* good,' for all the time we spend with God does us *great* good. Though afterwards we may weakly fail to perform our good intentions, yet some time or other His Majesty will find a way for us to practise them although perhaps much to our regret. Thus when He sees a soul very cowardly, He often sends it some great affliction, much against its will, and brings it through this trial with profit to itself, When the soul has learnt this, it is less timid in offering itself to Him.

11. I ought to have said, 'will do us *little* good' in comparison with the far *greater* good we can gain when our works fulfil our aspirations and our promises. She that cannot do all this at once should do it little by little, gradually dominating her will, if she wishes to gain fruit from prayer. Even in this little nook she will find many a chance to practise this. Remember, this is of far more importance than I know how to express. Fix your eyes on the Crucified One, and all will seem easy. If His Majesty proved His love for us by such stupendous labours and sufferings, how can you seek to please Him by words alone?

12. Do you know what it is to be truly spiritual? It is for men to make themselves the *slaves* of God—branded with His mark, which is the cross. Since they have given Him their freedom, He can sell

them as slaves to the whole world, as He was, which would be doing them no wrong but the greatest favour. Unless you make up your minds to this, never expect to make much progress,<sup>6</sup> for as I said humility is the foundation of the whole building and unless you are truly humble, our Lord, for your own sake, will never permit you to rear it very high lest it should fall to the ground.

13. Therefore, sisters, take care to lay a firm foundation by seeking to be the least of all and the slave of others, watching how you can please and help them, for it will benefit you more than them. Built on such strong rocks, your castle can never go to ruin. I insist again: your foundation must not consist of prayer and contemplation alone: unless you acquire the virtues and practise them, you will always be dwarfs; and please God no worse may befall you than making no progress, for you know that to stop is to go back—if you love, you will never be content to come to a standstill.

14. Perhaps you think I am speaking of beginners and that one may rest later on, but, as I told you, the rest such souls feel is within them: they have less outwardly nor do they wish for it. Why, do you think, does the soul send from its centre these inspirations, or rather aspirations, (the messages of which I spoke), to the dwellers in the precincts of the castle and to the surrounding mansions? To send them to sleep? No, no, no! The soul wages a fiercer war from thence to keep the powers,

<sup>6</sup> 'If thou wilt stand upon self and wilt not offer thyself freely to My will, thine offering is not perfect, nor will there be entire union between us.' (*Imitation*, bk. iv. ch. viii. 2.)

senses and the whole body from being idle, than ever it did when it suffered in their company. Formerly it did not understand the immense benefit its afflictions brought, though indeed they may have been the means God used to advance it to this state.

15. Besides, the company it enjoys gives it far greater strength than ever before. If, as David says: 'With the holy thou shalt be holy,'<sup>7</sup> doubtless by its becoming one with the Almighty, by this sovereign union of spirit with spirit, the soul must gather strength, as we know the saints did, to suffer and to die. Beyond doubt, with the force thus gained, the soul succours all within the castle and even the very body itself, which often seems to have no feeling left in it. The vigour the soul derives from 'the wine' drunk in the 'cellar'<sup>8</sup> (into which the Bridegroom brought her and would not let her go) overflows into the feeble body, just as the food we eat nourishes both the head and the whole frame.

16. Indeed the body suffers much while alive, for whatever work it does, the soul has energy for far greater tasks and goads it on to more, for all it can perform appears as nothing. This must be the reason of the severe penances performed by many of the saints, especially the glorious Magdalen, who had always spent her life in luxury.<sup>9</sup> This

<sup>7</sup> Ps. xvii. 26: 'Cum sancto sanctus eris.'

<sup>8</sup> Cant. ii. 4.

<sup>9</sup> 'St. Mary Magdalen gave herself up to penance and contemplation in a deep excavation of the rocks at La Baume, near Marseilles. In this wild spot there was neither bread, water, nor even herbage. Thus she lived for more than thirty-two years without any kind of nourishment but that which was celestial, performing meanwhile most severe penances.' (St. Vincent Ferrer.)

caused the zeal felt by our Father Elias for the honour of God,<sup>10</sup> and the desires of St. Dominic,<sup>11</sup> and St. Francis<sup>12</sup> to draw souls to praise the Almighty. I assure you that, forgetful of themselves, they must have passed through no small trials.

17. This, my sisters, is what I would have us strive for—to offer our petitions and to practise prayer, not for our own enjoyment but to gain strength to serve God. Let us seek no fresh path; we should lose ourselves in ways of ease. It would be a strange thing to fancy we should gain these graces by any other road than that by which Jesus and all His saints have gone before. Let us not dream of such a thing: believe me, both Martha and Mary must entertain our Lord and keep Him as their Guest, nor must they be so inhospitable as to offer Him no food. How can Mary do this

<sup>10</sup> III Reg. xix. 10.

<sup>11</sup> 'There was one sentiment within him to which may almost be given the name of passion: it was his ceaseless burning thirst for the salvation of souls. As his Divine Master had come into the world to save sinners and loved them even unto death, so he, too, gave up all that was most dear to him in his life to win souls to Christ. He was always giving himself: it was the very key-note of his existence. He would have sold himself as a slave, he would have been cut to pieces by the heretics, he would spare himself neither by day nor by night, if by any means he might save some.' (From the *History of St. Dominic*, by Augusta Theodosia Drane. London, 1891, p. 256).

<sup>12</sup> 'St. Francis of Assisi, at the very beginning of his Order, when he had only seven followers, said to them: "Consider, my brethren, what is our vocation. It is not only for our own salvation that the mercy of God has called us, but for the salvation of many other souls. It is that we may go forth and exhort all men rather by our example than by our words, to do penance and keep the divine commands."' (The *Life of St. Francis of Assisi*, by a religious of the Order of Poor Clares, London, 1861, p. 32).



while she sits at His feet, if her sister does not help her?<sup>13</sup>

18. His food is that in every possible way we should draw souls to Him so that they may be saved and may praise Him for ever. You may offer two objections—first, that I said that Mary had chosen the better part,<sup>14</sup> for she had already done Martha's work by waiting on our Lord, by washing His feet and by wiping them with her hair.

19. Do you think it was a small mortification for a woman of rank, as she was, to go through the street, perhaps by herself, for in her zeal she never thought of how she went? Then she entered a house where she was a stranger and had to bear the railing of the Pharisee and many other trials.<sup>15</sup> It was strange to see such a woman as she had been thus publicly change her life. With a wicked nation like the Jews, the sight of her love for our Lord Whom they hated so bitterly was enough to make them cast in her face her former life and taunt her with wanting to become a saint. Doubtless she must have changed her rich robes and all the rest. Considering how men talk now of people far less known than she was, what must have been said of her?

20. I assure you, sisters, she won the better part after many crosses and mortifications. Must not the mere sight of men's hatred of her Master have been an intolerable trial? Then, think of what she

<sup>13</sup> St. Luke x. 39, 40. *Life*, ch. xvii. 6. *Rel.* viii. 6. *Way of Perf.* ch. xxxi. 4. *Concep.* ch. vii. 4.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.* x. 42: 'Maria optimam partem elegit.'

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.* vii. 37.

endured afterwards at our Lord's death ! I believe, myself, that she did not suffer martyrdom because she was already a martyr by grief at witnessing the crucifixion.<sup>16</sup> Then what terrible pain His absence must have caused her<sup>17</sup> during the long years afterwards ! You see, she was not always enjoying contemplation at the feet of our Saviour !

21. Secondly, you may say that you have neither the power nor the means to lead souls to God ; though you would willingly do so, you do not know how, as you can neither teach nor preach as did the Apostles. I have often written an answer to this objection though I cannot tell whether I have done so in connection with the Castle. However, as the difficulty probably often crosses your minds on account of the desires our Lord gives you of serving Him, I will now speak of it again.<sup>18</sup> I told you elsewhere how the devil frequently fills our thoughts with great schemes, so that instead of putting our hands to what work we can do to serve our Lord, we may rest satisfied with wishing to perform impossibilities.

22. You can do much by prayer ; and then, do not try to help the whole world, but principally your companions ; this work will be all the better because you are the more bound to it. Do you think it is a trifling matter that your humility and mortification, your readiness to serve your sisters, your fervent charity towards them, and your love of God, should be as a fire to enkindle their zeal,

<sup>16</sup> Marginal note in the Saint's handwriting.

<sup>17</sup> *Life*, ch. xxi. 9.

<sup>18</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. i. 1. *Found.* ch. i. 6, 7. *Supra*, M. vi ch. vi. 2.

and that you should constantly incite them to practise the other virtues? This would be a great work and one most pleasing to our Lord: by thus doing all that is in your power, you would prove to His Majesty your willingness to do still more and He would reward you as if you had won Him many souls. Do you answer: 'This would not be converting my sisters, for they are very good already?' What business is that of yours? If they were still better, the praise they render God would please Him more and their prayers would be more helpful to their neighbours.<sup>19</sup>

23. In short, my sisters, I will conclude with this advice; do not build towers without a foundation, for our Lord does not care so much for the importance of our works as for the love with which they are done. When we do all we can, His Majesty will enable us to do more every day. If we do not grow weary, but during the brief time this life lasts (and perhaps it will be shorter than any of you think) we give our Lord every sacrifice we can, both interior and exterior, His Majesty will unite them with that He offered to His Father for us on the Cross so that they may be worth the value given them by our love, however mean the works themselves may be.

24. May it please His Majesty, my sisters and my daughters, that we may all meet together where we may praise Him for ever, and may He give me grace to practise something of what I have taught you, by the merits of His Son, Who liveth and

<sup>19</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. vii. 7.

reigneth for ever! Amen. I assure you that I am filled with confusion at myself and I beg you, for the sake of the same Lord, not to forget this poor sinner in your prayers.

## I H S

ALTHOUGH, as I told you, I felt reluctant to begin this work, yet now it is finished I am very glad to have written it, and I think my trouble has been well spent, though I confess it has cost me but little. Considering your strict enclosure, the little recreation you have, my sisters, and how many conveniences are wanting in some of your convents, I think it may console you to enjoy yourselves in this interior castle which you can enter, and walk about at will, at any hour you please, without asking leave of your superiors. It is true you cannot enter all the mansions by your own power, however great it may appear to you, unless the Lord of the castle Himself admits you. Therefore I advise you to use no violence if you meet with any obstacle, for that would displease Him so much that He would never give you admission to them. He dearly loves humility: if you think yourselves unworthy to enter the third mansion, He will grant you all the sooner the favour of entering the fifth. Then, if you serve Him well there and often repair to it, He will draw you into the mansion where He dwells Himself, whence you need never depart unless called away by the Prioress, whose

<sup>1</sup> *Way of Perf.* ch. xvi. 1.

commands this sovereign Master wishes you to obey as if they were His own. If by her orders, you are often absent from His presence chamber, whenever you return He will hold the door open for you. When once you have learnt how to enjoy this castle, you will always find rest, however painful your trials may be, in the hope of returning to your Lord, which no one can prevent. Although I have only mentioned seven mansions, yet each one contains many more rooms, above, below, and around it, with fair gardens, fountains, and labyrinths, besides other things so delightful that you will wish to consume yourself in praising in return the great God Who has created the soul to His own image and likeness. If you find anything in the plan of this treatise which helps you to know Him better, be certain that it is sent by His Majesty to encourage you, and that whatever you find amiss in it is my own. In return for my strong desire to aid you in serving Him, my God and my Lord, I implore you, whenever you read this, to praise His Majesty fervently in my name and to beg Him to prosper His Church, to give light to the Lutherans, to pardon my sins and to free me from purgatory, where perhaps I shall be, by the mercy of God, when you see this book (if it is given to you after having been examined by theologians). If these writings contain any error, it is through my ignorance; I submit in all things to the teachings of the holy Catholic Roman Church, of which I am now a member, as I protest and promise I will be both in life and death. May our Lord God be for ever praised and blessed! Amen, Amen.

I finished writing this book in the convent of St. Joseph of Avila, 1577, on the Vigil of St. Andrew, for the glory of God, Who liveth and reigneth for ever and ever! Amen.

HERE ENDS THE INTERIOR CASTLE  
OR THE MANSIONS  
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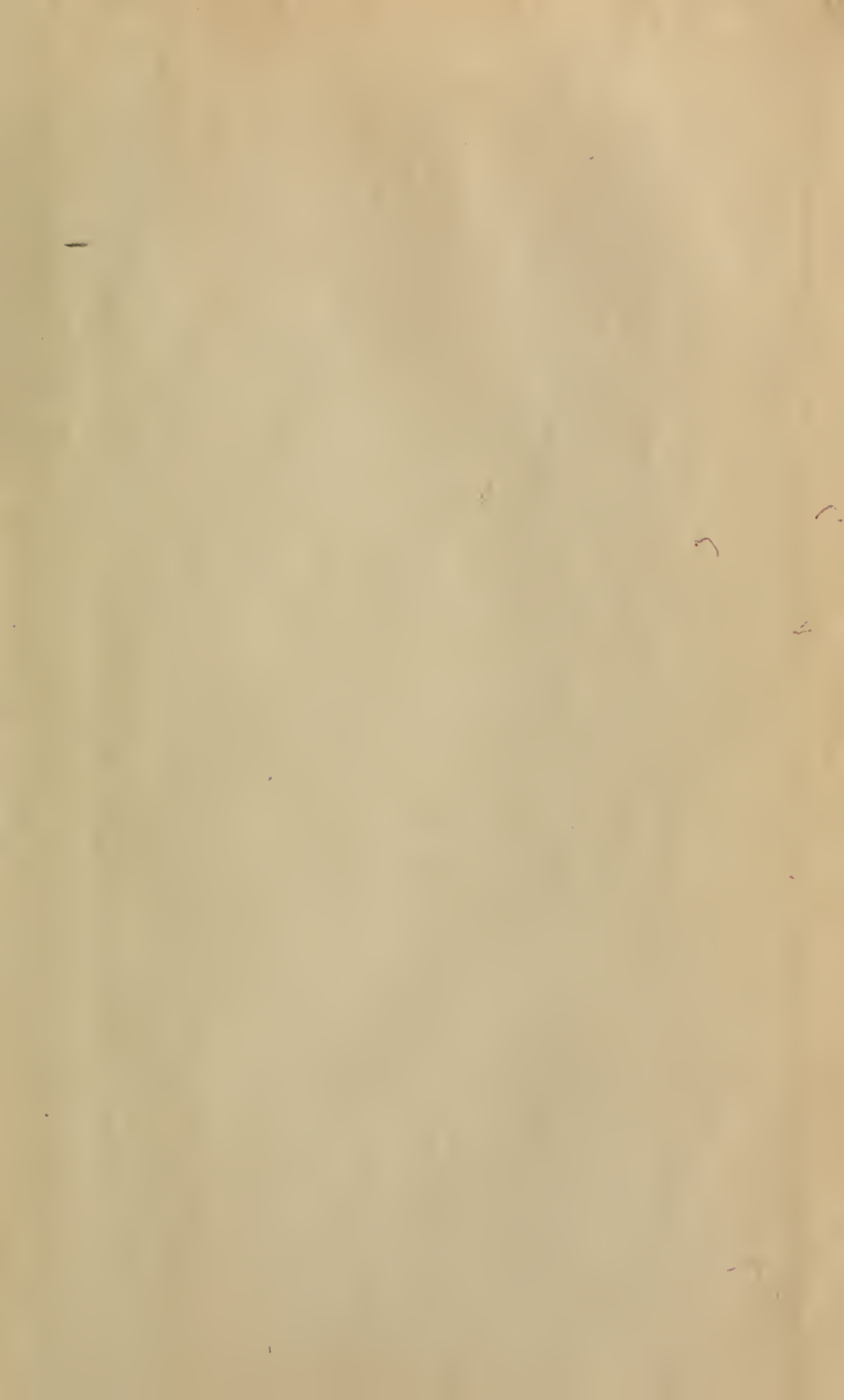
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## Judith Drake

Judith Drake (1670s-1723) was a prominent feminist author in the late 17th and early 18th century, whose *Essay in Defense of the Female Sex* (Hereafter, '*Essay in Defense*') was one of the most significant contributions to the early modern debate concerning women.<sup>1</sup> However, for many years after its publication, Drake's *Essay in Defense* was misattributed to Drake's close friend and fellow tory Mary Astell. Along with Astell, Drake was a member of a circle of literary figures that included Lady Mary Chudleigh, Elizabeth Thomas, Elizabeth Elstob, and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, among others, who played an important roll in debates concerning gender relationships in the last decade of the 17th century. As Hannah Smith (2001) describes it, Drake's "*Essay in Defense* combines tory ideas with Lockean philosophy to formulate a vision of sociable, secularized, learning and the role female conversation could play in settling a society fractured by party politics;" according to Smith,

Drake drew upon John Locke's *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* to construct a rationalist framework upon which to argue that it was custom and language which engendered the belief that women were intellectually inferior to men. Drake then proceeded to reject the cult of the ancients and, in their place, championed the worth of 'modern' learning and the value of informal education for women. Additionally, Drake contended that men shared the character faults of which women were usually accused. She accentuated masculine follies by sketching satiric portraits of various male types, such as a 'Pedant', a 'Country squire', a 'News-monger', a 'Bully', a 'City Critick', and a 'Beau', and she promoted the idea that polite socialization with ladies could help transform men into gentlemen.<sup>2</sup>

In other words, Drake's *Essay in Defense* attempts to bridge a political divide at the time by engaging with the philosophical arguments of her contemporaries on their own grounds. By doing so, Drake shows the fault in the arguments of those to whom she was responding, as well as demonstrating how individuals like herself had an important role to play in social and political conversation.

The central question Drake grapples with in her *Essay in Defense* is "whether the time an ingenious Gentleman spends in the Company of Women, may justly be said to be misemployed, or not?" According to Drake, spending time with others is properly employed when the mind gains either an "Improvement of the Understanding or a Diversion and Relaxation of its Cares and Passions." According to Drake, those who claimed 'ingenious Gentlemen' would be misemploying their time by keeping the company of women could defend their view in one of two ways; Drake claims,

If Women are not qualified for the Conversation of ingenious Men, or, to go yet further, their friendship, it must be because they want someone condition, or more, necessarily requisite to either. The necessary Conditions of these are Sense, and good nature, to which must be added, for Friendship, Fidelity and Integrity. Now if any of these be wanting to our Sex, it must be either because Nature has not been so liberal as to bestow 'em upon us; or because due care has not been taken to cultivate those Gifts to a competent measure in us.

In other words, Drake argues if women were not qualified for the conversations of 'ingenious Men', it must either be because the sexes have been 'bestowed' with different character traits or because nature has 'bestowed' everyone with the same character traits but society has failed to properly

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<sup>1</sup> Hanna Smith (2001), "English 'Feminist' Writings and Judith Drake's *Essay in Defense of the Female Sex* (1696)," *The Historical Journal*, 44.3, pp. 727.

<sup>2</sup> Hannah Smith (2001), "English 'Feminist' Writings and Judith Drake's *Essay in Defense of the Female Sex*," *The Historical Journal* vol. 44.3, pp. 727-747.

cultivate those 'gifts' in the case of women. If the former of the two were the case, Drake argues, those differences must be evidenced by the philosophy and empirical sciences of the day. If the latter of the two were the case, whatever differences existed would be the product of a failure on the part of the social and educational systems of the 18th century. Furthermore, if the latter of the two were the case and men were just as likely to be failed by the social and educational systems of the 18th century, one should take the value of another's company to depend only on the character of the person with whom one's time is spent. Thus, whether or not one properly employs one's time would depend only upon the character of the people involved.

Drake begins her *Essay in Defense* by taking aim at the first of the two possibilities discussed above—namely, that nature has not bestowed the same 'gifts' upon everyone. Following Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* and the newly developing human sciences of the time, Drake argues there is no natural distinction between the sexes with a series of simple and effective arguments. First, she argues there is no distinction between the souls of men and women; Drake claims,

To proceed therefore if we be naturally defective, the Defect must be either in Soul or Body. In the Soul it can't be, if what I have hear'd some learned Men maintain, be true, that all Souls are equal, and alike, and that consequently there is no such distinction, as Male and Female Souls; that there are no innate *Idea's*, but that all the Notions we have, are deriv'd from our External Senses, either immediately, or by Reflection.

Second, she argues the bodily composition of men and women does not entail that one of the two sexes is advantaged over the other; she claims,

Neither can it be in the Body, (if I may credit the Report of learned Physicians) for there is no difference in the Organization of those Parts, which have any relation to, or influence over the Minds; but the Brain, and all other Parts (which I am not Anatomist enough to name) are contriv'd as well for the plentiful conveyance of Spirits, which are held to be the immediate Instruments of Sensation, in Women, as Men. I see therefore no natural Impediment in the structure of our Bodies; nor does Experience, or Observation argue any: We use all our Natural Faculties, as well as Men, nay and our Rational too, deducting only for the advantages before mention'd.

After showing that whatever differences exist between the sexes are not the product of nature, Drake proceeds by investigating how the social and educational circumstances one is in can result in folly. According to Drake, everyone is susceptible to folly; as such, the value of another's company should be judged based only on the character of the person in question. Since the value of another's company depends only on the character of the person in question, everyone would benefit from greater education.

## Important Sections

No Distinction of Sexes in Souls

No Advantage in the *Organization* of Bodies

Confirm'd from Experience of Brutes.

Experience of Mankind

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See p 28 for an eecorium on  
Mr Shakespeare.





# THE COMPLEAT BEAU



*This vain gay thing sets up for man, But see <sup>t</sup> fate attends him  
The powdering Barber first began, The Barber Surgeon ends.*

A N

# ESSAY

In Defence of the

## FEMALE SEX.

In which are inserted the

### CHARACTERS

O F

*A Pedant,* } } *A Vertuoso,*  
*A Squire,* } } *A Poetaster,*  
*A Beau,* } } *A City-Critick, &c.*

In a Letter to a Lady.

Written by a Lady.

*Since each is fond of his own ugly Face ;  
Why shou'd you when we hold it break the Glass?*

*Prol. to Sir F. Flutter.*

↘ L O N D O N,

Printed for *A. Roper* and *E. Wilkinſon* at the *Black Boy*,  
and *R. Clavel* at the *Peacock*, in *Fleetſtreet*, 1696.

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To Her Royal Highness the  
Princess of Wales

151,645

May 1873

Thomas Bennett Barton

of the County of Middlesex  
Esquire  
I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 14th inst. in relation to the sum of £151,645 which you have deposited in my name for the use of Her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales. I have the pleasure to inform you that the same has been duly received and is now in my possession. I have also the honor to inform you that the same has been placed to the credit of Her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales in the name of the Treasurer of the Household. I have the honor to remain, Sir, your obedient servant.

Yours faithfully,  
Thomas Bennett Barton

---

---

*To Her Royal Highness the  
Princess Anne of Denmark.*

*MADAM;*

**I**F in adventuring to lay this little Piece at your Highnesses Feet, and humbly beg your Royal Protection of it, I have presum'd too far, be pleas'd to impute it to your own, most gracious Goodness, the knowledge of which encourag'd me. Our Sex are by Nature tender of their own Off-spring, and may be allow'd to have more fondness for those of the Brain, than any other; because they are so few, and meet with so many Enemies at their first appearance in the World. I hope therefore to find pardon, if like an indulgent Parent, I have endeavour'd to advance my first Born, by entering it very early into your Highnesses Service.

## DEDICATION.

I have not presum'd to approach your Highness out of any Confidence in the merits of this Essay, but of the Cause which it pleads, wherein the Honour of the whole Sex seem'd to exact of me no less a Patronage than that of the Best, as well as Greatest among 'em, whom they are all ambitious to see at their head. I have only endeavour'd to reduce the Sexes to a Level, and by Arguments to raise Ours to an Equallity at most with the Men: But your Highness by Illustrious Example daily convinces the World of our Superiority, and we see with wonder, Vertues in you, Madam, greater than your Birth. In this I am peculiarly happy, that I am exempted from the common Task of other Dedicators, who lie under an Obligation of publishing to the World those Excellencies of their Patrons, which perhaps appear nowhere but in their Epistles. In me it were as great folly, to pretend to  
make

## DEDICATION.

make known the Illustrious Quallities of your Highness, as it wou'd be to go about to demonstrate by Argument, that the Sun shin'd, to a Crowd that are warm'd by the Influence of it.

I had attempted the Character of a consummate Woman, could I, tho' but faintly have shaddow'd the inimitable Graces of you Highness; but the impossibillity of that Task forc'd me to desist. It were easy here to lanch into those glorious particulars, which affirmed of any other than your Royal Highness, would have been extravagance of Flattery; but to you Injustice, and in me the highest presumption, to attempt with my feeble Hand those Perfections, which the ablest must fall infinitely short of. The lustre of your Royal Vertues, Madam, like the Sun, gives us warmth and light, and while at a modest distance we admire it, improves our sight, which too bold a

A 3

view

view confounds, yet the meanest and most ignorant see those Glories, which the most exquisite Artist can never express. The World therefore will rather justify than condemn my conduct, if I do not wrong so bright an Original with a dark obscure Copy.

*Madam,* Tho' the world may condemn my performance, it must applaud my choice in this Address, and own that had I known as well how to Argue, as to Instance, I must infallibly have Triumph'd over all Opposition. It may be easie to evade, or baffle the force of my Arguments, but it is impossible without the utmost Stupidity, and Injustice to deny the manifest Advantages of those Illustrious Graces, which raise your Highness so far above theirs as well as your own Sex. In this I have imitated the conduct of prudent Generals, who, when they doubt the sufficiency of their strength, retire to some strong Fort, and rest secure

## DEDICATION.

cure under the Protection of it.

There is yet another Reason, *Madam*, which tho' the least justifiable, was nevertheless most prevalent with me to devote this Essay to your Highness. My Ambition to shew the profound Respects I have always had for your Highness, would not suffer me to let slip any occasion of expressing it, even tho I blush for the meanes of it. Thus I find my self reduc'd by my Zeal, to the condition of poor Tenants, who must expose their Poverty, to shew their Affection to their Lord in a worthless Present. I am sensible of the rashness of my Ambition in aspiring to the Patronage of Your Highness, and the need I have of an Apology; but were I able to make one as I ought, I should have taken care to have had less occasion for it. Yet I doubt not from Your Goodness that Indulgence, which I cannot expect from Your Justice, nor but that you will (like Heaven's



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whose more immediate Images Princes are ) accept my unprofitable Service, for the sincerity with which it is tender'd. If my unfeign'd Submission may procure pardon for my Presumption, that Your Happiness may equal Your illustrious Vertues, and Your Royal Person be as far out of the reach of Fortune, as your Fame and Honour of Detraction, shall ever be the prayers of

Madam,

*Your Royal Highness's*

*most Humble, most*

*Obedient, and most*

*Devoted Servant*

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# P R E F A C E.

**P**refaces to most Books, are like Prolocutors to Puppet-Shows, they come first to tell you what Figures are to be presented, and what Tricks they are to play. According therefore to ancient and laudable Custom, I have thought fit to let you know by way of Preface, or Advertisement, (call it which you please) that here are many fine Figures within to be seen, as well worth your curiosity, as any in Smithfield at Bartholomew Tide. I will not deny, Reader, but that you may have seen some of 'em there already; to those that have, I have little more to say, than that if they have a mind to see them again in Effigie, they may do it here. What is it you wou'd have? Here are St. George's, Batemans, John Dories, Punchinello's, and the Creation of the World, or what's as good; here's the German Artist too, or one that can show more Tricks than he: If all this will not invite you, y'are grown more squeamish

## Preface.

*squeamish of late, Gentlemen, than you us'd to be, and the poor Bookseller will make but an indifferent Market of you. Well, let the worst come to the worst, 'tis but shifting the scene to Smithfield, and making an Interest in half a dozen Vizard-Masks to be sure of your Company: But he, good Man, is desirous to please you at first hand, and therefore has put a fine Picture in the front to invite you in, so like some of you ( as he protests ) that you ought never look in a Glass again, if it offends you. For my part, I declare, he has acted clear against my Opinion in this case, and so he has been told; for many a poor Man has lost the showing of his Monster, by gratifying the curiosity of the gaping Crowd with too exact a picture without doors. Besides, there's an unlucky Rogue of a left-handed Barber, that looks like an ill Omen in the beginning. He was told too, that if he wou'd please most of you, he ought to take example by your Glasses and flatter you. Yet he continued obstinate and unmoveable to all these weighty Reasons, and is so fondly bent for his Picture, that he resolv'd against all advice to have it.*

*Nay,*

## Preface.

Nay, and he wou'd have Rhimes underneath it too, which, he says, weigh more with you, than all the Reason in the world. I thought fit to let you know this, that the Bookseller might not lose the credit of his Fancy, if it takes with you, as he is perswaded it will. For you must know, I am a great lover of strict Justice, and therefore would by no means Rob, or Defraud him of the Glory of his Invention, or by any sinister way sullie, or diminish the Honour, or Reputation of his Parts and Ingenuity. For the same Reason likewise I must acquaint you, that the Rhimes are none of mine neither; and now my Hand is in, I don't much care if I tell you, that I am not very good at that ingenious Recreation, called Crambo, from which some rise to be very considerable Rhimers. This now is more then I was oblig'd to tell you, and therefore I hope no body will deny, but that I deal ingenuously at least with you.

This one would think were Preface sufficient; but there are some Men so impertinently curious, that they must needs have a Reason for every thing,  
that

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that is done in the World, tho' it were in their favour (for which perhaps it were hard to give a good one) when it were their Interest to be satisfied, and thankful without farther enquiry. To comply therefore in some measure with the humour of these People, if any such think fit to peruse this Book, I must tell 'em very freely, that I was so far from aiming to oblige, or disoblige 'em by it, that it was never intended for their View. It was occasion'd by a private Conversation, between some Gentlemen and Ladies, and written at the request, and for the Diversion of one Lady more particularly, by whom with my consent it was communicated to two or three more of both Sexes, my Friends likewise.

By them I was with abundance of Complements importun'd to make it publick; now tho' I do with good Reason attribute much more, of what was said to me upon this Occasion, to their good Breeding and Friendship, than to their real Opinions of my Performance; yet I have so much satisfaction in their Sincerity, and Friendship as to be confident they would not suffer, much less per-

## Preface.

perswade me to expose to the world any thing, of which they doubted so far, as to think it would not be tollerably acceptable. Nor have I less assurance of their Judgment and Skill in things of this nature, beside that I have been inform'd by some of 'em, that it has been seen, and favourably receiv'd by some Gentlemen, whom the world thinks no incompetent Judges. After all this Encouragement, I suppose, I shall not be thought vain, if, as I pretend not to the applause, so I fear not the contempt of the world: Yet I presume not so far upon the Merits of what I have written, as to make my Name publick with it. I have elsewhere held, that Vanity was almost the universal mover of all our Actions, and consequently of mine, as well as of others; yet it is not strong enough in me, to induce me to bring my Name upon the publick stage of the World.

There are many Reasons, that oblige me to this cautious, reserv'd way of procedure; tho' I might otherwise be very ambitious of appearing in the defence of my Sex, cou'd I perswade my self, that I was able to write any  
thing

## Preface.

thing sutable to the dignity of the Subject; which I am not vain enough to think. This indeed is one Reason, because I am sensible it might have been much better defended by abler Pens; such as many among our own Sex are; though I believe scarce thus much wou'd have been expected from me, by those that know me. There is likewise another Reason; which was yet more prevalent with me, and with those few Friends whom I consulted about it, which is this; There are a sort of Men, that upon all occasions think themselves more concern'd; and more thought of than they are, and that, like Men that are deaf, or have any other notorious Defect; can see no body whisper, or laugh, but they think 'tis at themselves. These Men are apt to think, that every ridiculous description they meet with; was intended more particularly for some one or other of them; as indeed it is hard to paint any thing compleat in their several Kinds, without hitting many of their particular Features; even without drawing from them. The knowledge of this; with the consideration of the tenderness

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ness of Reputation in our Sex, (which as our delicatest Fruits and finest Flowers are most obnoxious to the injuries of Weather, is submitted to every infectious Blast of malicious Breath) made me very cautious, how I expos'd mine to such poisonous Vapours. I was not ignorant, how liberal some Men are of their Scandal, whenever provok'd, especially by a Woman; and how ready the same Men are to be so, tho' upon never so mistaken Grounds. This made me resolve to keep 'em in Ignorance of my Name, and if they have a mind to find me out, let 'em catch me (if they can) as Children at Blindmans Buff do one another, Hoodwinkt; and I am of Opinion I have room enough to put 'em out of Breath before they come near me.

The Event has in Effect prov'd my *suspicio's* Prophetick; for there are (as I am inform'd) already some, so forward to interest themselves against me, that they take Characters upon themselves, before they see 'em; and, for fear they should want some Body to throw their Dirt at, with equal Ignorance, and Injustice Father this Piece  
upon



## Preface.

upon the Gentleman, who was so kind as to take care of the Publication of it, only to excuse me from appearing. This made me once resolve to oppose my Innocence to their Clamour, and prefix my Name, which I thought I was bound to do in Justice to him. In this Resolution I had persisted, had not the very same Gentleman generously persuaded, and over-rul'd me to the contrary, representing how weak a defence Innocence is against Calumny, how open the Ears of all the World are, and how greedily they suck in any thing to the prejudice of a Woman; and that (to use his own Expression) the scandal of such Men, was like Dirt thrown by Children, and Fools at random, and without Provocation, it would dawb filthily at first, though it were easily washt off again: Adding, that he desir'd me not to be under any concern for him; for he valued the Malice of such men, as little, as their Friendship, the one was as feeble, as tother false.

I suppose I need make no Apology to my own Sex for the meaness of this defence; the bare intention of serving 'em will (I hope be accepted, and of  
Men

## Preface.

Men, the Candid and Ingenuous I am sure will not quarrel with me for any thing in this little Book; since there is nothing in it, which was not drawn from the strictest Reason I was Mistress of; and the best Observations I was able to make, except a start or two only concerning the Salique Law; and the Amazons, which, if they divert not the Reader, can't offend him.

I shall not trouble the Reader with any account of the Method I have observ'd, he will easily discover that in reading the Piece it self. I shall only take notice to him of one thing, which with a little attention to what he reads he will readily find to be true; that is, that the Characters were not written out of any Wanton Humour; or Malicious Design to characterize any Particular Persons; but to illustrate what I have said upon the several Heads, under which they are rang'd, and represent not single Men, but so many Clans, or Divisions of Men, that play the Fool seriously in the World. If any Individual seem to be more peculiarly markt; it is because he is perhaps more notorious to the World, by some one or more Arti-

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cles of the General Character here given I am sure that there is no Man, who is but moderately Acquainted with the World, especially this Town, but may find half a Dozen, or more Originals for every Picture. After all, if any Man have so little Wit, as to appropriate any of these Characters to himself, He takes a liberty I have hitherto never given him, but shall do it now in the Words of a Great Man, If any Fool finds the Cap fit him, let him put it on.

There are some Men, ( I hear ) who will not allow this Piece to be written by a Woman; did I know what Estimate to make of their Judgments, I might perhaps have a higher Opinion of this Trifle, than I ever yet had. For I little thought while I was writing this, that any Man ( especially an Ingenious Man ) should have the scandal of being the reputed Author. For he must think it scandalous to be made to Father a Womans Productions unlawfully. But these Gentlemen, I suppose, believe there is more Wit, than they'l find in this Piece, upon the Credit of the Bookseller, whose Interest it is to flatter it.

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*it. But were it as well written as I could wish it, or as the Subject wou'd bear, and deserves; I see no reason why our Sex shou'd be robb'd of the Honour of it; Since there have been Women in all Ages, whose Writings might vie with those of the greatest Men, as the Present Age as well as past can testify. I shall not trouble the Reader with their names, because I wou'd not be thought so vain, as to rank my self among 'em; and their names are already too well known, and celebrated to receive any additional Lustre from so weak Encomiums as mine. I pretend not to imitate, much less to Rival those Illustrious Ladies, who have done so much Honour to their Sex, and are unanswerable Proofs of, what I contend for. I only wish, that some Ladies now living among us (whose names I forbear to mention in regard to their Modesty) wou'd exert themselves, and give us more recent Instances, who are both by Nature and Education sufficiently qualified to do it, which I pretend not to. I freely own to the Reader, that I know no other Tongue besides my Native, except French, in which I am but very*

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*moderately skill'd. I plead not this to excuse the meanness of my Performance; because I know, I may reasonably be ask'd, why I was so forward to write; For that I have already given my reasons above, if they will not satisfy the Reader, he must endeavour to please himself with better, for I am very little solicitous about the matter. I shall only add, that for my Good Will I hope the Favour of my own Sex, which will satisfy my Ambition.*

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To the Most Ingenious Mrs.—  
or her Admirable Defence  
of Her Sex.

**L**ong have we sung the Fam'd *Orinda's* praise,  
And own'd *Astrea's* Title to the Bays,  
We to their Wit have paid the Tribute due,  
But shou'd be Bankrupt, before just to you.  
Sweet flowing Numbers, and fine Thoughts they  
writ;

But you Eternal Truths, as well as Wit.  
In them the Force of Harmony we find,  
In you the Strength, and Vigour of the Mind.  
Dark Clouds of Prejudice obscur'd their Verse,  
You with Victorious Prose those Clouds disperse;  
Those Fogs, which wou'd not to their Flame  
submit,

Vanish before your Rising Sun of Wit.  
Like Stars, they only in Themselves were bright,  
The whole Sex shines by your reflected Light.

Our Sex have long thro' Usurpation reign'd,  
And by their Tyranny their Rule maintain'd.  
Till wanton grown with Arbitrary Sway  
Depos'd by you They practice to obey,  
Proudly submitting, when such Graces meet,  
Beauty by Nature, and by Conquest Wit.  
For Wit they had on their own Sex entail'd,  
Till for your self, and Sex you thus prevail'd:  
Thrice happy Sex! Whose Foes such Pow'r  
disarms,

And gives fresh Lustre to your native Charms,  
Whose Nervous Sense couch'd in close Method  
lies,

Clear

Clear as her Soul, and piercing as her Eyes.  
If any yet so stupid shou'd appear,  
As still to doubt, what she has made so clear,  
Her Beautie's Arguments they would allow,  
And to Her Eyes their full Conversion owe.  
And by Experiment the World convince.  
The Force of Reason's less, than that of Sense.  
Your Sex you with such Charming Grace defend,

While that you vindicate, you Ours amend:  
We in your Glass may see each foul defect.  
And may not only see, but may correct.

In vain old *Greece* her Sages would compare,  
They taught what Men should be, you what  
they are

With doubtfull Notiones they Mankind perplex,  
And with unpracticable Precept vex.

In vain they strove wild Passions to reclaim,  
Uncertain what they were, or whence they came.  
But you, who have found out their certain Source,  
May with a happier Hand divert their Course.

Themselves so little did those Sages know,  
That to their Failings We their Learning owe.  
Their Vanity first caus'd 'em to aspire,  
And with fierce Wranglings set all *Greece* on  
Fire:

Thus into sects they split the *Grecian* youth,  
Contending more for Victory than Truth.

Your Speculations nobler Ends persue,  
They aim not to be Popular, but true.

You with strict Justice in an equal Light,  
Expose both Wit and Folly to our Sight.

Yet as the Bee secure on Poyson feeds,  
Extracting Honey from the rankest Weeds:

So safely you in Fools Instructours find,  
And Wildom in the Follies of mankind.

With purer Waves henceforth shall Satyr flow,  
And we this change to your chaste Labours owe;  
Satyr before from a Polluted Source  
Brought Native Filth, augmented in its course.  
No longer muddy shall those Streams appear,

Which

Which you have purg'd, and made so sweet, and  
clear.

Well may your Wit to us a wonder seem,  
So strong's the Current, yet so clear the stream,  
Deep, but not Dull, thro' each transparent Line  
We see the Gems, which at the Bottom shine.

To your Correction freely we submit,  
Who teach us Modesty, as well as Wit.  
Our Sex with Blushes must your Conquest own,  
While yours prepare the Garlands you have won.  
Your Fame secure long as your Sex shall last,  
Nor Time, nor Envy shall your Lawrels blast.

*James Drake.*

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The Reader is desir'd to excuse, and correct  
all *Literal Escapes*, and to amend the fol-  
lowing thus.

### *Errata:*

**P**Age 4. l. 10. for *Engenia*, read *Eugenia*. p. 10.  
l. 22. for *that*, read *the*, p. 28. l. 16. for  
*Mammy*, read *Mummy*. p. 29. l. 13. for *change* read  
*chance*. p. 32. l. 4. for *Repetition*, read *Repetition*. p. 53.  
l. 4. for *Essay*, read *Esop*. p. 53. l. 13. for *Messieurs*,  
read *Sieurs*. p. 60. l. 2. read *upon us*. p. 84. l. 1.  
for *and these*, read *these*, p. 103. l. 23. for *little*  
read *little*. p. 111. l. 12. for *ocsciaons*, read *occasions*.  
p. 113. l. for *Master*, read *Mastery*. p. 126. l. 20.  
for *as well*, read *as well as*. p. 143. l. 9. for *inspire*,  
read *inspires*.

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A N  
E S S A Y

In Defence of the

Female Sex, &c.

**T**HE Conversation we had  
yesterday day, makes me, Dear  
*Madam*, but more sensible  
of the unreasonableness of  
your desire; which obliges me to  
inform you further upon a Subject,  
wherein I have more need of your  
instruction. The strength of Judg-  
ment, sprightly Fancy, and admira-  
ble Address; you shew'd upon that  
Occasion, speak you so perfect a  
Mistress of that Argument (as I  
doubt not but you are of any other  
that you please to engage in) that  
whoever, would speak or write  
well on it, ought first to be your

B

Schollar,

Schollar. Yet to let you see how absolutely you may command me, I had rather be your *Eccho*, than be silent when You bid me speak, and beg your excuse rather for my Failures, than want of Complacence. I know You will not accuse me for a Plagiary if I return You nothing, but what I have glean'd from You, when You consider, that I pretend not to make a Present, but to pay the Interest only of a Debt. Nor can You tax me with Vanity, since no Importunity of a Person less lov'd, or valu'd by me than your self could have extorted thus much from me. This Consideration leaves me no room to doubt but that you will with your usual Candour pardon those Defects, and correct those Errors, which proceed only from an over forward Zeal to oblige You, though to my own Disadvantage.

The defence of our Sex against so many and so great Wits as have so strongly attack'd it, may justly seem a Task too difficult for a Woman

man to attempt. Not that I can, or ought to yield, that we are by Nature less enabled for such an Enterprize, than Men are; which I hope at least to shew plausible Reasons for, before I have done: But because through the Usurpation of Men, and the Tyranny of Custom (here in *England* especially) there are at most but few, who are by Education, and acquir'd Wit, or Letters sufficiently quallified for such an Undertaking. For my own part I shall readily own, that as few as there are, there may be and are abundance, who in their daily Conversations approve themselves much more able, and sufficient Assertors of our Cause, than my self; and I am sorry that either their Business, their other Diversions, or too great Indulgence of their Ease, hinder them from doing publick Justice to their Sex. The Men by Interest or Inclination are so generally engag'd against us, that it is not to be expected, that any one Man of Wit should arise so generous as to engage in our Quar-

rel, and be the Champion of our Sex against the Injuries and Oppressions of his own. Those Romantick days are over, and there is not so much as a *Don Quixot* of the Quill left to succour the distressed Damsels. 'Tis true, a Feint of something of this Nature was made three or four Ycars since by one; but how much soever his Engenia may be oblig'd to him, I am of Opinion the rest of her Sex are but little beholding to him. For as you rightly observ'd, *Madam*, he has taken more care to give an Edge to his Satyr, than force to his Apology; he has play'd a sham Prize, and receives more thrusts than he makes; and like a false Renegade fights under our Colours only for a fairer Opportunity of betraying us. But what could be expected else from a Beau? An Animal that can no more commend in earnest a Womans Wit, than a Man's Person, and that compliments curs, only to shew his own good Breeding and Parts. He levels his Scandal at the whole Sex,

and

and thinks us sufficiently fortified, if out of the Story of Two Thousand Years he has been able to pick up a few Examples of Women illustrious for their Wit, Learning or Vertue, and Men infamous for the contrary; though I think the most inveterate of our Enemies would have spar'd him that labour, by granting that all Ages have produc'd Persons famous or infamous of both Sexes; or they must throw up all pretence to Modesty, or Reason.

I have neither Learning, nor Inclination to make a Precedent, or indeed any use of Mr. W's. labour'd Common Place Book; and shall leave Pedants and School-Boys to rake and tumble the Rubbish of Antiquity, and muster all the *Heroes* and *Heroins* they can find to furnish matter for some wretched Harangue, or stuff a miserable Declamation with instead of Sense or Argument.

*Some advantages to be allow'd to the disparity of Education.*

I shall not enter into any dispute, whether Men, or Women be generally more ingenious, or learned; that Point must be given up to the advantages Men have over us by their Education, Freedom of Converse, and variety of Business and Company. But when any Comparison is made between 'em, great allowances must be made for the disparity of those Circumstances. Neither shall I contest about the preheminance of our Virtues; I know there are too many Vicious, and I hope there are a great many Virtuous of both Sexes. Yet this I may say, that whatever Vices are found amongst us, have in general both their source, and encouragement from them.

The Question I shall at present handle is, whether the time an ingenious Gentleman spends in the Company of Women, may justly be said to be misemploy'd, or not? I put the question in general terms; because whoever holds the affirmative must maintain it so, or the Sex

is

is no way concern'd to oppose him. On the other side I shall not maintain the Negative, but with some Restrictions and Limitations; because I will not be bound to justify those Women, whose Vices and ill Conduct expose them deservedly to the Censure of the other Sex, as well as of their own. The Question being thus stated, let us consider the end and purposes, for which Conversation was at first instituted, and is yet desirable; and then we shall see, whether they may not all be found in the Company of Women. These Ends, I take it, are the same with those we aim at in all our other Actions, in general only two, Profit or Pleasure. These are divided into those of the Mind, and those of the Body. Of the latter I shall take no further Notice, as having no Relation to the present Subject; but shall confine my self wholly to the Mind, the Profit of which is the Improvement of the Understanding, and the Pleasure is the Diversion, and Relaxation of its Cares and Passions.



Now if either of these Ends be attainable by the Society of Women, I have gain'd my Point. However, I hope to make it appear, that they are not only both to be met with in the Conversation of Women, but one of them more generally, and in greater measure than in Mens.

Our Company is generally by our Adversaries represented as unprofitable and irksome to Men of Sense, and by some of the more vehement Sticklers against us, as Criminal. These Imputations as they are unjust, especially the latter, so they favour strongly of the Malice, Arrogance and Sottishness of those, that most frequently urge 'em; who are commonly either conceited Fops, whose success in their Preferences to the favour of our Sex has been no greater than their Merit, and fallen very far short of their Vanity and Presumption, or a sort of morose, ill-bred, unthinking Fellows, who appear to be Men only by their Habit and Beards, and are scarce distinguishable from  
 Brutes

Brutes but by their Figure and Rifi-  
 sibility. But I shall wave these Re-  
 flections at present, however just,  
 and come clofer to our Argument.  
 If Women are not quallified for the  
 Conversation of ingenious Men, or,  
 to go yet further, their friendship,  
 it must be because they want some  
 one condition, or more, necessarily  
 requisite to either. The necessary  
 Conditions of these are Sense, and  
 good nature, to which must be ad-  
 ded, for Friendship, Fidelity and  
 Integrity. Now if any of these  
 be wanting to our Sex, it must be  
 either because Nature has not been  
 fo liberal as to bestow 'em upon  
 us; or because due care has not been  
 taken to cultivate those Gifts to a  
 competent measure in us.

The first of these Causes is that,  
 which is most generally urg'd a-  
 gainst us, whether it be in Raille-  
 ry, or Spight. I might easily cut  
 this part of the Controversy short  
 by an irrefragable Argument, which  
 is, that the expr'ss intent, and rea-  
 son for which Woman was created,  
 was

was to be a Companion, and help meet to Man; and that consequently those, that deny 'em to be so, must argue a Mistake in Providence, and think themselves wiser than their Creator. But these Gentlemen are generally such passionate Admirers of themselves, and have such a profound value and reverence for their own Parts, that they are ready at any time to sacrifice their Religion to the Reputation of their Wit, and rather than lose their point, deny the truth of the History. There are others, that though they allow the Story yet affirm, that the propagation, and continuance of Mankind, was the only Reason for which we were made; as if the Wisdom that first made Man, cou'd not without trouble have continu'd that Species by the same or any other Method, had not this been most conducive to his happiness, which was the gracious and only end of his Creation. But these superficial Gentlemen wear their Understandings like their Clothes, always set and formal,  
and

and wou'd no more Talk than Dress out of Fashion; Beau's that, rather than any part of their outward Figure shou'd be damag'd, wou'd wipe the dirt of their shoes with their Handkercher, and that value themselves infinitely more upon modish Nonsense, than upon the best Sense against the Fashion. But since I do not intend to make this a religious Argument, I shall leave all further Considerations of this Nature to the Divines, whose more immediate Business and Study it is to assert the Wisdom of Providence in the Order, and distribution of this World, against all that shall oppose it.

To proceed therefore if we be naturally defective, the Defect must be either in Soul or Body. In the Soul it can't be, if what I have hear'd some learned Men maintain, be true, that all Souls are equal, and alike, and that consequently there is no such distinction, as Male and Female Souls; that there are no innate *Idea's*, but that all the

*No distinction of Sexes in Souls.*

Notions

Notions we have, are deriv'd from our External Senses, either immediately, or by Reflection. These Metaphysical Speculations, I must own Madam, require much more Learning and a stronger Head, than I can pretend to be Mistress of, to be consider'd as they ought: Yet so bold I may be, as to undertake the defence of these Opinions, when any of our jingling Opponents think fit to refute 'em.

*No advantage in the Organization of their Bodies.*

Neither can it be in the Body, (if I may credit the Report of learned Physicians) for there is no difference in the Organization of those Parts, which have any relation to, or influence over the Minds; but the Brain, and all other Parts (which I am not Anatomist enough to name) are contriv'd as well for the plentiful conveyance of Spirits, which are held to be the immediate Instruments of Sensation, in Women, as Men. I see therefore no natural Impediment in the structure of our Bodies; nor does Experience, or Observation argue any: We use all

our

our Natural Faculties, as well as Men, nay and our Rational too, deducting only for the advantages before mention'd.

Let us appeal yet further to Experience, and observe those Creatures that deviate least from simple Nature, and see if we can find any difference in Sense, or understanding between Males and Females. In these we may see Nature plainest, who lie under no constraint of Custom or Laws, but those of Passion or Appetite, which are Natures, and know no difference of Education, nor receive any Byass by prejudice. We see great distance in Degrees of Understanding, Wit, Cunning and Docility ( call them what you please ) between the several Species of Brutes. An Ape, a Dog, a Fox, are by daily Observation found to be more Docile, and more Subtle than an Ox, a Swine, or a Sheep. But a She Ape is as full of, and as ready at Imitation as a He; a Bitch will learn as many  
Tricks

*Confirm'd  
from Expe-  
rience of  
Brutes.*

Tricks in as short a time as a Dog, a Female Fox has as many Wiles as a Male. A thousand instances of this kind might be produc'd; but I think these are so plain, that to instance more were a superfluous labour; I shall only once more take notice, that in Brutes and other Animals there is no difference betwixt Male and Female in point of Sagacity, notwithstanding there is the same distinction of Sexes, that is between Men and Women. I have read, that some Philosophers have held Brutes to be no more than meer Machines, a sort of Divine Clock-work, that Act only by the force of nice unseen Springs without Sensation, and cry out without feeling Pain, Eat without Hunger, Drink without Thirst, fawn upon their Keepers without seeing 'em, hunt Hares without Smelling, &c. Here Madam is cover for our Antagonists against the last Argument so thick, that there is no beating 'em out. For my part, I shall not envy 'em their refuge, let 'em lie like the wild *Irish* secure

secure within their Boggs; the field is at least ours, so long as they keep to their Fastnesses. But to quit this Topick, I shall only add, that if the learnedest He of 'em all can convince me of the truth of this Opinion, He will very much stagger my Faith; for hitherto I have been able to observe no difference between our Knowledge and theirs, but a gradual one; and depend upon Revelation alone, that our Souls are Immortal, and theirs not.

But if an Argument from Brutes and other Animals shall not be allowed as conclusive, (though I can't see, why such an Inference should not be valid, since the parity of Reason is the same on both sides in this Case.) I shall desire those, that hold against us to observe the Country People, I mean the inferiour sort of them, such as not having Stocks to follow Husbandry upon their own Score, subsist upon their daily Labour. For amongst these, though not so equal as

*Experience  
of Mankind's*

as



as that of Brutes, yet the Condition of the two Sexes is more level, than amongst Gentlemen, City Traders, or rich Yeomen. Examine them in their several Businesses, and their Capacities will appear equal; but talk to them of things indifferent, and out of the Road of their constant Employment, and the Ballance will fall on our side, the Women will be found the more ready and polite. Let us look a little further, and view our Sex in a state of more improvement, amongst our Neighbours the *Dutch*. There we shall find them managing not only the Domestick Affairs of the Family, but making, and receiving all Payments as well great as small, keeping the Books, ballancing the Accounts, and doing all the Business, even the nicest of Merchants, with as much Dexterity and Exactness as their; or our Men can do. And I have often hear'd some of our considerable Merchants blame the conduct of our Country-Men in this point; that they breed our Women so ignorant

rant of Business; whereas were they taught Arithmetick, and other Arts which require not much bodily strength, they might supply the places of abundance of lusty Men now employ'd in sedentary Business; which would be a mighty profit to the Nation by sending those Men to Employments, where hands and Strength are more requir'd, especially at this time when we are in such want of People. Beside that it might prevent the ruine of many Families, which is often occasion'd by the Death of Merchants in full Business, and leaving their Accounts perplex'd, and embroil'd to a Widdow and Orphans, who understanding nothing of the Husband or Father's Business occasions the Rending, and oftentimes the utter Confounding a fair Estate; which might be prevented, did the Wife but understand Merchants Accounts, and were made acquainted with the Books.

I have yet another Argument from Nature, which is, that the very Make and Temper of our Bodies shew that we were never design'd for Fatigue; and the Vivacity of our Wits, and Readiness of our Invention ( which are confess'd even by our Adversaries ) demonstrate that we were chiefly intend- ed for Thought and the Exercise of the Mind. Whereas on the contra- ry it is apparent from the strength and size of their Limbs, the Vi- gour and Hardiness of their Con- stitutions, that Men were purpose- ly fram'd and contriv'd for Action, and Labour. And herein the Wis- dom and Contrivance of Providence is abundantly manifested; for as the one Sex is fortified with Cou- rage and Ability to undergo the necessary Drudgery of providing Materials for the sustenance of Life in both; so the other is fur- nish'd with Ingenuity and Prudence for the orderly management and distribution of it, for the Relief and Comfort of a Family; and is over and above enrich'd with a peculiar

Tenderneſs and Care requiſite to the Cherishing their poor helpleſs Off-ſpring. I know our Oppoſers uſually miſcall our quickneſs of Thought, Fancy and Flaſh, and chriſten their own heavineſs by the ſpecious Names of Judgment and Solidity; but it is eaſie to retort upon 'em the reproachful Ones of Dullneſs and Stupidity with more Juſtice. I ſhall purſue this Point no further, but continue firm in my Perſuaſion, that Nature has not been ſo Niggardly to us, as our Adverſaries would inſinuate, till I ſee better cauſe to the contrary, then I have hitherto at any time done. Yet I am ready to yield to Conviction, whoever offers it; which I don't ſuddenly expect.

It remains then for us to enquire, whether the Bounty of Nature be wholly neglected, or ſtified by us, or ſo far as to make us unworthy the Company of Men? Or whether our Education (as bad as it is) be not ſufficient to make us a uſe-  
 C 2 ful,

ful, nay a necessary part of Society for the greatest part of Mankind. This cause is seldom indeed urg'd against us by the Men, though it be the only one, that gives 'em any advantage over us in understanding. But it does not serve their Pride, there is no Honour to be gain'd by it: For a Man ought no more to value himself upon being Wiser than a Woman, if he owe his Advantage to a better Education, and greater means of Information, then he ought to boast of his Courage, for beating a Man, when his Hands were bound. Nay it would be so far from Honourable to contend for preference upon this Score, that they would thereby at once argue themselves guilty both of Tyranny, and of Fear: I think I need not have mention'd the latter; for none can be Tyrants but Cowards. For nothing makes one Party slavishly depress another, but their fear that they may at one time or other become Strong or Courageous enough to make themselves equal to, if not superiour to their

*Women industriously kept in Ignorance.*

their Masters. This is our Case; for Men being sensible as well of the Abilities of Mind in our Sex, as of the strength of Body in their own, began to grow Jealous, that we, who in the Infaney of the World were their Equals and Partners in Dominion, might in process of Time, by Subtlety and Stratagem, become their Superiours; and therefore began in good time to make use of Force (the Origine of Power) to compell us to a Subjection, Nature never meant; and made use of Natures liberality to them to take the benefit of her kindness from us. From that time they have endeavour'd to train us up altogether to Ease and Ignorance; as Conquerors use to do to those, they reduce by Force, that so they may disarm 'em, both of Courage and Wit; and consequently make them tamely give up their Liberty, and abjectly submit their Necks to a slavish Yoke. As the World grew more Populous, and Mens Necessities whetted their Inventions, so it increas'd their Jealousie,

lousy, and sharpen'd their Tyranny over us, till by degrees, it came to that height of Severity, I may say Cruelty, it is now at in all the Eastern parts of the World, where the Women, like our Negroes in our Western Plantations, are born slaves, and live Prisoners all their Lives. Nay, so far has this barbarous Humour prevail'd, and spread it self, that in some parts of *Europe*, which pretend to be most refin'd and civiliz'd, in spite of Christianity, and the Zeal for Religion which they so much affect, our Condition is not very much better. And even in *France*, a Country that treats our Sex with more Respect than most do, We are by the *Salique Law* excluded from Sovereign Power. The *French* are an ingenious People, and the Contrivers of that Law knew well enough, that We were no less capable of Reigning, and Governing well, than themselves; but they were suspicious, that if the Regal Power shou'd fall often into the hands of Women, they would favour their own Sex, and might in  
time

Original of  
the Salique  
Law.

time restore 'em to their Primitive Liberty and Equality with the Men, and so break the neck of that unreasonable Authority they so much affect over us; and therefore made this Law to prevent it. The Historians indeed tell us other Reasons, but they can't agree among themselves, and as Men are Parties against us, and therefore their Evidence may justly be rejected. To say the truth Madam, I can't tell how to prove all this from Ancient Records; for if any Histories were anciently written by Women, Time, and the Malice of Men have effectually conspir'd to suppress 'em; and it is not reasonable to think that Men shou'd transmit, or suffer to be transmitted to Posterity, any thing that might shew the weakness and illegality of their Title to a Power they still exercise so arbitrarily, and are so fond of. But since daily Experience shews, and their own Histories tell us, how earnestly they endeavour, and what they act, and suffer to put the same Trick upon one another, 'tis natural



ral to suppose they took the same measures with us at first, which now they have effected, like the Rebels in our last Civil Wars, when they had brought the Royal Party under, they fall together by the Ears about the Dividend. The Sacred History takes no notice of any such Authority they had before the Flood, and their Own confess that whole Nations have rejected it since, and not suffer'd a Man to live amongst them, which cou'd be for no other Reason, than their Tyranny. For upon less provocation the Women wou'd never have been so foolish, as to deprive themselves of the benefit of that Ease and Security, which a good agreement with their Men might have afforded 'em. 'Tis true the same Histories tell us, that there were whole Countries where were none but Men, which border'd upon 'em. But this makes still for us; for it shews that the Conditions of their Society were not so easie, as to engage their Women to stay amongst 'em; but as liberty presented it self, they with-

drew

*Amazons;  
why they  
rejected the  
Society of  
Men.*

drew and retired to the *Amazons* ; But since our Sex can hardly boast of so great Privileges, and so easie a Servitude any where - as in *England*, I cut this ungrateful Digression short in acknowledgment ; tho' Fetters of Gold are still Fetters, and the softest Lining can never make 'em so easy, as Liberty.

You will excuse, I know Madam, this short, but necessary Digression. I call it necessary, because it shews a probable Reason, why We are at this time in such subjection to them, without lessening the Opinion of our Sense, or Natural Capacities either at present, or for the time past ; beside that it briefly lays open without any Scandal to our Sex, why our Improvements are at present so disproportion'd to those of Men. I wou'd not have any of our little, unthinking Adversaries triumph at my allowing a disproportion between the Improvements of our Sex and theirs ; and I am sure those of 'em that are ingenious Men, will see no reason for it from what I have said. After

After having granted so great a disparity as I have already done in the customary Education, and advantageous Liberties of the Sexes, 'twere Nonsense to maintain, that our Society is generally and upon all accounts as Beneficial, Improving and Entertaining, as that of Men. He must be a very shallow Fellow, that resorts to, and frequents us in hopes by our means to make himself considerable as a Schollar, a Mathematician, a Philosopher, or a States-man. These Arts and Sciences are the result only of much Study and great Experience; and without one at least of 'em are no more to be acquir'd by the Company of Men, however celebrated for any or all of them, than by ours. But there are other Qualifications, which are as indispensably necessary to a Gentleman, or any Man that wou'd appear to Advantage in the World, which are attainable only by Company, and Conversation, and chiefly by ours. Nor can the greatest part of Mankind, of what Quality soever,

boast

boast much of the use they make, or the benefit they reap from these acknowledg'd Advantages. So that Schollars only, and some few of the more thinking Gentlemen, and Men of Business have any just claim to 'em. And of these the first generally fall short enough some other way to make the Balance even. For Schollars, though by their acquaintance with Books, and conversing much with Old Authors, they may know perfectly the Sense of the Learned Dead, and be perfect Masters of the Wisdom, be throughly inform'd of the State, and nicely skill'd in the Policies of Ages long since past, yet by their retir'd and unactive Life, their neglect of Business, and constant Conversation with Antiquity, they are such Strangers to, and so ignorant of the Domestick Affairs and manners of their own Country and Times, that they appear like the Ghosts of Old Romans rais'd by Magick. Talk to them of the *Assyrian*, or *Persian* Monarchies, the *Grecians* or *Roman*

Com.

*Character  
of a Poet  
Ant.*

Common-wealths. They answer like Oracles, they are such finish'd Statesmen, that we shou'd scarce take 'em to have been less than Confidants of *Semiramis*, Tutours to *Cyrus* the great, old Cronies of *Solon* and *Lycurgus*, or Privy Councillours at least to the Twelve *Cæsars* successively; but engage them in a Discourse that concerns the present Times, and their Native Country, and they hardly speak the Language of it, and know so little of the affairs of it, that as much might reasonably be expected from an animated *Egyptian* Mummy. They are very much disturbed to see a Fold or a Plait amiss in the Picture of an Old *Roman* Gown, yet take no notice that their own are thredbare out at the Elbows, or Ragged, and suffer more if *Priscian's* Head be broken than if it were their own. They are excellent Guides, and can direct you to every Ally, and turning in old *Rome*; yet lose their way at home in their own Parish. They are mighty admirers of the Wit and Eloquence of  
the

the Ancients; yet had they liv'd in the time of *Cicero*, and *Cæsar* wou'd have treated them with as much supercilious Pride, and disrespect as they do now with Reverence. They are great hunters of ancient Manuscripts, and have in great Veneration any thing, that has escap'd the Teeth of Time and Rats, and if Age have obliterated the Characters, 'tis the more valuable for not being legible. But if by chance they can pick out one Word, they rate it higher then the whole Author in Print, and wou'd give more for one Proverb of *Solomons* under his own Hand, then for all his Wisdom. These Superstitious, bigotted Idolaters of time past, are Children in their understanding all their lives; for they hang so incessantly upon the leading Strings of Authority, that their Judgments like the Limbs of some *Indian* Penitents, become altogether cramp't and motionless for want of use.

But

But as these Men, will hardly be reckon'd much superiour to us upon the account of their Learning or Improvements, so neither will I suppose another sort diametrically opposite to these in their Humors and Opinions: I mean those whose Ancestors have been wise and provident, and rais'd Estates by their Ingenuity and Industry, and given all their Posterity after 'em Means, and Leisure to be Fools. These are generally sent to School in their Minority, and were they kept there till they came to Years of Discretion, might most of 'em stay, till they cou'd tuck their Beards into their Girdles before they left carrying a Satchel. In conformity to Custom, and the Fashion, they are sent early to serve an Apprenticeship to Letters, and for eight or nine years are whipt up and down through two or three Counties from School to School; when being arriv'd a Sixteen, or Seventeen Years of Age, and having made the usual *Tour* of Latin, and Greek Authors, they are call'd Home to be made Gentlemen.

*Character  
of a Coun-  
try Squire.*

men. As soon as the young Squire has got out of the House of Bondage, shaken off the awe of Birch, and begins to feel himself at Liberty, he considers that he is now Learned enough, ( and 'tis ten to one but his Friends are wise enough to be of his Opinion ) and thinks it high time to shake off the barbarous Acquaintance he contracted, with those crabbed, vexatious, obscure Fellows, that gave him so much trouble and smart at School, Companions by no means fit for a Gentleman, that writ only to torment and perplex poor Boys, and exercise the tyranny of Pedants and School-masters. These prudent resolutions taken, his Conversation for some years succeeding is wholly taken up by his Horses, Dogs and Hawks ( especially if his Residence be in the Country ) and the more senseless Animals that tend 'em. His Groom, his Huntsman, and his Falconer are his Tutors, and his walk is from the Stable to the Dog-kennel, and the reverse of it. His diversion is drudgery, and he is in  
highest



highest satisfaction when he is most tir'd. He wearies you in the Morning with his Sport, in the Afternoon with the noisie Repetition and Drink, and the whole Day with Fatigue and Confusion. His Entertainment is stale Beer, and the History of his Dogs and Horses, in which he gives you the Pedigree of every one with all the exactness of a Herald; and if you be very much in his good Graces, 'tis odds, but he makes you the Compliment of a Puppy of one of his favourite Bitches, which you must take with abundance of Acknowledgments of his Civillity, or else he takes you for a stupid, as well as an ill bred Fellow. He is very constant at all Clubs and Meetings of the Country Gentlemen, where he will suffer nothing to be talk'd or hear'd of but his Jades, his Curs, and his Kites. Upon these he rings perpetual Changes, and trespasses as much upon the patience of the Company in the Tavern, as upon their Enclosures in the Field, and is least impertinent, when most drunk.

His

His grand Business is to make an Assignation for a Horse Race, or a Hunting Match, and nothing discomposes him so much as a Disappointment. Thus accomplish'd, and finish'd for a Gentleman, he enters the Civil Lists, and holds the Scale of Justice with as much Blindness as she is said to do. From hence forward his Worship becomes as formidable to the Ale-Houses, as he was before Familiar; he sizes an Ale Pot, and takes the dimensions of Bread with great Dexterity and Sagacity. He is the terror of all the Deer, and Poultry Stealers in the Neighbourhood, and is so implacable a Persecutor of Poachers, that he keeps a Register of all the Dogs and Guns in the Hundred, and is the Scare-Beggar of the Parish. Short Pots, and unjustifiable Dogs and Nets, furnish him with sufficient matter for Presentments, to carry him once a Quarter to the Sessions; where he says little, Eats and Drinks much, and after Dinner, Hunts over the last Chace, and so rides Worshipfully

fully Drunk home again. At home he Exercifes his Authority in granting his Letters, Pattents to Petitioners for erecting Shovel Board, Tables and Ginger Bread Stalls. If he happen to live near any little Borough or Corporation that fends Burgefles to Parliament, he may become ambitious and fue for the Honour of being made their Representative. Henceforward he grows Popular, bows to, and treats the Mob all round him; and whether there be any in his Difcourfe or not, there is good Senfe in his Kitchin and his Cellar, which is more agreeable and edifying. If he be fo happy as to out-tap his Competitour, and Drink his Neighbours into an Opinion of his Sobriety, he is chofen, and up he comes to that Honourable Affembly, where he fhews his Wifdom beft by his Silence, and ferves his Country moft in his abfence.

I give you thefe two Characters, *Madam*, as irreconcilable as Water and Oyl, to fhew that Men may

may and do often Baffle and Frustrate the Effects of a liberal Education, as well by Industry as Negligence. 'Tis hard to say, which of these two is the more Sottish; the first is such an Admirer of Letters, that he thinks it a disparagement to his Learning to talk what other Men understand, and will scarce believe that two, and two, make four, under a Demonstration from *Euclid*, or a Quotation of *Aristotle*: The latter has such a fear of Pedantry always before his Eyes, that he thinks it a Scandal to his good Breeding, and Gentility to talk Sense, or write true *English*; and has such a contemptible Notion of his past Education, that he thinks the *Roman* Poets good for nothing but to teach Boys to cap Verses. For my Part I think the Learned, and Unlearned Blockhead pretty equal; for 'tis all one to me, whether a Man talk Nonsense, or Unintelligible Sense, I am diverted and edified alike by either; the one enjoys himself less, but suffers his Friends to do it more; the

other enjoys himself and his own Humour enough, but will let no body else do it in his Company. Thus, *Madam*, I have set them before You, and shall leave you to determine a Point, which I cannot.

*The Education of the Female Sex not so deficient as commonly thought.*

There are others that deserve to be brought into the Company of these upon like Honourable Reasons; but I keep them in reserve for a proper place, where I may perhaps take the Pains to draw their Pictures to the Life at full length. Let us now return to our Argument, from which we have had a long breathing while. Let us look into the manner of our Education, and see wherein it falls short of the Mens, and how the defects of it may be; and are generally supply'd. In our tender years they are the same, for after Children can Talk, they are promiscuously taught to Read and Write by the same Persons, and at the same time both Boys and Girls. When these are acquir'd, which is generally

ly about the Age of Six or Seven Years, they begin to be separated, and the Boys are sent to the *Grammar School*, and the Girls to *Boarding Schools*, or other places, to learn Needle Work, Dancing, Singing, Musick, Drawing, Painting, and other Accomplishments, according to the Humour and Ability of the Parents, or Inclination of the Children. Of all these, Reading and Writing are the main Instruments of Conversation; though Musick and Painting may be allow'd to contribute something towards it, as they give us an insight into two Arts, that makes up a great Part of the Pleasures and Diversions of Mankind. Here then lies the main Defect, that we are taught only our Mother Tongue, or perhaps *French*, which is now very fashionable, and almost as Familiar amongst Women of Quality as Men; whereas the other Sex by means of a more extensive Education to the knowledge of the *Roman* and *Greek* Languages, have a vaster Feild for their Imaginations to rove in, and

their Capacities thereby enlarg'd. To see whether this be strictly true or not, I mean in what relates to our debate, I will for once suppose, that we are instructed only in our own Tongue, and then enquire whether the disadvantage be so great as it is commonly imagin'd. You know very well, *Madam*, that for Conversation, it is not requisite we should be Philologers, Rhetoricians, Philosophers, Historians or Poets; but only that we should think pertinently and express our thoughts properly, on such matters as are the proper Subjects for a mixt Conversation. The *Italians*, a People as delicate in their Conversation as any in the World, have a Maxim that our selves, our Neighbours, Religion, or Business ought never to be the Subject. There are very substantial Reasons, to be given for these Restrictions for Men are very apt to be vain, and impertinent, when they talk of themselves, besides that others are very jealous, and apt to suspect, that all the good things said, are

*Religion,*  
*&c. no pro-*  
*per subjects*  
*for mixt*  
*Conversa-*  
*tion.*

intended as so many arguments of preference to them. When they speak of their Neighbours, they are apt out of a Principle of Emulation and Envy, natural to all the race of *Adam* to lessen, and tarnish their Fame, whether by open Scandal, and Defamatory Stories, and Tales, or by malicious Insinuations, invidious Circumstances, sinister and covert Reflections. This humour springs from an over fondness of our selves, and a mistaken conceit that anothers loss is an addition to our own Reputation, as if like two Buckets, one must necessarily rise as the other goes down. This is the basest and most ungenerous of all our natural Failures, and ought to be corrected as much as possible e'ry where; but more especially in *Italy*, where Resentments are carried so high, and Revenges prosecuted with so much Heat, and Animosity. Religion is likewise very tender there, as in all other places, where the Priests have so much Power and Authority. But even here, where our differences



and Disputes have made it more tame, and us'd it to rough handling, it ought carefully to be avoided ; for nothing raises unfriendly warmths among Company more than a religious Argument, which therefore ought to be banisht all Society intended only for Conversation and Diversion. Business is too dry and barren to give any Spirit to Conversation, or Pleasure to a Company, and is therefore rather to be reckon'd among the Encumbrances than Comforts of Life, however necessary. Besides these, Points of Learning, abstruse Speculations, and nice Politicks, ought, in my opinion, to be excluded ; because being things that require much Reading and Consideration, they are not fit to be canvas'd *ex tempore* in mixt Company, of which 'tis probable the greatest part will have little to say to 'em, and will scarce be content to be silent Hearers only ; besides that they are not in their nature gay enough to awaken the good Humour, or raise the Mirth of the Company. Nor need any one to fear, that by these  
 limi-

limitations Conversation shou'd be  
 restrain'd to too narrow a compass,  
 there are subjects enough that are  
 in themselves neither insipid, nor  
 offensive; such as Love, Honour,  
 Gallantry, Morality, News, Raille-  
 ry, and a numberless train of other  
 Things copious and diverting. Now  
 I can't see the necessity of any other  
 Tongue beside our own to enable  
 us to talk plausibly, or judiciously  
 upon any of these Topicks: Nay, I  
 am very confident that 'tis possible  
 for an ingenious Person to make a  
 very considerable progress in most  
 parts of Learning, by the help of  
 English only. For the only reason  
 I can conceive of learning Language-  
 ges, is to arrive at the Sense, Wit  
 or Arts, that have been communi-  
 cated to the World in 'em. Now  
 of those that have taken the pains  
 to make themselves Masters of those  
 Treasures, many have been so ge-  
 nerous as to impart a share of 'em  
 to the Publick, by Translations for  
 the use of the Unlearned; and I flat-  
 ter my self sometimes, that several  
 of these were more particularly un-  
 dertaken

*Great Im-  
 provements  
 to be made  
 by the help  
 of English  
 Books only.*

dertaken by Ingenious, good Na-  
 tur'd Men in Kindness and Com-  
 passion to our Sex. But whatever  
 the Motives were, the obliging  
 Humour has so far prevail'd, that  
 scarce any thing either Ancient or  
 Modern that might be of general  
 use either for Pleasure, or Instru-  
 ction is left untouch'd, and most  
 of them are made entirely free of  
 our Tongue. I am no Judge ei-  
 ther of the Accuracy, or Elegance  
 of such Performances; but if I may  
 credit the report of Learned and  
 Ingenious Gentlemen, ( whose Judg-  
 ment or Sincerity I have no reason  
 to question ) many of those excel-  
 lent Authors have lost nothing by  
 the change of Soil. I can see and  
 admire the Wit and Fancy of *Ovid*  
 in the Translation of his Epistles,  
 and Elegies, the softness and Pas-  
 sion of *Tibullus*, the Impetuosity  
 and Fire of *Juvenal*, the Gayety,  
 Spirit and Judgment of *Horace*;  
 who, though he may appear very  
 different from himself through the  
 diversity, and inequality of the  
 Hands concern'd in making him  
 speak

speak *English*, yet may easily be  
 guess'd at from the several excel-  
 lent Pieces render'd by the Earl of  
*Roscommon*, Mr. *Cowley*, Mr. *Dry-*  
*den*, Mr. *Congreve*, Mr. *Brown* and  
 other ingenious Gentlemen, who  
 have oblig'd the Nation with their  
 excellent Versions of some parts of  
 him. Nor is it possible to be in-  
 sensible of the sweetness and Maje-  
 sty of *Virgil*, after having read  
 those little but Divine Samples  
 already made Publick in *Eng-*  
*lish* by Mr. *Dryden*, which gives  
 us so much Impatience to see the  
 whole Work entire by that admira-  
 ble Hand. I have heard some in-  
 ingenious Gentlemen say, That it  
 was impossible to do Justice in  
 our Tongue to these two last  
 Celebrated Roman Poets, and  
 and I have known others, of whose  
 Judgments I have as high an Opini-  
 on, affirm the contrary; my igno-  
 rance of Latin disables me from  
 determining whether we are in the  
 right, but the Beauty of what I  
 have already seen by the means of  
 those Gentlemen, has so far preju-  
 dic'd,

dic'd me in favour of the latter; that might I have 'em entire from the same hands, I think I shou'd scarce envy those who can tast the pleasure of the Originals. Nor is it to the Poets only, that we stand indebted for the Treasure of Antiquity, we have no less Engagements to those, who have successfully labour'd in Prose, and have mads us familiar with *Plutarch, Seneca, Cicero*, and in general with all the famous Philosophers, Orators and Historians, from whom we may at once learn both the Opinions and Practices of their Times. Assisted by these helps, 'tis impossible for any Woman to be ignorant that is but desirous to be otherwise, though she know no part of Speech out of her Mother Tongue. But these are neither the only, nor the greatest Advantages we have; all that is excellent in *France, Italy*, or any of our neighbouring Nations is now become our own; to one of whom, I may be bold to say, we are beholding for more, and greater Improvements of Conversation, than to all

Anti-

Antiquity, and the learned Languages together. Nor can I imagine for what good Reason a Man skill'd in Latin and Greek, and vers'd in the Authors of Ancient Times shall be call'd Learned; yet another who perfectly understands *Italian, French, Spanish, High Dutch*, and the rest of the *European* Languages, is acquainted with the Modern History of all those Countries, knows their Policies, has div'd into all the Intrigues of the several Courts, and can tell their mutual Dispositions, Obligations and Ties of Interest one to another, shall after all this be thought Unlearned for want of those two Languages. Nay, though he be never so well vers'd in the Modern Philosophy, Astronomy, Geometry and Algebra, he shall notwithstanding never be allow'd that honourable Title. I can see but one apparent Reason for this unfair Procedure; which is, that when about an Age and an half ago, all the poor Remains of Learning then in Being, were in the hands of the Schoolmen;

*The name of Learning unjustly restrain'd to the knowledge of Latin and Greek only.*

men; they wou'd suffer none to pass Muster, that were not deeply engag'd in those intricate, vexatious and unintelligible Trifles, for which themselves contended with so much Noise and Heat; or at least were not acquainted with *Plato* and *Aristotle*, and their Commentators; from whence the Sophistry and Subtleties of the Schools at that time were drawn. This Usurpation was maintain'd by their Successors, the Divines, who to this day pretend almost to the Monopoly of Learning; and though some generous Spirits have in good measure broke the neck of this Arbitrary, Tyrannical Authority; yet can't they prevail to extend the name of Learning beyond the Studies, in which the Divines are more particularly conversant. Thus you shall have 'em allow a Man to be a wise Man, a good Naturalist, a good Mathematician, Politician, or Poet, but not a Scholar, a learned Man, that is no Philologer. For my part I think these Gentlemen have just inverted the use of the Term, and given

ven that to the knowledge of words; which belongs more properly to Things. I take Nature to be the great Book of Universal Learning, which he that reads best in all or any of its Parts, is the greatest Scholar, the most learned Man; and 'tis as ridiculous for a Man to count himself more learned than another, if he have no greater extent of knowledge of things, because he is more vers'd in Languages; as it would be for an Old Fellow to tell a Young One, his Eyes were better than his, because he Reads with Spectacles, the other without.

Thus, *Madam*, you see we may come in Time to put in for Learning, if we have a mind, without falling under the Correction of Pedants. But I will let Learning alone at present, because I have already banish'd it (though not out of disrespect) from mix'd Conversation; to which we will return, and of which the greatest Magazines and Supports are still

*English Books the best helps to Conversation.*

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in Reserve. I mean the many excellent Authors of our own Country, whose Works it were endless to recount. Where is Love, Honour and Bravery more lively represented than in our Tragedies, who has given us Nobler, or juster Pictures of Nature than Mr. *Shakespear*? Where is there a tenderer Passion, than in the Maids Tragedy? Whose Grief is more awful and commanding than Mr. *Otways*? Whose Descriptions more Beautifull, or Thoughts more Gallant than Mr. *Drydens*? When I see any of their Plays acted, my Passions move by their Direction, my Indignation, my Compassion, my my Grief are all at their Beck. Nor is our Comedy at all inferior to our Tragedy; for, not to mention those already nam'd for the other part of the Stage, who are all excellent in this too, Sir *George Etherege* and Sir *Charles Sedley* for neat Raillery and Gallantry are without Rivals, Mr. *Wicherley* for strong Wit, pointed Satyr, sound and useful Observations is beyond

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taught us to admire the Beauties as we ought, and to know the faults of the former. Nor are we less beholding to these for forming our Judgments, than to those for raising our Fancies.

These are the Sources from whence we draw our gayer part of Conversation; I don't mean in exclusion to the other parts of Poetry, in most of which (as I have heard good Judges say) we equal at least the Ancients, and far surpass all the Moderns. I honour the Names, and admire the Writings of *Denham*, *Suckling* and *D'avenant*; I am ravish'd with the Fancy of *Cowley*, and the Gallantry of *Waller*. I reverence the *Fairy Queen*, am rais'd, and elevated with *Paradise Lost*, *Prince Arthur* composes and reduces me to a State of Yawning indifference; and Mr. *W—stl—y's Heroicks* lull me to Sleep. Thus all Ranks and Degrees of Poets have their use, and may be serviceable to some body or other from the Prince to the Pastry Cook, or Past-beard Box-maker.

ker. I should mention our Satyrists, but it would be endless to descend to every particular, of these Mr. *Oldham* is admirable, and to go no further, the inimitable Mr. *Butler* will be an everlasting Testimony, of the Wit of his Age, and Nation, and bid eternal defiance to the Wits of all Countries, and future Ages to follow him in a Path before untrack'd. Our Prose Writers, that are eminent for a gay Style and Iovial Argument, are so many, that it would swell this Letter too much to name 'em, so that I shall only take notice, that whoever can read without Pleasure, or Laughter, *The contempt of the Clergy*, and the following Letters and Dialogues by the same Author, or the facetious Dialogues of Mr. *Brown* must be more Splenetick than *Heraclitus*, or more stupid, than the Ass he laugh'd at.

Nor are we less provided for the serious Part; Morality has generally been the Province of our

Clergy who have treated of all parts of it very largely with so much Piety, Solidity, and Eloquence, that as I think I may venture to say, they have written more upon it than the Clergy of all the rest of the World; so I believe no Body will deny that they have written better. Yet I cou'd wish, that our Ingenious Gentlemen wou'd employ their Pens oftner on these Subjects; because the severity of the other's Profession obliges 'em to write with an Air, and in a Style less agreable, and inviting to Young People, Not that we are without many excellent Pieces of Morality, Humanity and Civil Prudence written by, and like Gentlemen. But it is the Excellence of 'em, and the ability of our Gentlemen, which appears in the Spirit, Wit, and curious Observations in those Pieces, which make me desire more of the same Nature, Who can read the Essays of that Wonderful Man my Lord *Bacon*, or the no less to be admir'd Sir *Walter Raleigh's*, or Mr. *Osborns* advice to a Son,

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the *Advice to a Daughter*, Sir *William Temple's*, or Sir *George Machenzie's* *Essays*, Sir *Roger L'Estrange's* *Essay* ( to which last we are likewise oblig'd for an incomparable *Version of Seneca* ) and abundance of others, without wishing for more from the same or the like hands? Our Neighbours the *French*, have written a great deal of this kind, of the best of which we have the benefit in *English*; but more particularly the *Messieurs, Montagne, Rochefaucault*, and *St. Evremont* deserve to be immortal in all Languages. I need not mention any more, it is apparent from these that Women want not the means of being Wise and Prudent without more Tongues than one; nay, and Learned too, if they have any Ambition to be so.

The numberless Treatises of Antiquities, Philosophy, Mathematicks Natural, and other History ( in which I can't pass silently by, that learned One of Sir *Walter Raleigh*, which the World he writ of

can't match ) written originally in, or translated to our Tongue are sufficient to lead us a great way into any Science our Curiosity shall prompt us to. The greatest difficulty we struggled with, was the want of a good Art of Reasoning, which we had not, that I know of, till that defect was supply'd by the greatest Master of that Art Mr. *Locke*, whose Essay on Human Understanding makes large amends for the want of all others in that kind

Thus Madam I have endeavour'd to obviate all our Adversarie's Objections, by touching upon as great a Variety of things relating to the Subject as I conveniently cou'd. Yet I hope I have troubled you with nothing but what was necessary to make my way clear, and plain before me; and I am apt to think I have made it appear, that nothing but discouragement or an Idle Uncurious Humour can hinder us from Rivalling most Men in the knowledge of great Variety of things,

things, without the help of more Tongues than our Own; which the Men so often reproachfully tell us is enough. This Idleness is but too frequently to be found among us, but 'tis a Fault equally common to both Sexes. Those that have means to play the Fool all their lives, seldom care for the trouble of being made wise. We are naturally Lovers of our Ease, and have great apprehensions of the difficulty of things untry'd; Especially in matters of Learning, the common Methods of acquiring which are so unpleasant, and uneasy. I doubt not but abundance of noble Wits are stifled in both Sexes, for want but of suspecting what they were able to do, and with how much facility. Experience shews us every day Blockheads, that arrive at a moderate, nay sometimes a great Reputation by their Confidence, and brisk attempts which they maintain by their Diligence; while great Numbers of Men naturally more Ingenious lye neglected by, for



want of Industry to improve, or Courage to exert themselves. No Man certainly but wishes he had the Reputation in, and were Respected and Esteem'd by the World as he sees some Men are for the Fruits of their Pens; but they are loth to be at the pains of an Attempt, or doubt their sufficiency to perform; or what I believe is most general, never to enquire so far into themselves, and their own Abilities, as to bring such a thought into their Heads. This last I fancy is the true Reason, why our Sex, who are commonly charged with talking too much, are Guilty of Writing so little. I wish they would shake of this lazy Despondence, and let the noble examples of the deservedly celebrated Mrs. *Philips*, and the incomparable Mrs. *Behn* rouse their Courages, and shew Mankind the great injustice of their Contempt. I am confident they would find no such need of the assistance of Languages as is generally imagin'd. Those that have of their own need not graft upon

Ignorance  
of Latine  
&c. no di-  
advantage

upon Foreign Stocks. I have often thought that the not teaching Women Latin and Greek, was an advantage to them, if it were rightly consider'd, and might be improv'd to a great heighth. For Girles after they can Read and Write (if they be of any Fashion) are taught such things as take not up their whole time, and not being suffer'd to run about at liberty as Boys, are furnish'd among other toys with Books, such as *Romances, Novels, Plays* and *Poems*; which though they read carelessly only for Diversion, yet unawares to them, give 'em very early a considerable Command both of Words and Sense; which are further improv'd by their making and receiving Visits with their Mothers, which gives them betimes the opportunity of imitating, conversing with, and knowing the manner, and address of elder Persons. These I take to be the true Reasons why a Girl of Fifteen is reckon'd as ripe as a Boy of One and Twenty, and not any natural forwardness of

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Maturity as some People would have it. These advantages the Education of Boys deprives them of, who drudge away the Vigour of their Memories at Words, useless ever after to most of them, and at Seventeen or Eighteen are to begin their Alphabet of Sense, and are but where the Girles were at Nine or Ten. Yet because they have learnt Latin and Greek, reject with Scorn all *English* Books their best helps, and lay aside their Latin ones, as if they were already Masters of all that Learning, and so hoist Sail for the wide World without a Compass to Steer by. Thus I have fairly stated the difference between us, and can find no such disparity in Nature or Education as they contend for; but we have a sort of ungenerous Adversaries, that deal more in Scandal than Argument, and when they can't hurt us with their Weapons, endeavour to annoy us with stink Pots. Let us see therefore, *Madam*, whether we can't beat them from their Ammunition, and turn their

their own Artillery upon them; for I firmly believe there is nothing, which they charge upon us, but may with more Justice be retorted upon themselves.

They tax us with a long List of Faults, and Imperfections, and seem to have taken a Catalogue of their own Follies and Vices, not with design to correct them, but to shift of the Imputation to us. There is no doubt, but particular Women may be found upon whom every charge may be justified; but our Sex is not answerable for them, till they prove there are no such Men, which will not be before Dooms-day. However, like ill Neighbours they bring the Dirt out of their own Homes not out of Neatness, but out of Envy to their Neighbours, at whose Doors they lay it. But let them remove their Follies as oft as they please, they are still as constant to them, as the *Needle* to the *North Pole*, they point them out which way soever they move. Let us see what these  
 Quali-

Qualities are, they so liberally bestow upon, and after see how they fit the Donours, and survey 'em in their proper Figures and Colours. The most familiar of these are Vanity, Impertinence, Enviousness, Dissimulation, Inconstancy, &c.

*Vanity.*

To begin with Vanity, it is a failing the greatest Part of Mankind are tinctured with, more or less. For all Men are apt to flatter themselves with a Fancy, that they have some one or more good Qualities, or extraordinary Gifts, that raise 'em above the ordinary Level of Men; and therefore hug and cherish, what they think valuable and singular in 'em. It is never commendable, sometimes pardonable, when the excellencies are real, and it is moderate so much must be allow'd to humane frailty. It is ridiculous and intolerable when it is extravagant, misplac'd, or groundless. It is very injudicious, and makes men commonly dote on their Defects, and  
 expose

expose their blemishes by their Fondness, which makes 'em more remarkable by the care and ornament bestow'd on 'em. It persuades hard Favour'd and distorted Fellows to dress, and value their Persons, Cowards to pretend to Courage, and provoke Beatings, Blockheads to set up for Wit, and make themselves ridiculous in Print; Upstarts to brag of their Families, and be reminded of the Garrets they were born, and the Stalls they were brought up in. In Women the object of it is their Beauty, and is excusable in those that have it. Those that have it not may be pardon'd, if they endeavour at it; because it is the only undisputed advantage our Sex has over the other, and what makes 'em respected beyond all other Perfections, and is alone ador'd. In Men it has not only this Object, but all those before mention'd, and a hundred other. It is admirably seen in a Writing, reciting Fop Author, is in full Lustre in a Beau, but its most unlucky Prospect is in

*Character  
of a Bully.*

a Swaggering Coward, who is a Fool beyond the Conviction of Smart. His Courage is like an Ague Fit, that leaves him upon a Fright, and returns when he is out of the reach of a Cudgel. He spends much time in the Fencing School, and Fights briskly where there is no danger of Wounds nor Smart. His Hands are instructed, but his Heels do him all the Service. He is a nice observer of Punctilio's, and takes more Affronts than are given him. He draws first, and runs first, and if ever he makes another Man run, it is after him. He is a Pebble that sparkles like a Diamond, but wants hardness. He talks perpetually of what he will do, but thinks continually of what he shall suffer. He is often in Quarrels, yet seldom in Rencounters, and is glad of a Challenge, that he may know whom, and when to avoid. He brings up the Rear at an Engagement, and leads the Van in the Retreat. He is a Man of much Passion, but the most predominant

is his Fear. He offers affronts readily, but has too much honour to justify them, and will submit to any terms of satisfaction rather than occasion Blood-shed. He is so full of Courage, that it boils over when there is no occasion, and his *Sword* and *Person* are always at Leisure, and at your Service, till you want them, and then to his great Trouble, he is always indispensably engag'd otherwise. He wears *Red*, and a long *Sword* openly to shew his Valour, and *Mail* privately to shew his Discretion. He threatens terribly, but he is like a Witch, if you draw Blood of him, he has no power to hurt you. No Man shews or boasts more of his Scars with less Reason. He scorns to take a blow in the Face, and a Back-piece is as good to him as a whole sute of Armour. He is at first the Terror of all the *Young Bullies*, at last their *Maygame*, and they blood their *Cub Hectors* upon him, as they do young *Beagles* on a *Hare*. Good usage makes him insolent, but he fawns like a *Spaniel* most upon



upon those that beat him. When he is discover'd by all the rest of the World, the Cheat passes still upon himself, and he is pleas'd with the terrible Figure he makes in his Glass, tho' he is ready to shake at his own Shaddow.

Character  
of a Scow-  
rer.

There are men of an humour directly opposite to this, yet e'ry whit as Mad, Foolish, and Vain ; these are your Men of nice Honour, that love Fighting for the sake of Blows, and are never well but when they are wounded They are severe Interpreters of Looks, are affronted at every Face that don't please 'em. and like true Cocks of the Game have a quarrel to all Mankind at first sight. They are passionate Admirers of scarr'd Faces, and dote on a Wooden Leg. They receive a Challenge like a *Billet Douce*, and a home thrust as a Favour. Their common Adversary is the Constable, and their usual Lodging the Counter. Broken heads are a diversion, and an Arm in a Scarfe is a high satisfaction. They are frugal

gal in their expences with the Taylor, for they have their Doublets pinkt on their Backs, but they are as good as an Annuity to the Surgeon, tho' they need him not to let 'em blood. *Flanders* is their Mistress, and a Clap from her carries 'em off the Stage. If they return, an *Hospital* is their Retreat, or the *Sheriff* their Executioner. These two, *Madam*, are very different extravagances, and very strange one's, yet they are real, and such as appear every day. But, what is most to be wonder'd at, arise both from the same Principle, and the same mistaken Notion, and are only differenc'd by the diversity of Tempers in Men. The common Motive to both is Vanity, and they jointly concur in this Opinion, that Valour is the most estimable, and most honourable Quality; that Man is capable of; they agree in a desire to be honour'd and fear'd, but they differ in their methods in persuing this common End. The one is naturally active, bold and daring; and therefore takes the true course to arrive at it by shew-

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ing what he can do, by what he dare suffer, and his immoderate desire and indiscretion suffer him to know no bounds. The other is mean Spirited and fearful, and seeks by false Fire to Counterfeit a heat that may pass for genuine to conceal the Frost in his Blood, and like an ill Actor, over-does his Part for want of understanding it, which 'tis impossible he shou'd. Among peaceable Men, and those of his own Temper he comes off with Colours flying, and those are the Men he wou'd be valiant amongst only, cou'd he read Men's hearts. But the first Rencounter betrays the Ass thro' the Lions Skin, and he is Cudgel'd like an Ass in Spite of his Covering. It is our happiness *Madam*, that we lie under no manner of Temptation from these two Vanities, whereof one is so dangerous, the other so ridiculous. For all humours that are forc'd against the natural bent of our tempers must be so. Nature is our best guide, and has fitted ev'ry Man for somethings more particularly than others; which  
if

*Imitation  
ridiculous.*

if they had the sense to prosecute, they wou'd at least not be ridiculous, if they were not extraordinary. But so prevalent are our Vanity, and this Apish Humour of Imitation, that we persuade our selves, that we may practise with applause, whatever we see another succeed in, tho' as contrary to the intent of our Nature, as Dancing to an Elephant; so some Men that talk well of serious matters, are so mov'd at the applause some merry Drolls gain, that they forget their gravity, and aiming to be Wits, turn Buffoons; There are others, that are so taken with the actions and grimace of a good Mimick, that they fall presently to making awkward Faces and wry Mouths, and are all their lives after in a Vizard, Maskt tho' bare fac'd.

These, and innumerable others of the like Nature, are the lesser Follies of Mankind, by which their Vanity makes 'em fit only to be laugh'd at. There are others, who by more studied and

refin'd Follies arrive to be more considerable, and make a great Figure and Party among their Sex.

*Character  
of a Beau.*

Of the first rank of these is the *Beau*, who is one that has more Learning in his Heels than his Head, which is better cover'd than fill'd. His Taylor and his Barber are his Cabinet Council, to whom he is more behold- ing for what he is, than to his Maker. He is One that has travell'd to see Fashions, and brought over with him the newest cut suit, and the prettiest Fancy'd Ribbands for Sword Knots. His best Acquaintance at *Paris* was his Dancing Master, whom he calls the Marquis, and his chief Visits to the Opera's. He has seen the *French King* once, and knows the name of his cheif Minister, and is by this sufficiently convinc'd that there are no Politicians in any other Part of the World. His improvements are a nice Skill in the Mode, and a high Contempt of his own Coun-  
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try, and of Sense. All the knowledge he has of the Country, or Manners of it; is in the keeping of the Valet that follow'd him hither, and all that he retains of the Language is a few modish words to lard his discourse with, and shew his Breeding, and the names of his Garniture. He shou'd be a Philosopher, for he studies nothing but himself, yet ev'ry one knows him better, that thinks him not worth knowing. His looks and gestures are his constant Lesson, and his Glass is the Oracle that resolves all his mighty doubts and scruples. He examines and refreshes his Complexion by it, and is more dejected at a Pimple, than if it were a Cancer. When his Eyes are set to a languishing Air, his Motions all prepar'd according to Art, his Wig and his Coat abundantly Powder'd, his Gloves Essenc'd, and his Handkercher perfum'd and all the rest of his Bravery rightly adjusted, the greatest part of the day, as well the business of it at home, is over; 'tis time to launch, and down he

comes, scented like a Perfumers Shop, and looks like a Vessel with all her rigging under sail without Ballast. A Chair is brought within the door, for he apprehends every Breath of Air as much, as if it were a Hurricane. His first Vedit is to the *Chocolate House*, and after a quarter of an Hours Compliment to himself in the great Glass, he faces about and salutes the Company, and puts in practice his Mornings Meditations; When he has made his Cringes round, and play'd over all his Tricks, out comes the fine *Snush Box*, and his *Nose* is Regal'd a while: After this he begins to open, and starts some learned Arguments about the newest Fashion, and hence takes occasion to commend the next Man's Fancy in his Cloths, this ushers in a discourse of the Appearance last *Birth Night*, or *Ball* at Court, and so a Critick upon this *Lord*, or that *Ladies Masquing Habit*. From hence he adjourns to the *Play-house*, where he is to be met again in the side Box, from whence he makes his

his Court to all the Ladies in general with his Eyes, and is particular only with the *Orange-Wench*. After a while he engages some neighbouring Vizor, and together they run over all the Boxes, take to Pieces every Face, examine every Feature, pass their Censure upon every one, and so on to their Dress; here he very Judiciously gives his opinion upon every particular, and determines whose Colours are well chosen, whose Fancy is neatest, and whose Cloths fit with most Air; but in conclusion sees no Body compleat but himself in the whole House. After this he looks down with contempt upon the Pit, and rallies all the slovenly Fellows, and awkward Beau's (as he calls them) of t'other End of the Town, is mightily offended at their ill scented *Snuff*, and in spite of all his *Pulvilio* and *Essences*, is overcome with the stink of their *Cordovant Gloves*. To close all, *Madam*, in the Mask must give him an account of the Scandal of the Town, which she does in the History of abundance of Intrigues real or feign'd; at



all which he laughs aloud and often, not to shew his satisfaction, but his Teeth. She shews him who is kept by such a Lord, Who was lately discarded ~~to~~ such a Knight, for granting Favours too indiscreetly to such a Gentleman : who has lately been in the Country for two or three Months upon extraordinary Occasions. To all which he gives great attention, that he may pass for a Man of Intelligence in another Place. His next Stage is *Locket's*, where his Vanity, not his Stomach, is to be gratified with something that is *little and dear*, *Quails* and *Ortalans* are the meanest of his Diet, and a Spoonful of *Green Pease* at *Christmass*, are worth to him more than the inheritance of the *Feild* where they grow in *Summer*. Every thing falls in his Esteem, as it falls in price, and he would not so much as tast the *Wine*, if the hard name, and the high rate did not give it a relish. After a glass or two, ( for a Pint is his stint ) he begins to talk of his Intrigues, boasts much of the Favours he has receiv'd, and shews

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counterfeit Tokens, and in Conclusion, slanders some Lady or other of unquestion'd Vertue with a particular fondness for him. His Amours are all profound Secrets, yet he makes a Confidence of 'em to every Man he meets with. He pretends a great reverence for the Ladies, and a mighty tenderness of their Reputations; yet he is like a *Flesh Flye*, whatever he blows on is tainted. He talks of nothing under Quality, tho' he never obtain'd a Favour, which his Man might not have for half a Crown. He and his Footman in this Case are like *English* and *Dutch* at an Ordinary in *Holland*, the Fare is the same, but the Price is vastly different. Thus the Show goes forward, till he is beaten for Trespasses he was never guilty of, and shall be damn'd for Sins he never Committed. At last, with his Credit as low as his Fortune he retires sullenly to his Cloister, the *King's-Bench*, or *Fleet*, and passes the rest of his days in Privacy, and Contemplation. Here, *Madam*, if you please

please wee'l give him one *Visit* more, and see the last *Act* of the *Farce*; and you shall find him ( whose *Sobriety* was before a *Vice*, as being only the *Pimp* to his other *Pleasures*; and who fear'd a lighted *Pipe* as much as if it had been a great *Gun* levell'd at him ) with his *Nose Flaming*, and his *Breath* stinking of *Spirits* worse than a *Dutch Tarpawlin's*, and smoking out of a short *Pipe*, that for some Months has been kept hot as constantly as a *Glass-House*, and so I leave him to his *Meditation*.

You wou'd think it yet more strange, that any one should be *Slovenly* and *Nasty* out of *Vanity*; yet such there are I can assure you, *Madam*, and cou'd easily give a description of 'em, but that so foul a Relation must needs be *Nauseous* to a Person so Neat as your *Self*; and wou'd be treating You as the *Country Squire* did his *Court Friend*, who when he had shew'd him all the *Curiosities* of his *House* and *Gardens*, carried him into his *Hogsties*.

ties. But there are more than enough to justify what I have said of the Humour of *Diogenes*, who was as vain and as proud in his *Tub*, as *Plato* cou'd be in the midst of his fine *Persian Carpets*, and rich *Furniture*. Vanity is only an Ambition of being taken notice of, which shews it self variously according to the humour of the Persons; which was more extravagant in the *Anti-Beau*, than in the *Beau Philosopher*. Vanity is the veriest *Proteus* in the World, it can Ape *Humility*, and can make Men decry themselves on purpose to be Flattered; like some cunning *Preachers* that cry up *Mortification* and *Self-denial* perpetually, and are pamper'd all the while by the Zeal and at the Charges of their Followers, who are afraid the good Man shou'd starve himself. It is the Blessing of Fools, and the Folly of Ingenious Men. For it makes those contentedly hugg themselves under all the scorn of the World, and the Indignities that are offer'd 'em, and these restless and dissatisfied with  
its

its applause. Both think the World envious, and that their merit is injur'd, and it is impossible to right either of 'em to their Minds; for those have no title to the presence of merit, and these not so much as they think they have. Yet it is the Happiness of the first that they can think themselves capable of moving *Envy*; for though they commonly mistake the Derision of Men, for their applause, yet Men are sometimes so ill Natur'd as to undeceive 'em, and then it is their Comfort, that these are envious Men, and misrepresent the Worlds opinion of 'em. Cou'd these Men be convinc'd of their mistake, I see nothing that shou'd hinder them from being desperate, and hanging or disposing of themselves some other such way. For though a Man may comfort himself under Afflictions, it is either that they are undeserved, or if deserved, that he suffers only for Oversights, or rash Acts, by which the wisest Men may be sometimes overtaken; that he is in the main Discreet and

*Van'ty a  
Blessing to  
Fools.*

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Prudent, and that others believe him so. But when a Man falls under his own *Contempt*, and does not only think himself not wise, but by *Nature* made absolutely incapable of ever becoming *Wise*, he is in a deplorable *State*, and wants the common *Comfort*, as well of *Fools*, as *Wise Men*, *Vanity*; which in such a Case is the only proper *Mediatour* of a *Reconcilement*. No Quality seems to be more *Providentially* distributed to every Man according to his *Necessity*; for those that have least *Wit*, ought to have the greatest *Opinion* of it; as all other *Commodities* are rated highest, where they are scarcest. By this means the level is better maintain'd amongst Men, who, were this imaginary *Equality* destroy'd, might be apt to reverence, and idolize one another too much; and forgetting the common Fate, they are all Born to, pay *Honours* too near divine to their Fellow *Mortals*. But as the humour of the World now runs, this sort of *Idolatry* is scarce likely to come in-

to



has always more Wit in his Pockets than any where else, yet seldom or never any of his own there. *Esop's Daw* was a *Type* of him; For he makes himself fine with the Plunder of all Parties. He is a Smuggler of Wit, and steals *French Fancies* without paying the customary Duties. Verse is his *Manufacture*; For it is more the labour of his Finger than his brain. He spends much time in Writing, but ten times more in Reading what he has Written. He is loaden constantly with more Papers, and duller than a *Clerk* in *Chancery*, and spends more time in *Hearings*, and *Re-hearings*. He asks your Opinion, yet for fear you shou'd not jump with him, tells you his own first. He desires no Favour, yet is disappointed, if he be not Flatter'd, and is offended always at the Truth. His first Education is generally a *Shop*, or a *Counting-House*, where his acquaintance commences with the *Bell-man* upon a new Years day. He puts him upon Intriguing with the *Muses*, and promises to *Pimp* for

*Character  
of a Poetaster.*



for him. From this time forward he hates the name of *Mechanick*; and resolves to sell all his stock, and purchase a Plantation in *Parnassus*. He is now a Poetical *Haberdasher* of *Small Wares*; and deals very much in *Novels*; *Madrigals*; *Ric<sup>ds</sup>* *dles*, *Funeral*, and *Love Odes*, and *Elegies*, and other *Toyes* from *Helicon*, which he has a Shop so well furnish'd with; that he can fit you with all sorts and Sizes upon all Occasions in the twinkling of an Eye. He frequents *Apollo's Exchange* in *Covent-Garden*, and picks up the freshest Intelligence what *Flays* are upon the Stocks, or ready to be launch'd; who have lately made a good Voyage, who a saving one only, and who have suffer'd a Wreck in *Lincoln's-Inn-Feilds*, or *Drury-Lane*, and which are brought into the Dock to be *Careen'd* and fitted for another Voyage. He talks much of *Jack Dryden*, and *Will. Wyckerley*, and the rest of that Set, and protests he can't help having some respect for 'em, because they have so much for him, and his

Writings;

Writings; otherwise he cou'd shew 'em to be meer Sots and Blockheads that understand little of Poetry, in comparision of himself; but he forbears 'em meerly out of Gratitude, and Compassion. Once a Month he fits out a small *Poetical Smeck* at the charge of his Bookseller, which he lades with *French Plunder* new Vampt in *English*, small Ventures of *Translated Odes*, *Elegies* and *Epigrams* of Young Traders; and ballasts with heavy *Prose* of his own; for which returns are to be made to the severall Owners in Testers, or applause from the Prentices and Tyre Women that deal for 'em. He is the Oracle of those that want Wit, and the Plague of those that have it; for he haunts their Lodgings, and is more terrible to em, than their Duns. His Pocket is an unexhaustible Magazine of *Rhime*, and *Nonsense*, and his Tongue like a repeating Clock with Chimes, is ready upon every touch to sound to 'em. Men avoid him for the same Reason, they avoid the *Pillory*, the security of their

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*Ears;*

*Ears*; of which he is as merciless a Persecutor. He is the Bane of Society, a Friend to the Stationers, the Plague of the Press, and the Ruine of his Bookseller. He is more profitable to the *Grocers* and *Tabacconists* than the *Paper Manufacture*; for his Works, which talk so much of Fire and Flame, commonly expire in their Shops in *Vapour* and *Swoak*. If he aspire to *Comedy*, he intrigues with some experienc'd *Damsel* of the *Town*, in order to instruct himself in the humour of it, and is cullied by her into *Matrimony*, and so is furnish'd at once with a Plot, and two good Characters, himself and his Wife, and is paid with a Portion for a Jointure in *Parnassus*, which I leave him to make his best of.

*Vanity Universal.*

I shall not trouble you with any more Instances of the foolish vanities of Mankind; because I am afraid I have been too large upon that Head already. Not that I think there is any Order or Degree of Men, which wou'd not afford many

many and notorious instances for our Purpose. For as I think *Vanity* almost the Universal mover of all our Actions, whether good or bad; so I think there are scarce any Men so Ingenious, or so Vertuous, but something of it will shine through the greatest Part of what they do, let them cast never so thick a Vail over it. What makes Men so solicitous of leaving a Reputation behind 'em in the World, though they know they can't be affected with it after Death, but this even to a degree of Folly? What else makes great Men involve themselves in the Fatigues and Hazards of War, and intricate Intrigues of State, when they have already more than they can enjoy, but an Itch of being talk'd of and remembered, to which they sacrifice their present happiness and repose?

But I shall carry these Considerations no farther; because I have already singled out some of those many whose *Vanity* is more extravagant and ridiculous, than any our

Sex is chargeable with, and these slight Touches may serve to let 'em see, that even the greatest, and Wisest are not wholly exempt, if they have it not in a higher Degree, tho' they exercise it in things more Popular, and Plausible. I hope therefore the burthen of this good Quality will not hereafter be laid upon us alone, but the Men will be contented to divide the Load with us, and be thankful that they bear less than their Proportion.

*Impertinence.*

*Impertinence* comes next under Consideration, in which I shall be as brief, as I conveniently can, in regard I have been so long upon the precedeing Head. *Impertinence* is a humour of busying our selves about things trivial, and of no Moment in themselves, or unseasonably in things of no concern to us, or wherein we are able to do nothing to any Purpose. Here our Adversaries insult over us, as if they had gain'd an intire *Victory*, and the *Field* were indisputable; but they shall have no cause for  
*Triumph,*

*Triumph*, this is no Post of such mighty advantage as they fondly persuade themselves. This *Presumption* arises from an Erroneous Conceit, that all those things in which they are little concern'd, or consulted, are trifles below their care or notice, which indeed they are Commonly mistaken. not by Nature so well able to manage. Thus, when they hear us talking to, and advising one another about the Order, Distribution and Contrivance of *Household Affairs*, about the *Regulation* of the *Family*, and *Government* of *Children* and *Servants*, the provident management of a *Kitchen*, and the decent ordering of a *Table*, the suitable *Matching*, and convenient disposition of *Furniture* and the like, they presently condemn us for impertinence. Yet they may be pleased to consider, that as the affairs of the World are now divided betwixt us, the *Dome-stick* are our share, and out of which we are rarely suffer'd to interpose our Sense. They may be pleased to consider likewise, that as light and inconsiderable as these things

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seem,

seem, they are capable of no Pleasures of Sense higher or more refin'd than those of *Brutes* without our care of 'em. For were it not for that, their Houses wou'd be meer *Bedlams*, their most luxurious Treats, but a rude confusion of ill Digested, ill mixt Scents and Relishes, and the fine Furniture, they bestow so much cost on, but an expensive heap of glittering *Rubbish*. Thus they are beholding to us for the comfortable Enjoyment of what their labour or good Fortune hath acquir'd or bestow'd, and think meanly of our care only, because they understand not the value of it. But if we shall be thought impertinent for Discourses of this Nature, as I deny not but we sometimes justly may, when they are unseasonable; what censure must those Men bear, who are perpetually talking of *Politicks*, *State Affairs* and *Grievances* to us, in which perhaps neither they, nor We are much concern'd, or if we be, are not able to propose, much less to apply any Remedy to 'em? Surely these are  
 impertinent

impertinent; not to call the *Beau*, or *Poetaster* on the *Stage* again, whose whole Lives are one continued scene of Folly and Impertinence; let us make the best of our *News Menger*.

He is one whose Brains having been once over-heated, retain something of the Fire in 'em ever after. He mistakes his Passion for Zeal, and his Noise and Bustling, for Services. He is always full of Doubts, Fears, and Jealousies, and is never without some notable Discovery of a deep laid Design, or a dangerous Plot found out in a *Meal Tub*, or *Petticoat*. He is a mighty Listner after *Prodigies*, and never hears of a *Whale*, or a *Comet*, but he apprehends some sudden *Revolution* in the State, and looks upon a *Groaning-board*, or a *speaking-head*, as fore-runners of the *Day of Judgment*. He is a great Lover of the King, but a bitter Enemy to all about him, and thinks it impossible for him to have any but *Evil Counsellors*, and though he be very zealous

*Character  
of a Coffee-  
House Poli-  
tician.*



lous for the Government, yet he never finds any thing in it but *Grievances* and *Miscarriages* to declaim upon. He is a Well-wisher to the *Church*, but he is never to be reconcil'd to the *Bishops* and *Clergy*, and rails most inveterately at the *Act* of *Uniformity*. He hates *Persecution* implacably, and contends furiously for *Moderation*, and can scarce think well of the *Toleration*, because it is an *Act* of the State. He professes himself of the *Church* of *England*, pretends to like the *Worship* of it, but he goes to Meetings in spite to the *Parson* of his *Parish*. His *Conscience* is very tender and scrupulous in Matters of Ceremony, but it is as steely and tough as *Brawn* behind his Counter, and can digest any Sin of Gain. He lodges at home, but he lives at the *Coffee-house*. He converses more with *News Papers*, *Gazettes* and *Votes*, than with his *Shop Books*, and his constant Application to the *Publick* takes him off all Care for his *Private Concern*. He is always settling the *Nation*, yet cou'd never manage his  
own

own *Family*. He is a mighty Stickler at all *Elections*, and tho' he has no *Vote*, thinks it impossible any thing shou'd go right unless he be there to Bawl for it. His business is at *Home*, but his thoughts are in *Flanders*, and he is earnestly investing of *Towns* till the *Sheriff's Officers* be-leaguer his *Doors*. He is busie in forcing of *Counterscarps*, and storming of *Breaches*, while his *Creditors* take his *Shop* by surprize, and make *Plunder* of his *Goods*. Thus by mending the *State*, He marrs his own *Fortune*; and never leaves talking of the *Laws* of the *Land*, till the Execution of 'em silence him.

This sort of Impertinents the *Coffee-houses* are every day full of; nay, so far has this contagious Impertinence spread it self, that *Private Houses*, and *Shops*, nay, the very *Streets* and *Bulks* are infected and pester'd with *Politicks* and *News*. Not a Pot cou'd go glibly down, or a sitch go merrily forward without *Namur*, a while ago; 'twas *Spice* to the *Porter's Ale*, and  
Wax

*Wax* to the *Cobler's Thread*; the one suspended his Draught, and the other his Awl to enquire what was become of the *Rogue*, and were very glad to hear he was taken, and expected no doubt he shou'd come over and make 'em a *Holy-day* at his Execution. They were mightily rejoyc'd at the Arresting of the *Mareschal Boufflers*, and made no question but they shou'd see him amongst the rest of the *Beasts* at *Bartholomew Fair* for Two Pence. This Folly of the *Mob* was in some measure excusable, because their Ignorance led 'em into an expectation of seeing what had given the World so much Trouble. But those that have better knowledge of things have no such *Plea*, they ought to have been wiser, than to have busied themselves so much and so earnestly about affairs, which all their care and Sollicitude could have no more Influence upon, than over the Weather. 'Twas pleasant to see what Shoals the report of the arrival of a *Holland*, or *Flanders Mail*, brought to the *Secretary's Office*, the

*Post*

*Post Office*, and the *Coffee-Houses*; every one Crowding to catch the News first, which as soon as they had, they posted away like so many Expresses to disperse it among their Neighbours at more distance, that waited with Ears prickt up to receive 'em, or walk'd uneasily with a Foolish Impatience to and from the Door, or Window, as if their looking out so often wou'd fetch 'em the sooner. Most Men in their News are like *Beau's* in their Diet, the worst is welcome while 'tis fresh and scarce, and the best is not worth a Farthing when it has been blown upon; and commonly they fare like *Beau's*, are fond of it while 'tis young and insipid, and neglect it when 'tis grown up to its full, and true relish. No sooner is it rumour'd that a Breach is made in the *Castle Wall*, or the *White Flag* hung out, but a *Council of War* is call'd in every *Coffee-house* in Town; the *French*, and *Dutch Prints*, their Intel- ligencers are call'd for immediately, and examin'd. and not a Shot is mention'd but they start as if the  
Ball

Ball whizz'd just then by their Ears. After this follows a serious debate about a general Assault, and whether they shall storm immediately, or not; who shall begin the Attack; what Conditions shall be granted on Capitulation. The Castle of *Namur* thus taken, or Surrender'd, they proceed to take their Measures, and settle the next Campaign, and whatever harm we suffer by those mischeivous *French* in the Field, they are sure to take sufficient Revenge, and pay 'em off Swingingly in the *Coffee-houses*: But as if this were not enough, Our greatest Actions must be Buffoon'd in Show, as well as Talk. Shall *Namur* be taken and our Hero's of the City not show their Prowess upon so great an Occasion? It must never be said, that the *Coffee-houses* dar'd more than *Moor-Fields*; No, for the honour of *London*, out comes the Foreman of the *Shop* very Formidable in *Buff* and *Bandileers*, and away he marches with Feather in Cap, to the general Rendezvous in the *Artillery Ground*. There these terrible Mimicks of

*Mars*

City Militia.

*Mars* are to spend their Fury in *Noise* and *Smoke*, upon a *Namur* erected for that purpose on a *Mole-hill*, and by the help of *Guns* and *Drums* out-stink and out-rattle *Smith-field* in all its Bravery, and wou'd be too hard for the greatest Man in all *France*, if they had him but amongst 'em. Yet this is but Skirmishing, the hot Service is in another Place, when they engage the *Capons* and *Quart Pots*; never was Onset more Vigorous, For they come to Handy-Blows immediately, and now is the real cutting and flashing, and Tilting without Quarter, Were the Towns in *Flanders* all wall'd with *Beef*, and the *French* as good meat as *Capons*, and drest the same way, the King need never beat his Drums for Soldiers; all these Gallant Fellows wou'd come in Voluntarily, the meanest of which wou'd be able to eat a *Mareschal*, and whom nothing cou'd oppose in conjunction.

Nothing is more common, and familiar than this sort of Impertinence;

ence; Most Men wou'd have little to do, did they busie themselves about nothing, but what they understood, or were concern'd in. A Monkey is not liker a Man in his Figure, than in his humour. How ready are all Mankind to censure without Authority, and to give advice unaskt, and without reason. They are very much mistaken, that think this forwardness to thrust themselves into other's affairs, springs from any Principle of Charity or Tenderness for 'em, or the least Regard to the Welfare of their Neighbours. 'Tis only a Vain Conceit that they are wiser, and more able to advise, which puts 'em upon engaging in things they have nothing to do with, and passing their Judgments Magisterially on matters they have no Cognizance of, and generally little Information, or Skill in. They are desirous the World shou'd have as great an Opinion of 'em as they have of themselves, and therefore impertinently interpose their own Authority and Sense, tho' never so little to the purpose, only

*Officious  
Impertinences.*

to

to shew how well they cou'd manage; were it their Business; thus they advise without good intention, or kindness, and censure without design, or malice to the Persons counsell'd, or reflected on, These buzzing Insects swarm as thick every where, and are as troublesome as *Muskettoes* in the *West-Indies*. They are perpetually in a hurry of Business, yet are forc'd to rack their Inventions to employ their Leisure. They are very busie for every Body, and serve no Body. They are always in hast, and think themselves expected every where with Impatience, yet come sooner alwayes than they are welcome. They will walk a Mile, and spend an hour to tell any one how urgent their Business is, and what hast they are in to be gone. Their Expedition is their greatest Loss, For Time is the only thing that lies heavy upon their hands. They are walking *Gazetts*, that carry News from one Neighbour to another, and have their Stages about the Town as regular and certain, as a *Penny Postman*.

Every



Every Man is their acquaintaince, but no Man their Friend. They drudge for every Body, and are paid by no no Body, and tho' their Lives be worn out in endeavours to oblige all Mankind, when they die no one regrets their Loss, or misses their Service.

Character  
of a Virtuoso.

There are another sort of Impertinents, who, as they mind not the Business of other Men where it concerns 'em not, neglect it likewise where it does; and amuse themselves continually with the Contemplation of those things, which the rest of the World slight as useles, and below their regard. Of these the most Egregious is the *Virtuoso*, who is one that has sold an Estate in Land to purchase one in *Scallop, Conch, Muscle, Cockle Shells, Periwinkles, Sea Shrubs, Weeds, Mosses, Sponges, Coralls, Corallines, Sea Fans, Pebbles, Muchafites and Flint stones*; and has abandon'd the Acquaintance and Society of Men for that of *Insects, Worms, Grubbs, Maggots, Flies, Moths, Locusts, Beetles*;

*tles, Spiders, Grasshoppers, Snails, Lizards and Tortoises.* His study is like *Noah's Ark*, the general Rendezvous of all Creatures in the *Universe*, and the greatest part of his Moveables are the remainders of his Deluge. His Travels are not design'd as Visits to the Inhabitants of any Place, but to the Pits, Shores and Hills; from whence he fetches not the Treasure, but the Trumpery. He is ravish'd at finding an uncommon shell, or an odd shap'd Stone, and is desperately enamour'd at first sight of an unusual market Butter-flie, which he will hunt a whole day to be Master of. He trafficks to all places, and has his Correspondents in e'ry part of the World; yet his Merchandizes serve not to promote our Luxury, nor encrease our Trade, and neither enrich the Nation, nor himself. A Box or two of *Pebbles* or *Shells*, and a dozen of *Wasps, Spiders* and *Caterpillars* are his Cargoe. He values a *Camelion* or *Salamanders* Egg, above all the Sugars and Spices of the *West* and *East-indies*;

and wou'd give more for the Shell of a *Star-fish*, or *Sea Urchin* entire, than for a whole *Dutch Herring Fleet*. He visitès Mines, Colepits, and Quarries frequently, but not for that sordid end that other Men usually do, *viz.* gain; but for the sake of the fossile Shells and Teeth that are sometimes found there. He is a smatterer at *Botany*, but for fear of being suspected of any useful design by it, he employs his curiosity only about *Mosses, Grasses, Brakes, Thistles, &c.* that are not accus'd of any vertue in Medicine, which he distinguishes and divides very nicely. He preserves carefully those *Creatures*, which other Men industriously destroy, and cultivates seduloussly those *Plants*, which others root up as *Weeds*. He is the Embalmer of deceas'd *Vermin*, and dresses his *Mummyes* with as much care, as the Ancient *Egyptians* did their *Kings*. His *Cashi* consists much in old *Coins*, and he thinks the Face of *Alexander* in one of 'em worth more than all his *Conquests*. His *Inventory* is a list of the *Insects*

fects of all Countries, and the Shells and Pebbles of all Shores, which can no more be compleat without two or three of remarkable *Signatures*, than an *Apothecaries* Shop without a *Tortoise* and a *Crocodile*, or a Country *Barber's* without a batter'd *Cittern*. A piece of Ore with a Shell in it is a greater Present than if it were fine Gold, and a string of *Wampompeag* is receiv'd with more joy, than a *Rope of Orient Pearl*, or *Diamonds* wou'd be. His Collection of *Garden Snails*, *Cockle Shells* and *Vermine* compleated; (as he thinks) he sets up for a *Philosopher*, and nothing less than *Universal Nature* will serve for a Subject; of which he thinks he has an entire History in his *Lumber Office*. Hence forward he *struts* and *swells*, and despises all those little insignificant Fellows, that can make no better use of those noble incontestable Evidences of the *Universal Deluge*, *Scallop* and *Oyster Shells*, than to stew *Oysters*, or melt *Brimstone* for *Matches*. By this time he thinks it necessary to give the

World an *Essay* of his Parts, that it may think as highly of 'em (if possible) as he does himself; and finding *Moses* hard beset of late, he resolves to give him a lift, and defend his Flood, to which he is so much oblig'd for sparing his darling Toys only. But as great Masters use, he corrects him sometimes for not speaking to his Mind, and gives him the lie now and then in order to support his Authority. He shakes the World to Atoms with ease, which melts before him as readily as if it were nothing but a Ball of Salt. He pumps even the Center, and drains it of imaginary stores by imaginary Loopholes, as if punching the Globe full of holes cou'd make his *Hypothesis* hold Water. He is a Man of *Expedition*, and does that in a few days, which cost *Moses* some Months to compleat. He is a Passionate Admirer of his own Works without a Rival, and superciliously contemns all *Answers*, yet the least *Objection* throws him into the Vapours. He sets up for a grand *Philosopher*, and  
 palms

palms *Hypotheses* upon the World, which future Ages may (if they please) expect to hear his Arguments for; at present he is in no humour to give 'em any other satisfaction than his own word, that he is infallible. Yet those that have a Faith complacent enough to take a Gentleman's word for his own great Abilities, may perhaps be admitted to a sight of his grand Demonstration, his *Raree Show*; the particulars of which he repeats to 'em in a whining *Tone*, e'ry whit as formal and merry, though not so Musical, as the Fellows that used formerly to carry *theirs at their Backs*. His ordinary discourse is of his *Travels under Ground*, in which he has gone farther (if he may be believ'd) than a whole Warren of *Conies*. Here he began his Collection of Furniture for his Philosophical *Toy Shop*, which he will conclude with his Fortune, and then like all Flesh revert to the place from whence he came, and be translated only from one Shop to another.

This, *Madam*, is another sort of Impertience our Sex are not liable to; one wou'd think that none but *Mad Men*, or highly *Hypochondriacal*, cou'd employ themselves at this rate. I appeal to you, or indeed to any Man of Sense, whether acts like the wiser Animal; the man that with great care, and pains distinguishes and divides the many Varieties of Grass, and finds no other Fruit of his labour, than the charging of his Memory with abundance of superfluous Names; or the Ass that eats all promiscuously, and without distinction, to satisfy his *Appetite* and support *Nature*. To what purpose is it, that these Gentlemen ransack all Parts both of *Earth* and *Sea* to procure these *Triffles*? It is only that they may give their Names to some yet unchristen'd Shell or Insect. I know that the desire of knowledge, and the discovery of things yet unknown is the Pretence; But what Knowledge is it? What Discoveries do we owe to their Labours? It is only the Discovery of some few unheeded Varieties of Plants, Shells,

or Insects, unheeded only because useless; and the Knowledge, they boast so much of, is no more than a Register of their Names, and Marks of Distinction only. It is enough for them to know that a *Silk Worm* is a sort of *Caterpillar*, that when it is come to maturity Weaves a *Web*, is metamorphos'd to a *Moth-Flye*, lays Eggs, and so Dies. They leave all further enquiry: to the Unlearned and Mechanicks, whose business only they think it to prosecute matters of Gain and Profit. Let him contrive, if he can, to make this *Silk* serviceable to *Mankind*; their *Speculations* have another *Scope*, which is the founding some wild, uncertain, conjectural *Hypothesis*, which may be true or false; yet *Mankind* neither Gainers nor Losers either way a little in point of *Wisdom* or Convenience. These Men are just the reverse of a *Rattle Snake*, and carry in their *Heads*, what he does in his *Tail*, and move Laughter rather than Regard. What; improvements of *Physick*, or any useful Arts,



what noble Remedies, what serviceable Instruments have these *Mushrome*, and *Cockle shell* Hunters oblig'd the World with? For I am ready to recant if they can shew so good a Med'cine as *Stew'd Prunes*, or so necessary an Instrument as a *Flye Flap* of their own Invention and Discovery. Yet these are the Men of exalted Understandings, the Men of elevated Capacities, and sublime Speculations, that Dignifie and Distinguish themselves from the rest of the World by Specious Names, and Pompous Titles, and continue notwithstanding as very *Reptiles* in Sense, as those they converse so much with.

I wou'd not have any Body mistake me so far, as to think I wou'd in the least reflect upon any sincere, and intelligent Enquirer into Nature, of which I as heartily wish a better knowledge, as any *Vertuoso* of 'em all. You can be my Witness, *Madam*, that I us'd to say, I thought Mr. *Boyle* more honourable for his learned Labours, than for his Noble Birth;

Birth ; and that the *Royal Society*, by their great and celebrated Performances, were an Illustrious Argument of the Wisdom of the *August Prince*, their Founder of happy *Memory* ; and that they highly merited the *Esteem*, *Respect* and *Honour* paid 'em by the Lovers of Learning all *Europe* over. But tho' I have a very great Veneration for the *Society* in general, I can't but put a vast difference between the particular Members that compose it. Were *Supererogation* a Doctrine in Fashion, 'tis probable some of 'em might borrow of their Fellows merit enough to justify their Arrogance, but alas they are come an Age too late for that trick ; They are fallen into a Faithless, Incredulous Generation of Men that will give credit no farther than the visible Stock will extend : And tho' a Vertuoso should swell a Title-Page even till it burst with large Promises, and sonorous Titles, the World is so ill natur'd as not to think a whit the better of a Book for it. 'Tis an ill time to trade with im-  
plicity

plicite Faith, when so many have so lately been broken by an overstock of that *Commodity*; no sooner now a days can a Man write, or steal an Hypothesis, and promise Demonstration for it hereafter in this or the next World; but out comes some malicious Answer or other, with Reasons in hand against it, overthrows the credit of it, and puts the poor Author into Fits. For though a great Philosopher that has written a Book of three Shillings may reasonably insult, and despise a six penny Answer, yet the Indignity of so low pric'd a Refutation wou'd make a *Stoick* fret, and *Frisk* like a Cow with a Breeze in her Tail, or a Man bitten by a *Tarantula*. Men measure themselves by their *Vanity*, and are greater or less in their own Opinions, according to the proportion they have of it; if they be well stock'd with it, it may be easie to confute, but impossible to convince 'em. He therefore that wou'd set up for a great Man, ought first to be plentifully provided of it, and then a Score of *Cockle Shells*,

a dozen of *Hodmandods*, or any Trifle else is a sufficient Foundation to build a Reputation upon. But if a Man shall abdicate his lawful Calling in pure affection to these things, and has for some years spent all the Time and Money he was Master of in prosecution of this Passion, and shall after all hear his *Caterpillars* affronted, and his *Butter-flies* irreverently spoken of, it must be more provoking to him, than 'tis to a *Lion* to be pull'd by the *Beard*. And if, when to crown all his Labours, he has discover'd a Water so near a kin to the famous one, that cou'd be kept in nothing but the hoof of an *Ass*, that it was never found but in the *Skull* of the same *Animal*; a Water that makes no more of melting a *World*, than a *Dutchman* does of a *Ferkin* of *Butter*; and when he has written a *Book* of Discoveries, and Wonders thereupon, if ( I say ) the Impertinent Scriblers of the Age, will still be demanding *Proofs* and writing *Answers*, he has reason to throw down his *Pen* in a rage, and pronounce

pronounce the world, that cou'd give him such an interruption, unworthy to be blest with his future labours, and breath eternal Defiance to it, as irreconcilable, as the quarrel of the Sons of *Oedipus*. To which prudent Resolution, let us leave him till he can recover his Temper.

These Instances, *Madam*, will ( I hope ) suffice to shew that Men are themselves altogether as impertinent, as they maliciously misrepresent us. It is not for want of plenty of others that I content myself with these ; but I am not willing to trouble you with any of an inferiour Character. These are all impertinents of *Mark* and *Note*, and have severally the good fortune to find crowds of *Fools* of their own Sex to applaud and admire them. *Impertinence* is a failing, that has its *Root* in *Nature* ; but is not worth Laughing at, till it has receiv'd the finishing strokes of Art. A Man through natural defects may do abundance of incoherent, foolish Actions,

Actions, yet deserve *Compassion*  
 and *Advice* rather than *Derision*.  
 But to see Men spending their For-  
 tunes, as well as Lives, in a course  
 of *Regular Folly*, and with an in-  
 dustrious, as well as expensive I-  
 dleness running through tedious  
*Systems* of impertinence, wou'd have  
 split the sides of *Heraclitus*, had it  
 been his fortune to have been a  
 Spectator. 'Tis very easie to de-  
 cide which of these *Impertinents* is  
 the most signal; the *Vertuoso* is ma-  
 nifestly without a Competitour. For  
 our Follies are not to be measur'd  
 by the degree of *Ignorance*, that ap-  
 pears in 'em, but by the Study,  
 Labour and Expence they cost us  
 to finish and compleat 'em. So that  
 the more Regularity and Artifice  
 there appears in any of our Extra-  
 vagancies, the greater is the folly  
 of 'em. Upon this Score it is, that  
 the last mention'd deservedly claim  
 the preference to all others; they  
 have improv'd so well their Amuse-  
 ments into an Art, that the *Credu-  
 lous* and *Ignorant* are induc'd to be-  
 lieve there is some secret Vertue,  
 some

some hidden Mystery in those darling toys of theirs; when all their Butting amounts to no more than a learned *Impertinence*, (for so they abuse the Term) and all they teach Men is, but a specious expensive method of throwing away both Time and Money.

I intend not in what remains to trouble you with any more such instances; because I am sensible these have already swell'd this *Letter* to a *Volume*, which was not at first my intent. I shall therefore dispatch the remaining part of the charge in as few Words as possible. Amongst the rest *Dissimulation* is none of the least *Blemishes*, which they endeavour to fix upon us. This Quality, though it can't upon any occasion deserve the name of a *Vertue*, yet according to the present Constitution of the World, is many times absolutely necessary, and is a main ingredient in the Composition of Human Prudence. It is indeed oftentimes criminal, but it is only accidentally so, as Industry

*Dissimulation become necessary.*

dustry, Wit, and most other good Qualities may be, according, to the Ends and Purposes to which they are misemploy'd. Dissimulation is nothing but the hiding or disguising our secret thoughts, or Inclinations under another appearance. I shall not endeavour to absolve our Sex wholly from all use of this Quality, or Art ( call it which you please ) because I think it may upon many occasions be used with Innocence enough, and upon some can't without great Imprudence be omitted. The World is too full of *Craft*, *Malice*, and *Violence*, for absolute *Simplicity* to live in it. It behoves therefore our Sex as well as the other to live with so much Caution, and Circumspection in regard to their own Security, that their Thoughts and Inclinations may not be seen so naked, as to expose 'em to the *Snares*, designs, and practices of *Crafty Knaves*, who wou'd make a property of 'em; or lay 'em open to the wicked *Efforts*, and mischievous Impressions of *Envy*, or *Malice*, whose pleasure springs from the hurt  
of



of others. Nothing gives our Adversaries so great an advantage over us, as the knowledge of our Opinions, and Affections, with something agreeable to which they will be sure to bate all their Traps and Devices. For this reason it is that it has been Proverbially said of Old; that, *He that knows not how to dissemble, knows not how to live:* The Experience of all Ages since has confirm'd this Observation, and ours no less than any of the Preceding. This premis'd, I suppose no Wise Man will blame our Sex for the use of an Art so necessary, to preserve 'em from becoming a *Prey* to every designing Man, an Art of which himself must make great use to deserve that Title. Yet I am afraid, that upon enquiry our Sex will not be found to have so much of it as is requisite, at least not generally; Our sedentary Life, and the narrow Limits to which our Acquaintance, and Business are Circumscrib'd, afford us so little Variety, so regular a Face of things, that we want the means of obtain-

ing

ing the Master of so useful an Art, which no question but we shou'd as soon acquire as Men, had we but equal Opportunities. Hence it is that *Women* are more apt to show their *Resentments* upon all *Provocations* than *Men*; and are thought naturally more *Peevish* and *Captious*, by those that apprehend not the true reason; Whereas *Men* are altogether as *Stomachful*, and take *Offence* as soon, but they cover and suppress their *Indignation* better, not with a design to forget any *Injury* receiv'd, but to wreak their *Revenge* more covertly and effectually. This is another advantage *Men* derive from liberty of *Conversation* and promiscuous *Business*, wherein the *Variety* of *Contingencies* they have to provide against, and the *Diversity* of *Tempers* they deal with, force 'em to turn and wind themselves into all *Shapes*, and accommodate themselves to all *Humours*. There is indeed yet a higher sort of *Dissimulation*, which is always *Criminal*, that is when *Men* not only cloud their real *Sentiments* and *Intentions*

*Dissimulation when criminal.*

tentions, but make Profession of and seem zealously to affect the contrary; this by a more proper and restrain'd Name is call'd *Deceit*, and is always us'd in an ill Sense. This Art is most practic'd in Courts where *Policie*, and *Ambition* reign; there You may see *Enemies* hugging and caressing one another with all outward *Expressions* of *Tenderness* and *Friendship* imaginabe, while they are secretly contriving each others ruine. There you may see Men cringing to those, they wou'd *Spurn* if they durst, and *Flattering* those they despise and rail at behind their *Backs*, The Court is a place where we come very rarely otherwise than as *Spectators*, not as *Actours*; as *Ornaments*, not as *Instruments*; and therefore are seldom involv'd in the guilty Practices of it. Nor is it the Court only, but all Places are infected with this Vice, where there is any Encouragement of Profit or Pleasure to be hop'd from successful Treachery, of which no Place is so barren as not to afford some. This Deceit is so far from  
being

being the Vice of our Sex, that they are the common Object on which it is daily practic'd : Nothing is more frequently met with than false *Love* *False Love commonly practic'd.* in Men, which is now grown so familiar, that a Company of Six of both Sexes can scarce meet, but a *Sham Passion* commences immediately, is urg'd, protested, and sworn to be real with all imaginable Violence. If these false Arts, mock sighing, and Dying prevail upon any foolish, easie, credulous *Woman*, the *Sham Lover* is blown up with the Success, he is big and in Labour till he be deliver'd of the Secret, which with great satisfaction he proclaims in all Places where he comes : 'tis his highest Exploit of *Gallantry*, which he will by no means lose the credit of. Thus he thinks her ruine a step to Reputation, and founds his own Honour upon her Infamy. This *Madam* is the basest of Treachery; for they are not satisfied with the Success of their false Promises, and Oaths, but they insult over the weakness of a too fond *Woman*, and Tri-

*umph* in her Dishonour. I am sorry there are any *Women* so foolish and forward, as to give hopes and encouragement to such ungenerous Fellows ; yet we may be assur'd, that they are not a quarter so many as those vain *Boasters* wou'd make 'em. Much more be said on this head, but that I think it high time to pass on to the next, which is *Enviousness*, so foul a Blot to a fair Character, that no Merit can wash it out, or atone sufficiently for it.

*Enviousness* *Envy* is the Parent of *Calumny*, and the Daughter of *Jealousie*. Men seldom envy others, till they fear being out strip'd by 'em in Fortune or Reputation. It is the most criminal, because the most injurious to Vertue, and worth of all our natural Failings, against which it's Malice is generally bent. This vice and *Jealousie* seem to be more particularly hated of *Providence* than any other ; For they carry their Punishment inseparably along with 'em, The Envious and the Jealous need

need no other Tormentours than their own Thoughts. The Envious Man ruins his own to disturb anothers Tranquillity, and sacrifices his own Happiness and Repose to a perverse Desire of troubling his Neighbours. He feeds like *Toads* upon the Venome of the Earth, and sucks in Scandal greedily, that he may at Pleasure disgorge it to the greater annoyance of other Men. His mind has the *Vapours*, a Sweet Report of any one throws it into Convulsions, and Agonies, and a foul one is the Releif and Refreshment of it. A wholesome Air free from the Blasts of *Detraction* and *Slander* is as certainly pernicious to him, as *Ireland* to *Frogs* and *Toads*. This Vice is generally disclaim'd by both Sexes, yet generally practic'd by both. Men love as little to have their Reputation as their Chimneys over-topt by their Neighbours; For they think by that means their names become dark, as their Houses do smoaky by the other: Yet thro' a lazy Malignity had rather pull the other's down to their Level, than build

their own up higher. This Humour prevails indeed, yet not in equal Measure in both Sexes. For as we have confessedly less *Ambition*, so have we apparently less of this Poison which usually attends it, and arises from a self Interested Principle, which makes 'em endeavour by base sinister means to level that Merit which they think stands in their way to Preferment, and which they despair of being able to surmount by honourable attempts. For what need any one use base Sleights to stop the Man, whom by fair Speed he thought he cou'd overtake. No sooner is any Man rais'd to any Eminence in the World, but half the Sex at least join in Confederacy to raise a Battery of Scandal against him, to bring him down again. *Honour* is the *Pillory* of great Desert, whither a Man is no sooner rais'd, but the vile Rascally inferior Croud gather immediately together, to throw Dirt at him, and make that which was intended as a Grace, and Reward, but a more honourable Punishment. Our Sex seldom ar-

rive

rive to this Pitch of Envy, our Ambition is more bounded, and our Desires sooner satisfied. Hence it is that we are less troubl'd at the Prosperity of others; for not giving our selves the Liberty of aiming at things far out of our Power, they are the sooner compass'd, and we the sooner at Ease. He, that thinks himself Happy, is incapable of Envyng another's Felicity, since he sees him possess'd of nothing which either he has not or despises not. Yet it must be confess'd that the lesser Piques, and Grudgings are daily to be met with among us, but no less among Men. What is it that spawns daily such Fryes of *Satyrists* without Wit, and *Criticks* without Judgment, but this humour of carping, and nibbling at the Reputation of others? But they are generally abundantly furnisht with Impudence, a good Quality that commonly supplies largely the want of all other.

A *Critick* of this sort is one that for want of *Wit* sets up for *Judgment*; yet he has so much Ambition

*Character  
of a City  
Critick*



to be thought a *Wit*, that he let<sup>s</sup> his *Spleen* prevail against *Nature*, and turns *Poet*. In this Capacity he is as just to the World as in the other Injurious. For as the *Critick* wrong'd ev'ry Body in his Censure, and snarl'd, and grin'd at their Writings, the *Poet* gives 'em Opportunity to do themselves Justice, to return the Compliment and laugh at or despise his. He wants nothing but *Wit* to fit him for a *Satyr*, yet he has *Gall* and *Vanity* enough to dispence with that Want, and write without it. His works are *Libells* upon others, but *Satyrs* upon himself, and while they *Bark* at Men of *Wit*, call him Fool that writ 'em. He takes his Malice for a Muse, and thinks himself inspir'd when he is only *Possess'd*, and blown up with a Flatus of *Envy* and *Vanity*. His great helps to Poetry are *Crambo*, and *Arithmetick*, by which he aspires to Chime, and Numbers, yet mistakes frequently in the tale of his Fingers. He has a very great *Antipathy* to his own Species, and hates to see a Fool any where but in his Glass.

For

For (as he says) they *Provoke* him  
*And offend his Eyes: He Follows 'em* 7th. Satyre  
of Boileau  
Eng.  
*as a Dog pursues his Prey, and barks*  
*whenever He smells 'em in his way: He*  
*knows, to say no more that Wit is scarce,*  
*to gingle out a Rhime, or tag a Verse:*  
*Or Cobble wretched Prose to numerous*  
*Lines: There if he has a Genius there*  
*it shines.* His Fund of Criticism is  
 a Set of Terms of Art pickt out of  
 the *French Criticks*, or their Tran-  
 slators; and his *Poetical* stock is a  
 Common Place of certain *Forms* and  
*Manners* of Expression. He writes  
 better in *Verse* than *Prose*; For in  
 that there is *Rhime*, in this neither  
*Rhime* nor *Reason*. He talks much of  
 the *Naivete* of his Thoughts, which  
 appears sufficiently in the Dullness of  
 'em; yet nothing but the *Phlegma-*  
*tick*, Spiritless *Air* is his own. He  
 rails at Mr. *Oldham* for want of  
 Breeding and good *Manners* with-  
 out a grain of either, and steals his  
 own Wit to bespatter him with,  
 but like an ill *Chymist*, he lets  
 the *Spirit* flie of in the drawing  
 over, and retains only the *Phlegm*:  
 He censures Mr. *Cowley* for too  
 much

much *Wit*, and corrects him with none. The difference between Mr. *Cowley* and him is this; the one has too much *Wit*, and too fine for the Standard; the other not enough to blanch his base Metal, or cover the Brass of his Counterfeits. To compleat himself in the Formalities of *Parnassus*, he falls in love and tells the World, it is oblig'd to his *Passion* for his *Poetry*; but if his *Mistress* prove no more indulgent than his *Muse*, his Amour is like to conclude but unluckily. For if his Love be no warmer than his Lines, his *Corinna* may play with his Flame without danger of Burning. He pretends to have written only his sincerest Thoughts; I don't know how well his *Mistress* may take that from the *Lover*, but I dare swear the World did not expect it from the Poet. He is happiest at the Picture of a Rhiming Fool, for he need only to look in his Glass, and he may Copy a Country *Wit* from the City Original. If this Rhiming Humour lasts, there's a good *Sugar-Jobber* spoil'd for an ill *Poet*; yet for his comfort, Time, Improvement, and two

or three Books more may raise him to Rival *E — S —* and sing *London's* Triumphs, to the Envy of *Tom Jordan* of happy Memory.

You may wonder, *Madam*, why I shou'd give you the trouble of this Character, after I had given you my word to trouble you with no more of this Nature. I must confess, I am sorry that so foolish an Occasion cou'd make me forget my self; but a Book newly publish'd happening just at this Juncture unluckily to fall into my Hands, I cou'd not without Indignation see the Scurrility and Insolence, with which *Mr. Oldham*, and *Mr. Cowley* are treated; and cou'd not but resent a little the Wrongs done to the Memory of Men whom the rest of the World with Justice admire; and cou'd not help taking Notice upon so fair an Opportunity, that they are not, tho' dead, to be so rudely plaïd with, and made the *May-Game* of e'ry *Splenetic* *Boy*. There are some yet living, whose Wit and Performances deserve a more respectful treatment, than they have met with from him. But they are able  
to

to revenge their own Quarrel, if they think he deserves the honour to be Scourg'd by 'em. Nothing but Envy and a Vain Conceit of himself cou'd move him to attack the Reputation of Men, whose Verse will alwayes command Admiration, while his own raise nothing but Scorn and Indignation. If his Book-feller were but blest with half a dozen such Authors, he wou'd in a short time infallibly be *Stationer* general to all the *Grocers* and *Tobacconists* in the Town.

*Levity.*

After this Digression, *Madam*, let us return to our Subject. We stand yet charg'd with *Levity*, and *Inconstancy*, two Failings so nearly related and so generally United, that it is hard to treat of 'em apart; we will therefore consider 'em briefly together. *Levity* is an unsteady Humor that makes men like and dislike, seek and reject frequently the same things upon slender or no Reasons. This is the Humour of the Infancy of both Sexes, and proceeds from the strength of their Appetites, and the weak-

ness

ness of their Judgments. At these tender Years every thing we see moves our Curiosities, and because we think little beyond our Appetites, desire impatiently whatever pleases. This wears of in Proportion to the growth of our Judgments, when we begin to consider the Fatigue, Hazard, Disreputation, and other Inconveniences that attend unreasonable, or inordinate Desires. Herein our Sex have a manifest Advantage over the other; For it is confess'd on all hands that our Judgments ripen sooner than theirs, whence of course it Follows, that this Folly prevails not so long upon us, as them. 'Tis yet true, that even the most experienc'd and wisest of Us have no small mixture of it, which appears in the greatest Part of our Actions. But it is certain likewise, that Men have a greater proportion of it than we. From this it is that *Novelty* derives all its Charms, and that Men pursue with so much Eagerness and Impatience what they so soon slight if obtain'd. I appeal to the Experience

*Less Levity among Women than Men.*

rience of all mankind, if they do not generally frame to themselves much greater Idea's of any thing they desire, and are unacquainted with, than they find real, when they become Familiar to 'em; and if they did not imagine greater Pleasures, while they were in pursuit, than they met with after they were in Possession of their Wishes. The Imagery of *Fancy* is, like some Paintings, ravishing; and surprizing at a due distance, but approach 'em near, and all the Charms and Beauty vanish, and they appear rough and unpleasant. Hence it is that Men grow uneasy, and their desires pall so soon upon the full enjoyment of their Wishes; they see then the imperfections as well Beauties of what they coveted, which glitter'd so far off, and like the Moon appear'd all Lustre and Smoothness, but when arriv'd at, all dark and uneven. These Fallacies Men are more submitted to than we, by those very Priviledges which give 'em in some things the advantage over us. The variety of Business,  
and

and Society they run through, the large acquaintance they contract, give 'em encouragement to aspire to, and hopes to obtain many difficult things, which our Sex seldom lift their Thoughts up to. I know this aspiring Humour of theirs is generally call'd *Ambition*, and I allow the Term to be proper; but their Ambition works upon their Levity, which only can make them Barter certain Ease, Peace and Security, for uncertain Pomp and Splendour; and forsake a Condition they know to be good, for one they know no more of, than that it Shines, and that it Glitters, and and so part with the true Jewel for the false one. These are the ferocious and applauded Follies of Mankind, and shew the Weakness and Levity of those we call the greatest, and wisest Men, that sacrifice the Ease and Pleasure of their lives to *Popular Ereath*, and sounding Titles, which is like bartering a small Diamond for a large Glass Bubble.



*Inconstancy*

*Inconstancy* is so like *Levity* that little more needs to be said of it; only that it is commonly restrain'd to the change of Affections in regard to Persons, and so is chiefly concern'd in Love and Freindship. It is founded upon *Levity*, thro' which we first make an injudicious Choice, and are afterwards as unreasonably disgusted with it. This happens oftner in *Love*, than *Friendship*; because the Impressions of *Love* are more suddenly receiv'd, and the Effects of it more violent, than those of *Friendship*; and the Desires, which are commonly kindled by one single Perfection, such as *Beauty* or *Wit*, not being suddenly answered, are in Process of time extinguish'd, or abated by observation of some disgustful Imperfection or other in the Person below'd. This is indeed the true Reason, why *Love*, which 'is generally so hot at first, cools commonly so suddenly; because being generally the Issue of Fancy, not Judgment, it is grounded upon an over great Opinion of those Perfections, which first strike us, and which

*Love, why  
so soon cold.*

which fall in our Esteem upon more mature Examination. From whence it is likewise that Men are less constant in their Affections, than we; for Beauty only being generally the Object of their Passion, the Effect must necessarily be as fading as the Cause; their Love therefore being only the result of wonder and Surprise, is abated by Familiarity, and decays, as they wear of, by Degrees. Beside, that, a Love so Founded is liable to be ravish'd by any Superior Beauty; or if not so, yet the Novelty of the Former once worn of, the New Comer has the assistance of Fancy the Slave of Novelty to gain the Superiority. This is the Cause why so few real and lasting Passions are found amongst Men. For Charms depending upon, and owing their Power to Fancy, can maintain no Conquests any longer, than that is on their side, which is as inconstant as the Wind. In this also we are less faulty, than they; For, not usually fixing our Affection on so mutable a Thing as the *Beauty of a Face*, which a thousand

K accidents

*Women constant Lovers.*

accidents may destroy, but on *Wit*, *Good Humour*, and other *Graces* of the *Mind*, as well as of the *Body*, our Love is more durable, and constant in proportion to the longer continuance of those Qualities in the Object. Neither indeed have we the means, or temptation to be Fickle and inconstant so ready as Men have; For Modesty, and the Rules of Decency observ'd among Us, not permitting to us the Liberty of declaring our sentiments to those we love, as Men may, we dare not indulge a wanton Fancy, or rambling Inclination, which must be stifled in our own Breasts, and cou'd only give us a hopeless Anxiety, unless we were able to inspire the same Passion for us in them; which it were vain to expect, without breaking thro' all restraint of *Modesty* and *Decorum* at the price of our Fame and Reputation, which I hope few are so daring as to venture. Besides this our Tempers are by Nature calm, sedate, and tender, not apt to be ruff'd, and disturb'd by Passions, and too fearful to enter-  
prize

prize any thing in satisfaction of 'em; theirs on the contrary, bold, active, and uneven, easily susceptible of all manner of Desires, and readily executing any Designs to gratifie 'em. Thus are we debarr'd the liberty of chusing for our selves, and confin'd to please our selves out of the number that like and address to us, of which if we fix our Affections upon any one, we are generally fixt and unmoveable, as having neither the Inclination to, nor opportunity of Inconstancy, that the Men have. I don't deny but that there may be some among us guilty of this Fault, but they are vastly short of the Number of Men involv'd in the like Guilt, amongst whom it is now grown so fashionable, that is become no Scandal; but is daily justified, and the Treachery boasted of as high Gallantry. The Crimes therefore of some few *Women* ought, to be no reproach to the Sex in general. Of Infidelity in Friendship I shall say little, because I think there are so few Instances of any thing that deserve the Name,

that scarce any Age has been so fruitful as to produce two Pair of real and true Friends. I know that the *Freindship.* Name is commonly given to such as are linkt by any Ties of Consanguinity, Affinity, Interest, mutual Obligations, Acquaintance, and the like: But these are such Friendships (if they may be call'd so) as are always contracted with a tacit Reserve to Interest on both sides, and seldom last longer than the Prosperity of either Party, and during that are frequently renounc'd upon slight Disobligations, or languish and die of themselves. Yet if I may presume to give my Opinion in a Case, where matter of Fact does not appear, I think we shou'd be the more Faithful even in this too: For as we are less concern'd in the Affairs of the World, so we have less Temptation from Interest to be false to our Friends. Neither are we so likely to be false thro' Fear; because our Sex are seldom engag'd in matters of any Danger. For these Reasons it is, our Sex are generally more hearty and sincere in the ordinary

*Women true  
or Friends  
than Men.*

ordinary Friendships they make than Men, among whom they are usually clogg'd with so many Considerations of Interest, and Punctilio's of Honour; to which last perhaps are owing the greatest part of those honourable Actions, which are mistakenly imputed to Friendship. For something done to salve Honour, commonly puts a Period to all Friendship, with unfortunate Persons; whom Men think they may afterward grow cold to without Reproach.

These are the most considerable Imperfections, or at least those, which with most Colour of Reason are charg'd upon us, as general Defects; and I hope, *Madam*, I have fairly shown, that the other Sex are both by Interest and Inclination more expos'd, and more Subject to 'em, than we. *Pride, Lust, Cruelty*, and many more, are by the Declaimers against us thrown into the Scale to make weight and bear us down, but with such manifest Injustice, that without giving my

More ill  
Men than  
Women.

self any further trouble, I dare appeal to any reasonable *Man*, and leave him to decide the Difference. I know there was a *Tullia*, a *Claudia*, and a *Messalina*; there was likewise, a *Sardanapalus*, a *Nero*, a *Caligula*; but if the Sexes in general are to be reproach'd with, and measur'd by these; Human Race is certainly the vilest Part of the Creation. 'Tis very ill *Logick* to argue from Particulars to Generals, and where the Premisses are singular, to conclude Universally: But if they will allow us the Liberty they take themselves, and come to numbering the Vicious, of both Sexes, they will certainly out poll us by infinite Numbers. It were therefore better Policy surely in them, to quit a way of arguing; which is at once so false, and so much to the disadvantage of the Cause they contend for: and when they can by sound Arguments make out any Advantages their Sex has over ours, other than what I have already granted, I am ready to be convinc'd, and become their Convert; and I make

no

no doubt but every ingenuous Man will do as much by me. Thus I have endeavour'd to vindicate our Sex, from the unjust Imputations with which some unreasonable, malicious Men wou'd load us: For I am willing to think the greater, or at least the better Part of their Sex, more generous than to encourage their Scandal. There remains nothing more, but to shew that there are some necessary Qualifications to be acquir'd, some good Improvements to be made by Ingenious *Gentlemen* in the Company of our Sex.

Of this number are *Complacence*, *Gallantry*, *Good Humour*, *Invention*, and an Art, which ( tho' frequently abus'd ) is of admirable use to those that are Masters of it, the *Art of Insinuation*, and many others. 'Tis true a Man may be an Honest and Understanding Man, without any of these Qualifications; but he can hardly be a Polite, a Well Bred, an Agreeable, Taking Man, without all, or most of these.

*Many Advantages from Womens Company.*



Without 'em *Honesty, Courage, or Wit*, are like *Rough Diamonds, or Gold* in the *Ore*, they have their *intrinsick Value, and Worth*, before, but they are *doubtful and obscure*, till they are *polish'd, refin'd*, and receive *Lustre, and Esteem* from these.

Complacence to be learn'd by it.

The Principal of these is *Complacence*, a good Quality, without which in a competent Measure no Man is fitted for Society. This is best learnt in our Company, where all Men affect *Gaiety*, and endeavour to be agreeable. *State News, Politicks, Religion, or private Business* take up the greatest Part of their Conversation, when they are among themselves only. These are Subjects that employ their Passions too much, to leave any room for *Complacence*; they raise too much heat to suffer Men to be easy and pleasant, and Men are too serious when they talk of 'em, to suppress their natural Temper, which are apt to break out upon any Opposition. Men are as apt to defend

send their Opinions, as their Property, and wou'd take it as well to have their Titles to their Estates question'd, as their Sense ; and perhaps in that they imitate the Conduct of our Sex, and do, like indulgent Mothers, that are most tender of those Children that are weakest. But however it be, I have observ'd, when such Arguments have been introduc'd even in our Company, and by Men that affect Indifference, and abundance of Temper, that very few have been able to shew so much Mastery, but that something appear'd either in their Air, or Expression, or in the Tone of their Voices, which argued a greater Warmth, and Concern, than is proper for the Conversation of *Gentlemen*, or the Company of *Ladies*. These Uneasinesses happen not so often among us, because the Men look upon us to have very little Interest in the Publick Affairs of the World, and therefore trouble us very seldom with their grave, serious Trifles, which they debate with so much earnestness among one another

another. They look upon us as Things design'd and contriv'd only for their Pleasure, and therefore use us tenderly, as Children do their Favourite Bawbles. They talk gayly, and pleasantly to us, they do, or say nothing that may give us any Disgust, or *Chagrin*, they put on their chearfullest Looks, and their best Humour, that they may excite the like in us: They never oppose us but with a great deal of Ceremony, or in Raillery, not out of a Spirit of Opposition, (as they frequently do one another) but to maintain a pleasant Argument, or heighthen by variety of Opinions an agreeable Entertainment. Mirth, and Good Humour reign generally in our Society, Good Manners always; For with us Men shew in a manner, the Reverse of what they are one to another: They let their thoughts play at Liberty, and are very careful of the Expression, that nothing harsh, or obscene escape 'em, that may shock a tender Mind, or offend a modest Ear. This Caution it is,  
 which

which is the Root of *Complacence*, which is nothing but a Desire to oblige People, by complying with their Humours. 'Tis true some Tempers are too Obstinate, and froward, ever to arrive at any great Heighth of this good Quality, yet there is nothing so stubborn, but it may be bent. Assiduity and constant Practice will contract such Habits, as will make any thing easie and familiar, even to the worst contriv'd Disposition; but where Nature concurs, Men are soon Perfect. This is one great advantage Men reap by our Society, nor is it to be despis'd by the Wisest of 'em, who know the use of this Accomplishment, and are sensible, that it is hardly, if at all, to be acquir'd, but by conversing with us. For tho' Men may have Wit and Judgment, yet the Liberty they take of thwarting, and opposing one another makes 'em Eager, and Disputative, Impatient, Sowre, and Morose; till by conversing with us, they grow insensibly asham'd of such lustick Freedom. The truth of this

is

is Evident from the Observation of the *Universities*, and *Inns of Court*, I mean those Students in 'em that lead a more recluse and Monastick Life, and converse little with our Sex. They want neither Wit, nor Learning, and frequently neither Generosity, nor Good Nature, yet when they come into gay, tho' Ingenious Company, are either damp'd and silent, or unseasonably Frolicksom and Free, so that they appear either Dull, or Ridiculous.

Gallantry  
acquir'd by  
our Compa-  
ny.

Nor is *Complacence* the only thing these Men want, they want likewise the *Gallantry* of those Men that frequent our Company. This Quality is the heighth and perfection of Civility, without which it is either Languishing, or Formal, and with which it appears always with an engaging Air of Kindness, and Good Will. It sets a value upon the most inconsiderable Trifles, and turns every Civility into an Obligation. For in ordinary Familiarities, and civil Correspondencies, we regard not so much what, as how

how things are done, the Manner is more lookt upon than the Matter of such Courtesies. Almost all Men that have had a liberal, and good Education know, what is due to Good Manners, and civil Company. But till they have been us'd a little to Our Society, their Modesty fits like Constraint upon 'em, and looks like a forc'd Compliance to uneasie Rules, and Forms of Civility. Conversing frequently with us makes 'em familiar to Men, and when they are convinc'd, as well of the Easiness, as the Necessity of 'em, they are soon reconcil'd to the Practice. This Point once gain'd, and they become expert in the common, and necessary Practices. Those that have any natural Bravery of Mind, will never be contented to stop there; Indifference is too cold and Phlegmatick a thing for 'em, a little Formal Ceremony, and common Civilities, such as are paid to e'ry one of Course, will not satisfie their Ambitious Spirits, which will put 'em upon endeavouring for better Receptions, and obliging those, whom

*Difference  
betwixt  
Compla-  
cence and  
Gallantry.*

whom they can't without Reproach to themselves offend. This is the Original, and first Spring of *Gallantry*, which is an Humour of Obliging all People, as well in our Actions as Words. It differs from *Complacence*, this being more active, that more passive; This inclines us to oblige, by doing or saying after our own Humours such things as we think will please; that by submitting to, and following theirs. A Man may be *Complacent* without *Gallantry*, but he can't be *Gallant* without *Complacence*. For 'tis possible to please and be agreable, without shewing our own Humours to Others; but 'tis impossible without some regard to theirs: yet this Pleasure will be but faint and languid, without a Mixture of both. This mixture of Freedom, Observance, and a desire of pleasing, when rightly tempered, is the true Composition of *Gallantry*; of which, who ever is compleat Master, can never fail of being both admir'd, and be'ov'd. This Accomplishment is best, if not only to be acquir'd by  
conversing

conversing with us ; for besides the natural Deference, which the Males of every observable Species of the creation pay to their Females, and the Reasons before given for *Complacence*, which all hold good here, there is a tender Softness in the Frame of our Minds, as well as in the Constitution of our Bodies, which inspire Men, a Sex more rugged, with the like Sentiments, and Affections, and infuses gently and insensibly a Care to oblige, and a Concern not to offend us.

Hence it is that they employ all their *Art, Wit, and Invention* to say and do things, that may appear to us, surprizing and agreable either for their Novelty or Contrivance. The very End and Nature of Conversation among us retrench abundance of those things, which make the greatest part of Men's discourse, and they find themselves oblig'd to strain their Inventions to fetch from other Springs, Streams proper to entertain us with. This puts 'em upon beating and ranging ore the

*Invention,  
improv'd  
by our So-  
ciety.*



the Fields of Fancy to find something new, something pretty to offer to us, and by this means refines at the same time their Wit, and enlarges, and extends their Invention; For by forcing 'em out of the common Road, they are necessitated to invent new Arguments, and seek new ways to divert and please us, and by restraining the large Liberty they take one with another, they are compell'd to polish their Wit, and File off the Roughness of it. To this they owe, the Neatness of Raillery, to which abundance of Gentlemen are now arriv'd; For Contrariety, of Opinions, being that which gives Life, and Spirit to Conversation, as well Women as Men do frequently hold Arguments contrary to their real Opinions, only to heighthen the Diversion, and improve the pleasure of Society. In these the utmost Care is taken to avoid all things that may sound harsh, offensive, or indecent, their Wit is employ'd only to raise mirth, and promote good Humour, Conditions that can't well be observ'd, when  
Men

Men contend for Realities, and dispute for the Reputation of their Wit or Judgment, and the truth of their Opinions. 'Tis true these Improvements are to be made only by Men, that have by Nature an improvable Stock of Wit and good Sense; For those that have it not, being unable to distinguish what is proper for their Imitation, are apt to Ape us in those Things which are the peculiar Graces and Ornaments of our Sex, and which are the immediate Objects of Sight, and need no further Reflection, or thinking. This Affectation is notorious in our Modern *Beau's*, who observing the Care taken by some of our Sex in the setting of their Persons, without penetrating any farther into the Reasons Women have for it, or considering, that what became them, might be ridiculous in themselves, fall to licking, sprucing, and dressing their Campaign Faces, and ill contriv'd Bodies, that now, like all Foolish Imitatours, they out do the Originals, and out-powder, out-patch, and out-paint the Vainest

L and

*Fools no fit  
Companions  
for Women.*

and most extravagant of our Sex at those Follies, and are perpetually Cocking, Brustling, Twiring, and making Grimaces, as if they expected we shou'd make Addresses to 'em in a short Time. Yet ought not this to discourage any Ingenious Person, or bring any Scandal upon our Conversation, any more than Travelling ought to be brought into Disrepute, because it is observ'd, that those, who go *abroad Fools, return Fops*. It is not in our power to alter Nature, but to polish it, and if an Ass has learnt all his Paces, 'tis as much as the thing is capable of, 'twere absurd to expect he shou'd chop *Logick*. This is so far from being an Objection against us, that it is an Argument, that none but Ingenious Men are duely qualified to converse with us; Who by our Means have not only been fitted, and finish'd for great things, but have actually aspir'd to 'em. For 'tis my Opinion, that we owe the Neat, Gentile Raillery in Sir *George Etheredge*, and Sir *Charles Sedley's* Plays, and the Gallant

Verses

Verſes of Mr. *Waller* to their Con-  
 verſing much with Ladies. And I  
 remember an Opinion of a very In-  
 genious Perſon, who aſcribes the  
 Ruine of the *Spaniſh Grandeur* in great  
 meaſure, to the ridiculing in the  
 Perſon of *Don Quixot*, the Gallantry  
 of that *Nation* toward their *Ladies*.  
 This Opinion however Ingenious  
 carries me beyond the Scope and de-  
 ſign of the preſent Argument, and  
 therefore I ſhall leave all further  
 Conſideration of it to thoſe that are  
 more at leiſure, and leſs weary than  
 I am at preſent.

There remain yet ſome things to  
 be ſpoken to, but I muſt confeſs to  
 you, *Madam*, that I am already very  
 much tired, and I have reaſon to  
 fear that you are more. When you  
 enjoyn'd me this Task, I believe,  
 you did not expect, I am ſure, I  
 did not intend ſo long a Letter. I  
 know I have written too much, yet  
 I leave you to judge, whether it be  
 enough. One Experience I have  
 gain'd by this Eſſay, that I find,  
 when our Hands are in, 'tis as

hard to stop 'em, as our Tongues,  
 and as difficult not to write, as not  
 to talk too much. I have done  
 wondring at those *Men*, that can  
 write huge Volumes upon slender  
 Subjects, and shall hereafter admire  
 their Judgment only, who can con-  
 fine their Imaginations, and curb  
 their wandring Fancies. I pretend  
 no Obligation upon our Sex for this  
 Attempt in their Defence; because  
 it was undertaken at your Com-  
 mand, and for your Diversion only,  
 which if I have in any measure  
 satisfied, I have my Ambition, and  
 shall beg nothing farther, than that  
 my ready Obedience may excuse  
 the mean Performance of

*Madam,*

*Your real Friend, and*

*Most humble Servant.*

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F I N I S:













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## Susanna Newcome

Susanna Newcome (1685-1763)<sup>1</sup> was born in Durnford, Wiltshire, where her father was the vicar of the Church of St. Andrew. Susanna's husband, John Newcome, served the Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity of Saint John's and after their marriage became Master of the College in 1735. She is principally known for the *An Enquiry into the Evidence of the Christian Religion* (1728 and 1732), but there is evidence that she contributed notes to the works of others and published a pamphlet or two on moral subjects.<sup>2</sup> Newcome is among the first published female Christian apologists. However, despite the esteem she received among academics with whom she was acquainted, her work has received little contemporary attention. In fact, other than Patrick J. Connolly's (2019) "Susanna Newcome's Cosmological Argument," no other peer reviewed publications on Newcome's work exist. As a result, the history of her life, the works she published other than *An Enquiry into the Evidence of the Christian Religion*, and more have failed to be fully investigated.

While Newcome's husband John received little to no praise from his colleges, nothing could be further from the truth in the case of Susanna.<sup>3</sup> By all accounts, Susanna Newcome was a woman of exceptional intellect, talent, and reputation. In fact, to say Newcome's reputation preceded her would be a severe understatement. According to the entry on her husband contained within the second volume of Thomas Baker's *History of the College of St. John the Evangelist*, Susanna Newcome "bears the character, by everybody, of the most excellent and worthy woman; nay, to say learned: for she has given proof of her erudition in more than one book which she has published;" it is said that "her modesty and humility always strove to conceal the great improvements of her mind. But no person of discernment could be long acquainted with that excellent woman, without esteeming her one of the most perfect pieces of human nature."<sup>4</sup> Similarly, she is described as "being a woman of excellent parts and abilities; of sound sense and masculine judgement; and had written a pamphlet or two on moral subjects, which I have heard much commended. She was as fine a figure of a woman when she was turned of 60, as many are when they are 20 years younger: and she has often put me in mind of the person and character of that most exalted and excellent woman Madame de Maintenon, in a more humble style: for she was as good a woman, as she was an accomplished one."<sup>5</sup>

Newcome's *Enquiry into the Evidence of the Christian Religion* sets itself up as presenting an argument in favor of the existence of God that does not rest on a *a priori* judgement. In the preface of the first edition of her work, Newcome states she takes arguments that use terms without determinate meanings or that take propositions for granted as ones that tend to result in perplexities.<sup>6</sup> As Connolly (2019) claims, "She reiterates the point at the outset of her discussion of God's existence by invoking the Lockean notion that the mind is originally 'empty and void, without any innate Ideas' of God and that it remains so until sensation provides it with mental content."<sup>7</sup> The mental content Newcome relies on to prove the universe must have a cause is twofold. First, she claims sensation informs us

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<sup>1</sup> Little is known about Susan Newcome life; as a result, the dates should not be taken to be exact.

<sup>2</sup> Baker (1869), *History of the College of St. John the Evangelist*, Cambridge: University Press, p. 1026.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid; see, also, Connolly (2019), pg. 844-845.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Newcome (1728), *An Inquiry into the Evidence of the Christian Religion*, Cambridge: University Press, p. 2.

<sup>7</sup> Connolly (2019), "Susanna Newcome's Cosmological Argument," *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, 27(4), pg. 847.

things which have beginnings must have causes to be brought into being.<sup>8</sup> Second, she claims our observations of the causal chains that exist in universe imply the universe must have been caused.<sup>9</sup>

Newcome begins the first edition of her work by appeal to the hedonic claim that, if Christian theology were true, it would affect our happiness to the highest degree.<sup>10</sup> In fact, according to Newcome, it would be irrational not to examine whether or not it is true. If the Christian Religion is true, those to whom it is made known must believe it and follow its precepts. Thus, we ought to investigate whether or not the Christian religion is true. In other words, because believing the truth of the Christian religion would affect the happiness of everyone to the greatest degree if it were true, Newcome takes a proper investigation into the truth of the Christian religion as being of utmost importance.

After showing why an investigation into the Christian religion should be considered an important undertaking, Newcome begins her argument for God's existence by appealing the Lockean idea that there are no innate ideas and that the basis of all knowledge is the product of ideas of sensation.<sup>11</sup> In other words, the project of Newcome's work is to defend the existence of God on purely empirical grounds—an argumentative strategy unlike many who proceeded her.

Newcome continues her argument for God's existence by claiming that the things we perceive and feel to exist must do so either with or without a cause. If they exist without a cause, they must exist eternally—since nothing can have a beginning without a cause. If they exist with a cause, further investigation into what the cause could be will be necessary. Newcome provides the following example of chains of cause and effect:

If Body  $x$  produces the body  $y$ , and Body  $y$ , the Body  $z$ , yet still there must be a cause for the production of  $x$ , otherwise there would be a beginning without a cause, which is impossible: And if there must be a cause of the production of the body  $x$ , that is, if there must be a cause of every link in a certain chain of causes and effects, then the whole chain or series of causes and effects cannot exist without cause.<sup>12</sup>

In other words, we perceive things as products of chains of cause and effect. What is more, like the parts the make up the chains of causes and effects that we experience, our reasoning about the system those chains make up lead us to conclude the system must also be caused. According to Newcome,

From seeing and considering the manner of the existence of this system, and that many of the parts of it in every period of time are caused, we find it no less than a contradiction to assert that the whole system exists without a cause: and to assert that certain parts of a system do not exist without a cause, yet the whole system exists without a cause is the same as to assert that the parts do not belong to the whole.<sup>13</sup>

Put differently, Newcome believes “a material system, which is compose'd of parts that are changeable, cannot exist without a cause, distinct from, as well as prior to, such a system.”<sup>14</sup> The existence of change in the system requires a cause of the change; without a cause for the change, there would be no change. Furthermore, the change in a system must either be a product of the materials of the system or something which is not part of the materials of the system. If the change is a product of the materials of the system, then the materials of the system would have to exist antecedently to any of the changes in the system and the materials themselves would have to be uncaused.<sup>15</sup> However, even assuming the materials of the system were uncaused, it is impossible for matter to change without

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<sup>8</sup> Connolly (2019), 847.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Newcome (1728), pg. 9.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., pg. 10.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, pg. 11.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid; note that Newcome is committing the fallacy of composition in her reasoning here.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., pg. 12.

<sup>15</sup> Connolly (2019), pg. 850.

a cause for that change. For example, it is impossible for matter to begin motion without a cause for that motion; as Newcome claims, “there is no motion but what is the effect of a former motion; consequently there is no motion in such a system which has been from eternity which has not been caused.”<sup>16</sup> To suppose motion in the system is to suppose that there is a beginning to that motion, and, as stated above, things which have a beginning must have a cause. So, even if the materials of the system existed eternally, something external to the system must be the cause of change in the materials of the system. Thus, Newcome concludes, “if the cause of change in a material system cannot be in itself, then it follows that if there is a change in a material system, it must be caused by something distinct from, as well as prior to, all the changes in this system.”<sup>17</sup> According to Newcome, the thing distinct from, and prior to, the system is God.

Thus, Newcome’s argument in favor of the existence of God is the product of two ideas—i.e., that everything that has a beginning must have a cause and that the universe has a beginning. As noted by Connolly, “Newcome does not offer an independent defense of [the claim that everything that has a beginning must have a cause], but it was certainly widely accepted in the period. For example, she may have been following Locke, who wrote to Stillingfleet that “‘Everything that has a beginning must have a cause’ is a true principle of reason, or a proposition certainly true.”<sup>18</sup> Newcome does, however, argue tirelessly in favor of the latter claim, starting from our experiences of cause and effect and working her way up to the system of cause and effect itself. As Connolly succinctly presents it,

Newcome takes it to be an empirical fact that the beings we routinely engage with are, in fact, caused: ‘we find certain Chains of Cause and Effect, and many Parts of this System owing their Existence to an antecedent cause’. Her ultimate goal is to move from this observation to the conclusion that ‘we cannot with Reason assert that the whole System exists without [a] Cause’. If she can successfully make this argumentative move she will have achieved her objective. She can then identify the cause of the universe with God and proceed to enumerate features or attributes that this creator of the universe must have.<sup>19</sup>

In this way, Newcome’s argument is not unlike others in the period. For example, both Samuel Clarke’s *A Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God* and Leibniz’s “On the Ultimate Origination of Things” claim that if there must be a sufficient reason for anything that exists, then even if there is an infinite chain of cause and effects, we can ask why this infinite chain rather than some other infinite chain exists. According to Clark and Leibniz, since the infinite chain cannot answer this question, we have to go outside it for the sufficient cause and that is God. Unlike Clark and Leibniz, Newcome does not appeal to the claim that some other chain of cause and effect could exist rather than the one we experience. Rather, she appeals to ideas from Newtonian physics to defend the claim that the chains of cause and effect we experience either require external support for their continued existence or can come to an end—eventually concluding that the cause of the universe must be eternal, independent, unchangeable, intelligent, powerful, perfect, omnipresent, omniscient, and free.

In addition, as if defending God’s existence were not enough, *An Enquiry into the Evidence of the Christian Religion* has a great deal to tell us about rationality, belief, truth, revelation, happiness, and much more. For example, in section VII of the first edition of the work, Newcome investigates how reason requires the natural exercise of our unimpaired powers and faculties to obtain happiness, distinguishes between the powers and faculties of body and mind, and claims that the happiness of

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<sup>16</sup> Newcome (1732), 13-14; Connolly (2019), pg. 851

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., pg. 13.

<sup>18</sup> Connolly (2019), pg. 847; referencing John Locke (1823), *The Works of Locke*, vol. 4, pg. 61.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

human beings requires providing support and assistance in the happiness of others. In addition, and not unlike Kant after her, she argues the moral status of actions are a product of their intention or motive.<sup>20</sup>

## Important Sections

Propositions: Section I-V (pg. 1-9)

Section VI. Enquiry the 1<sup>st</sup>. What is the Evidence of a God? (pg. 9-33)

Section VII. Enquiry the 2<sup>nd</sup>. After Happiness (pg. 33-50)

Section VII. Enquiry the 3<sup>rd</sup>. After a Revelation (pg. 50-63)

## Further Readings

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<sup>20</sup> Newcome (1728), pg. 38-39.

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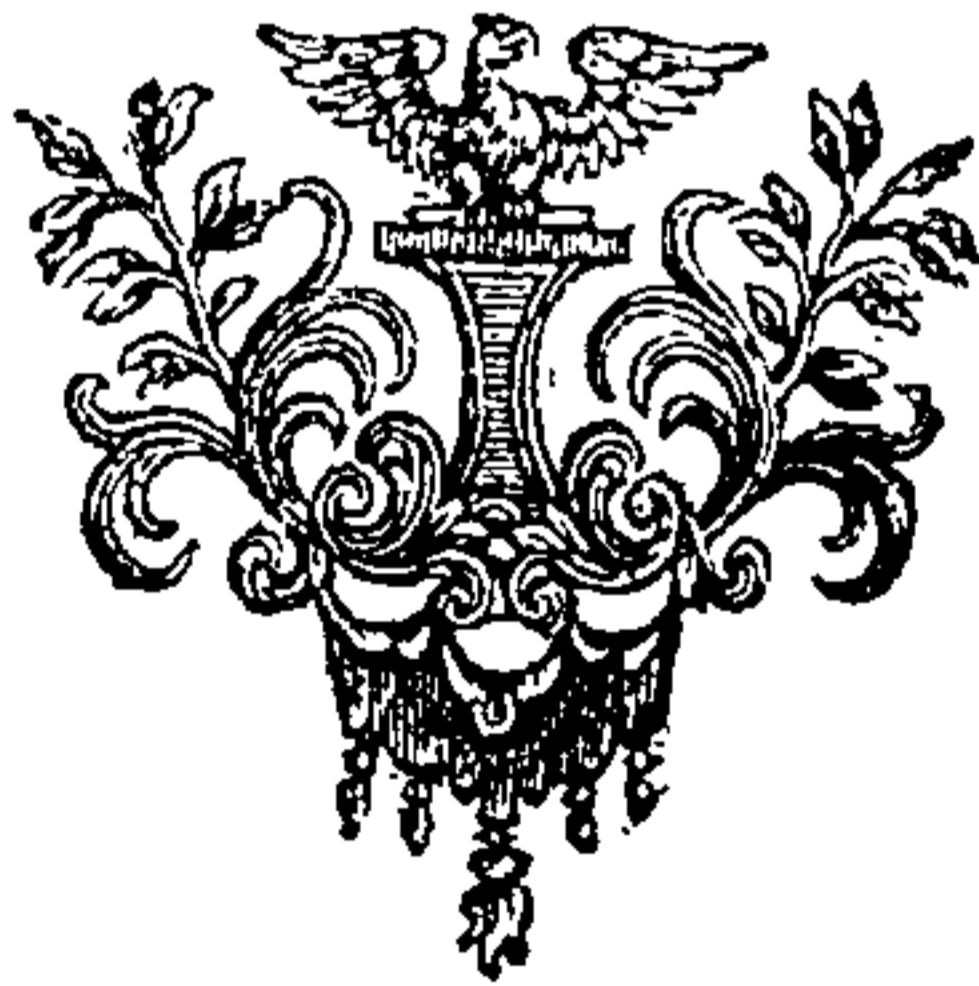
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AN <sup>4</sup>  
ENQUIRY  
INTO THE  
EVIDENCE  
OF THE

*Christian Religion.*

*By* *Mr. Aquinas, and Mr. Newcomb* *Mag.*  
The SECOND EDITION, with Additions.



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## P R E F A C E.

**I**T being intended that a Second Edition of *An Enquiry into the Evidence of the Christian Religion* should be publish'd, I thought it proper just to mention to the Reader that I have made some few Additions to it.

Particularly, I have added to, and strengthened my Arguments, that the System of the Universe did not always exist, but must have had a Cause of its Existence external and antecedent to it. And I have been more full and clear in my Proof of the Attributes of that Being who exists without Cause, and is the Author of the Existence of this System.

And as I have been fuller and clearer in the Proof of the Attributes of the Deity, so have I in that natural Religion, or Means to Happiness, which is founded on them; and I will presume to say, that the natural Religion which I advance, demonstratively follows from the Attributes.

I have in one Point gone higher than I did before; and as I had proved that if the Author of Man's Existence was a wise, good, and powerful Being, Man must be made capable of obtaining  
Happi-



## P R E F A C E.

Happiness; so I now prove from the Attributes of Wisdom, Goodness, and Power, that his Happiness shall be everlasting, and that he who by a right Use of his Powers shall obtain Happiness; will enjoy it to all Eternity.

I have been more particular in an Enquiry whether it was suitable to the Attributes of God for him to reveal himself, because it has been lately advanced by a very considerable Writer, that the Law, Rule, or Religion, given to all Men, is a Perfect Law, Rule, or Religion, and can have nothing added to it; from whence it will follow, (though this Gentleman does not expressly say so much) that God cannot at all reveal himself; and upon searching this Point, I still find that it is very suitable to the Attributes of God for him to reveal himself; and that the Law, Rule, or Religion given to all Men, is a very imperfect Law, Rule, or Religion, and may have something added to it.

I have not yet found Reason to retract any Thing which I before advanced; still continue to assert there is no Proof of a God à priori; and am ready to make good that Assertion.


I have only to add, my sincere Wishes, that, if I have delivered any Thing contrary to the Truth, it may not be received.



# DEFINITIONS.



## S E C T. I.

DEF. I.  Proposition which expresses the Existence, Nature, Relations, Powers, &c. of Beings, or Things, or Facts; that is, which expresses Things as they are, is call'd Truth.

II. Evidence is the Ground of the Mind's Assent to Truth, or the Means or Medium by which Truth is convey'd to the Mind. There is,

1. Evidence of Sense; or our own Senses, are Evidence to us of certain Facts.

B

2. There

2. There is Demonstration; or we can by our own Powers find Connections betwixt Truths, and from Things known, discover others unknown.

3. There is Moral Proof; or the Testimony of Persons concerning the Evidence of their Senses, and an Appearance of Circumstances and Things.

III. The highest Degree of this last kind of Evidence is call'd Moral Certainty.

IV. A lower Degree of it is call'd Probability.

V. An Assent to Propositions, of which we have not Evidence of Sense, nor can demonstrate, is call'd Belief, or Opinion.

VI. When our Belief or Opinion concerning the Existence, Nature, or Relations of Beings, or Things, or Facts, agrees with the Existence, Nature, Relations of Beings or Things, or Facts, and the Mind takes Things to be what they really are, then we are said to have a true, or right Opinion or Belief concerning those Things.

VII. When our Belief or Opinion concerning the Existence, Nature, Relations of Beings, or Things, or Facts, does not agree with the Existence, Nature, Relations of Beings or Things, or Facts, but the Mind takes Things to be what they really are not, then the Mind has a false Opinion or Belief concerning those Things.

## S E C T. II.

**P**LEASURE and Pain need not, nor can properly be defined.

DEF. I. Happiness, is a Term for, collected Pleasure, or a Sum Total of Pleasure.

II. Misery, is a Term for collected Pain, or a Sum Total of Pain.

III. That Being may be call'd a happy Being, who enjoys Pleasure without Interruption of Pain.

IV. That Being a miserable Being, who suffers Pain without Enjoyment of Pleasure.

V. Every Being is in some Degree Happy, the Sum Total of whose Pleasure exceeds his Pains.

VI. Every Being is in some Degree Miserable, the Sum Total of whose Pains exceeds his Pleasures.

VII. Any Degree of Pleasure to a Being, which procures to that Being a greater Degree of Pain, is not to be reckon'd as part of his Happiness, but Misery.

VIII. Any Degree of Pain to a Being, which procures to that Being a greater Degree of Pleasure, is not to be reckon'd as part of his Misery, but Happiness.

IX. Perfect Happiness is the enjoying the highest Degree of Pleasure that sensible Beings are capable of, without any Interruption of Pain.

## S E C T. III.

PROP. I. **T**O all sensible Beings Pleasure is preferable to Pain.

II. If to all sensible Beings Pleasure is preferable to Pain, then all such Beings must will and desire Pleasure, and will an Avoidance of Pain.

III. What sensible Beings must always prefer, will, and desire, is most fit for them.

IV. What sensible Beings must always will contrary to, shun and avoid, is most unfit for them.

V. Happiness is then in its own Nature most fit for sensible Beings.

VI. Misery is in its own Nature most unfit for them.

VII. If Happiness is in its own Nature most fit for sensible Beings, and Misery in its own Nature most unfit for them, then there are Fitnesses and Unfitnesses of Things arising from the Nature of sensible Beings antecedent to all Law and Appointment; and the Happiness of sensible Beings is a Fitness of Things, and the Misery of sensible Beings, an Unfitness of Things.

VIII. And it farther follows, that if the Happiness of sensible Beings is a Fitness of Things, and the Misery of sensible Beings an Unfitness of Things, that whatever is a Means to the Happiness of sensible Beings, is likewise fitting, or fit, and that whatever is a Means to the Misery of sensible Beings, is unfitting, or unfit.

IX. That

IX. That all those Actions of sensible Beings which tend to the Happiness of sensible Beings, are most fit.

X. That all those Actions of sensible Beings which tend to the Misery of sensible Beings, are most unfit.

XI. That right or true Opinions concerning the Existence, Nature, Relations, Powers of Beings, and Things, and Facts, and concerning the Tendency of our Actions, are fit. And,

XII. That all false Opinions concerning the Existence, Nature, Relations, Powers of Beings and Things, and Facts, and the Tendency of our Actions, are unfit.

XIII. That an Examination into the Evidence of the Existence, Nature, Relations, Powers of Beings and Things, and Facts, and the Tendency of our Actions, is fit. That

XIV. An Assent to Evidence is fit.

XV. And a Dissent from Evidence unfit.



S E C T. IV.

DEF. **T**HAT Power of the Mind by which it discovers the Existence, Nature, Relations, Powers, &c. of Beings, and Things, and the Fitness, and Unfitness of Things from antecedent Knowledge; that is, which finds  
Truth

## 6 PROPOSITIONS.

Truth from its Connexion with Truth antecedently known, or believed, is call'd Reason.

As Reason is that Power of the Mind by which it finds Truth, and the Fitness and Unfitness of Things, it follows, that whatever is True or Fit, is also Rational, Reasonable, or according to Reason. And that,

1. It is reasonable that sensible Beings should be happy.

2. That it is unreasonable they should be miserable.

3. That whatever is a Means to the Happiness of sensible Beings is rational, or according to Reason.

4. That whatever is a Means to the Misery of such Beings is Irrational, or contrary to Reason.

5. That all those Actions of Beings which are Means to their Happiness, are rational.

6. That all those Actions of Beings which are Means to their Misery, are irrational.

7. That whoever does not, as far as he has Ability, search out the Means to his Happiness, is irrational.

8. That whoever does not make use of those Means, when found, is irrational.

9. That an Enquiry after Truth is rational.

10. That an Assent to it is rational.

11. That when a Proposition is proposed, which if true will affect our Happiness in the highest Degree, it is highly irrational not to examine whether it be true or not.

12. That

12. That in Order to a rational Assent, it is rational to consider what kind of Evidence Propositions of that Nature are capable of.

That is, in Order to an End, it is rational to consider by what Means it is to be obtain'd, and as some Truths can be supported with Evidence of Sense; or Demonstration; others only by Testimony of Persons, and an Appearance of Circumstances and Things; it must be proper to consider what kind of proof Propositions of this Nature are capable of.

13. That it is highly irrational to expect that Evidence of Propositions, which the Nature of such Propositions will not admit. As thus, suppose the Question was concerning Historical Facts, pretended to be before our own Times; of these there can be no higher Evidence than Testimony of Persons, and a Concurrence of Circumstances, and Things, and Events. It must be then highly irrational to expect other kind of Evidence of such Propositions.

14. That when Moral Proof or Probability is the only Evidence Propositions are capable of, this ought to determine the Assent to such Propositions as truly as Demonstration ought to determine the Assent to Propositions which can be demonstrated.

An Assent to Evidence, is an Assent according to Reason; and a Dissent from Evidence a Dissent contrary to Reason: And the Irrationality of the Dissent consists in dissenting from Evidence, as such, be that Evidence what it will.





## S E C T. V.

**T**HAT the Christian Religion is a Divine Revelation, is a Proposition, which if true will affect our Happiness in the highest Degree; it is then highly irrational not to consider whether it be true or not.

That if the Christian Religion be true, the Happiness of all those to whom it is promulged, must consist in believing this Religion and obeying its Precepts, is evident from the Nature of this Religion and its repeated Declarations; it must be then highly irrational not to examine whether it be true or not.

In order then to find whether the Christian Religion be a Divine Revelation, we will go to the very Bottom of Things; and first see what is our Evidence of a God: And before we examine whether a certain supposed Being has reveal'd himself, we will consider whether we have Reason to believe, that there is really such a Being.

S E C T. VI.

*Enquiry the 1st. What is our Evidence  
of a God?*

**I**N the first Place then we find the Mind empty and void, without any innate Ideas of such a Being, or any Notion of a God, till it ascends to it by that which is the Basis of all Knowledge, Ideas of Sensation.

And as there are no innate Ideas of a God, so likewise we can have no Proof of such a Being *a priori*; and if there is really such a Being, we can only come to a Knowledge of his Existence, from a Consideration of the Existence of Things

We then perceive and feel that certain Things do exist, which Things we find must exist either with, or without a Cause. If they exist without a Cause, then it follows that they must have existed eternally, it being certain that nothing can have a Beginning without a Cause. If they exist with a Cause, then we must consider, what can be the Cause of their Existence.

The Question then is, whether we have Reason to think, that the Things which we see and perceive do exist, existed eternally without a Cause, or whether there is a Cause of their Existence? The most likely Method to obtain Satisfaction in this Point, is to consider the Things  
C which

which do exist, and what we know of the Manner of their Existence.

And here we find certain Chains of Causes and Effects, and many Parts of this System owing their Existence to an antecedent Cause, consequently, we cannot with Reason assert that the whole System exists without Cause.

As thus, if we take any Species of Beings, we say justly, that no one individual of that Species ever existed without a Cause, then we cannot say, that the whole Species composed of those Individuals, existed without a Cause. If every Link in a certain Chain has a Cause, then must the whole Chain have a Cause.

If it is replied, that though every Link in a Chain, every individual of a Species must have a Cause; yet that the Cause is only in the Chain itself, in the Species, and that a Succession of such Individuals is infinite, and consequently, without Cause. I answer, a Succession which depends on something external to the Succession for its Continuance, which is the Case of all the Successions in this System, must have a Cause external and antecedent to it.

For, whatever has been always, and without Cause, must be always; and there cannot be a Cause of the ceasing to be, of that, which had no Beginning, nor Cause. And, if a Succession of Beings, suppose Men, has been always, and without Cause, there can be no Cause of the ceasing to be of a Succession of Men.

But a Succession of Men is liable to cease from several Causes. It may cease by outward  
Accidents;

Accidents; and it is possible that those Things which have often been partially destructive to Mankind, may become universally so, and the whole Species destroy'd by them.

It may cease from a Want of the Support and Assistance of other Beings and Things; and Mankind be extinct from a Want of Sustainance.

A Succession of Beings then, which is dependent on something external to the Succession for its Continuance, may quite cease; and if it may quite cease, then it could not exist without Cause; there being no Cause of the ceasing to be of that, which has no Cause of its Existence.

2. A Succession of Beings, each of which cannot exist but in Pain, without the Support and Assistance of something external to the Succession, (which is the Case of all the Successions in this System) must have a Cause external, and antecedent to it.

If there is Pain in an individual of a Succession, there is Cause of that Pain; otherwise, there would be a Beginning, without a Cause. The Cause of Pain in such Individual, must be in the Succession, or not in it. But there cannot be a Cause of Pain in that which exists without Cause. Consequently, a Succession of Beings, each of which cannot exist but in Pain without the Support and Assistance of something external to the Succession, could not exist without Cause; which Cause must be external, and antecedent it.

3. If Beings cannot exist but in Pain, without the Support and Assistance of other Beings or Things; then there is a Fitness in the Parts of such Beings, to suffer Pain without such Support and Assistance, and a Fitness to receive Pleasure from it; and a Fitness in these other Beings, and Things, to give Pleasure. But such a Fitness of Parts to certain Ends, and a Fitness of different Beings, and Successions of Beings to each other; and all these Fitnesses concurring to one grand Use, or End, which is the Preservation of the whole, must have a Cause external, and antecedent to them.

4. There is through all inanimate Nature a Fitness of certain Things to others, and a Dependency of some Parts of this System on other Parts of it. Particularly, all Vegetables depend on something external to themselves, and even Species, for being what they are, and for their continuing to exist. And there is a Fitness in the inanimate Part of Nature to give Pleasure, or preserve Existence in the animate, for which it seems alone to exist. And the whole System of Beings, and Things, is as one grand Machine composed of a vast Variety of Parts, each Part depending on other Parts, and all concurring to certain Uses, or Ends, which is the Preservation or Happiness of the whole. Such a Variety of Fitnesses then in order to the Preservation, or Happiness of a whole System of Beings, must have a Cause external, and antecedent to them.

5. If

5. If a material System is composed of Parts that are changeable, there must be a Cause external, and antecedent, to all the Changes in such a System.

Wherever there is a Change, there is a Cause of that Change; otherwise, there would be a Beginning, without a Cause.

Now the Cause of Change in a material System, must be in the Materials of the System, or not in the Materials of the System. If it is in the Materials of the System, then the Materials must exist antecedently to all the Changes in the System, and likewise, they must exist without Cause; (for, if the Materials had a Cause of their Existence, then that Cause, would be the original Cause of all the Changes in the System; and then, our Proposition would be proved) but, if the Materials of the System exist without a Cause, they cannot possibly have a Cause of Change in them; for then there would be a Cause of Change in that which exists without Cause; there would be in that which has no Cause of its Existence, a Cause of its not being, what it is, which is a Contradiction.

And, if the Cause of Change in a material System cannot be in the System, then it follows, that it must be distinct from, and antecedent to, all the Changes in such a System.

6. There is no Motion in a material System, which is not the Effect of something antecedent to it, or that has not been caused. Now the Cause of Motion in a material System, cannot be in the System, it being impossible for Matter

to begin Motion. Consequently, there must be a Cause of Motion in a material System, distinct from, and antecedent to the System.

If it should be said, that Matter may begin Motion, (though I suppose very few will venture to say this) then I prove, that Motion in a material System must have a Cause external, and antecedent to it, the same Way that I prove all the Changes in a material System, must have a Cause external, and antecedent to them.

7. From the Frame and Constitution of this System, it is evident, that it did not exist without Cause.

A System that never had a Beginning, never can have an End, and if it has always existed, it must always exist; otherwise (as has been observed) there would be a Cause of the Destruction of that which exists without Cause, and has always existed, which is impossible. But from the Nature and Constitution of Things, the \* Decrease of Fluids in the Planets; and of Light and Bulk in the Sun, and fix'd Stars; and from the Resistance that is made to the Motions of the heavenly Bodies, it is evident that this System cannot always exist; and if it cannot always exist, then neither has it always existed; that is, it did not exist without Cause.

As for the Argument, *that had the World lasted from all Eternity, as it now is; it is altogether impossible, but that Arts and Sciences must have been brought to a far greater Per-*

\* See Dr. Cheyne's Philosophical Principles of Religion.

*fection, than they have as yet attained; I take it to be inconclusive, and so shall let it pass; only put those who make Use of it in Mind, that supposing this System had lasted from all Eternity, no one Reason can be assign'd, why Arts and Sciences should not be invented in this Age, or any other particular one, as well as a 1000, or 10000 Ages ago; and consequently, no Argument can be drawn from their being invented in this Age, or any other Age, to prove the World not eternal.*

But if we can shew, as we certainly can, that the whole Appearance of Nature, agrees with this System's beginning to exist at a certain Time, we have from hence Evidence that it is not eternal. And if we have a History that informs us, that this System did actually begin to exist at that Time; then our Argument against the Eternity of this System is strengthened.

We have then from the whole Appearance of Nature, and History of the Creation, Evidence, that this System did not exist eternally, and consequently, did not exist without Cause.

If it is said, that though the Existence of this System may be the Effect of a Cause; yet that nothing which I have offered gives us Reason to believe, that the Matter of which it is compounded, is not eternal: I answer, that this is a Point, which at present does not at all concern my Enquiry; if there is a Being, who framed, and fitted up this System, and made Man in particular, a sensible, intelligent Being, capable of Pleasure and Pain, I have all that I want  
under



under the present Argument. And the other Enquiry, may more properly be left to some future Opportunity.

We have then full Evidence, and have proved under several Particulars, that this System did not exist eternally, and consequently did not exist without Cause. Come we then to consider,

*Secondly*, What is the Cause of its Existence.

Now, as this System, which began to exist, must owe its Existence to an antecedent Cause; so likewise must that antecedent Cause, if it began to exist, owe its Existence to another antecedent Cause; and so must all Beings, and Things, 'till we ascend to a Being, who never began to exist; which Being, who never began to exist, can have nothing antecedent to it, and consequently, can have no Cause of its Existence.

As we are sure then that the material World does exist, and that it does not exist without Cause; but owes its Existence to something antecedent to it; we are sure likewise, that if that to which it owes its Existence, does not exist without Cause; yet that it derives its Existence from something which does, and that the Being to whom this System owes its Existence, is a Being who exists absolutely without Cause, and is eternal.

And having said thus much, and that the Being, who is the Fountain of Existence to other Beings and Things, is a Being who exists absolutely without Cause, and is eternal, we  
have

have said all that is proper upon this Head, having no Ideas which can lead us to a Knowledge of the Manner of his Existence. And as our Knowledge of such a Being, wholly arises from a Consideration of the Existence of Things, we can have no Knowledge of him farther than the Existence of Things will lead us. But Things which exist with a Cause, will not lead us to a Knowledge of the Manner of Existence of a Being, who exists absolutely without Cause, and is eternal.

Neither will they lead us to a Knowledge of the Substance of this Being; there being no Connexion between the Substance of a Being, and his Works. In these Particulars then is our Enquiry to stop.

But though the Things which do exist, will not lead us to a Knowledge of the Manner of Existence, nor to the Substance of a Being, who exists absolutely without Cause, and is eternal; yet they will lead us to several of his Attributes, and from an Effect we can justly argue to its Cause; and we may find certain Attributes connected with others. Thus

*Secondly,* We can prove that the Being who framed, and fitted up this System, is an intelligent Being.

When we see a Machine composed of a vast Variety of Parts, which regularly, and constantly do distinct Offices, and all concur to one grand Use, or End, we pronounce it to be the Effect of Intelligence; having observed like Effects to be owing to Intelligence, and not know-

ing any other Cause that is capable of producing them. When then we see the grand Machine of the Universe composed of a vast Variety of Parts, all suited, and fitted to each other, and each Part regularly, and constantly doing distinct Offices, in order to the Preservation of the whole, if we pronounce not this to be the Effect of Intelligence, we are inconsistent with ourselves, and with constant Experience; we judge differently in this Case, from what we would do in all others of a like Nature.

We have then Reason to believe the Universe the Effect of Intelligence, or have no Reason to believe any Machine, that we did not see the forming of, the Effect of Intelligence.

Again, not only the Nature of Things which do exist, and the Manner of their Existence, lead us to an intelligent Cause; but likewise, Intelligence being in this System, it is from thence evident, that the Cause of this System is an intelligent Being.

It is impossible for a Being to give a Perfection which he possesses not himself; for then there would be an Effect without a Cause, or a Beginning without a Cause, which is impossible. And to assert that an unintelligent Being can give Intelligence, is to assert that there may be an Effect without a Cause.

III. We find that the Being, who framed and fitted up this System, and gave it its present Form and Appearance, must be a Being of great Power.

We are sure that the Power of this Being must be equal to the Effects of it; that is, that he must be capable of making and sustaining a World, because in Fact he has done it: We are sure likewise, that his Power must be unlimited by any Being which derives its Existence from him; that none of his own Creatures can successfully resist his Power; for then he would give a Perfection which he possess not himself; there would be an Effect without a Cause, or a Beginning without a Cause, which is impossible. And this is full enough for us at present, under a general Consideration of his Power.

IV. The Being who framed, and fitted up this System, must be a wise Being.

Wisdom lays down the best End, and pursues it by the best Means; that is, by Means most effectual to the proposed End.

The best End that any Being can propose is the Happiness of Beings.

If then sensible Beings are capable of Happiness, if Existence is better than Non-Existence to them, (and our Desire after a Continuance of Existence, is Conviction to us, that it is) then the supreme Being, when he determin'd to make such Beings, laid down the best End.

That he makes Use of Means most effectual to this End, and to the Preservation of all kinds of Beings, not only their continuing to exist is Evidence; but likewise these Means are every where visible.

Thus we find Instincts, or Desires in all Beings, which push them on to preserve Existence.

Different Beings are wonderfully framed, and constituted, and fitted to each other, as has been observed, in order to the Continuance of Existence, and all Things concur to the Preservation of the System.

If any then should doubt the Wisdom of the End; that is, whether Existence is better than Non-Existence to sensible Beings; they must wait for farther Evidence, which will appear in due Time. But the Wisdom of the Means, in order to the Continuance of Existence, cannot be question'd, they being, through all Nature most conspicuous.

V. The Being who exists without Cause, must be an independent Being.

Independency is included in existing without Cause, and as a Being who exists without Cause, derives nothing from another; so can nothing be taken from him by any other. There can be no Cause of the Destruction of that, which has no Cause of its Existence. And a Being who derives nothing from another, and can have nothing taken from him by any other, is an independent Being.

VI. The independent Being, who exists without Cause, must be unchangeable; that is, he must always exist with the same Powers, Attributes and Qualities, and consequently must always act by the same Motives and Reasons.

If a Being with certain Powers, Attributes, and Qualities, has no Cause of its Existence,  
then

then these Powers, Attributes, and Qualities have no Cause.

If Powers, Attributes, and Qualities in a Being have no Cause, they can never cease to be in that Being; for then there would be a Cause of the Ceasing to be of that which never had a Beginning, which is impossible.

Again, wherever there is a Change, there is a Cause of that Change; otherwise, there would be a Beginning without a Cause.

The Cause of Change in a Being, must be either external, or internal.

But there can be no external Cause of Change in an independent Being, who exists without Cause; for then he would be a dependent Being, dependent on other Beings or Things for Powers, Attributes, and Qualities, which had no Cause; which is a Contradiction.

And for a Being, who exists without Cause, to have in himself a Cause of Change; that is, a Cause of not being what he is, is likewise a Contradiction.

It follows then, that a Being who exists without Cause, must always exist with the same Powers, Attributes and Qualities. And if a Being must always exist with the same Powers, Attributes and Qualities, then must he always act by the same Motives and Reasons, and be an unchangeable Being.

VII. The intelligent, independent Being, who exists without Cause, and is Author of this System, must be perfectly happy.

There is no Pain without Cause.

The

The Cause of Pain in a Being, must be either external, or internal.

It cannot be external to an independent Being; for then he would be a dependent Being, dependent on other Beings, or Things for his Happiness.

A Being who exists without Cause, cannot have a Cause of Pain in himself.

Then it follows, that an intelligent, independent Being, cannot suffer Pain.

2. An intelligent, independent Being, is not only uncapable of suffering Pain, but likewise he must enjoy Pleasure, or, be a happy Being.

A Being who communicates Pleasure to other Beings, must enjoy Pleasure himself; otherwise, he would give a Perfection, which he possess not; there would be an Effect without a Cause, or a Beginning without a Cause, which is impossible.

Again, A Consciousness of possessing Powers, capable of being exerted to certain Ends, and a real exerting of them to those Ends, must give great Pleasure to the Being who possesses, and exerts these Powers. And the greater the Powers, and the more certain their Effects, the greater is the Pleasure to the Possessor of them.

A Power then of making, and sustaining of a World; of forming Beings, and Things, and suiting of them to each other, in order to the Preservation or Happiness of the whole; and the real Exercise of this Power, must give great Pleasure to the Being who possesses it.

Further,

Further, The intelligent, independent Being, who exists without Cause, must not only be a happy Being; that is, enjoy Pleasure without any Interruption of Pain; but he must likewise be perfectly happy; that is, he must enjoy the highest Degree of Pleasure, that any Being is capable of.

As he is the Fountain of Pleasure to other Beings; that is, of all that rational Pleasure which does not produce Pain, he must himself enjoy the highest Degree of it; otherwise he would give more than he possess, there would be an Effect without a Cause.

Again, As the Powers of a Creator vastly exceed the Powers of his Creatures, so must his Pleasure from a Consciousness of such Powers, and from the real Exercise of them, vastly exceed any Pleasure which they can have from a Consciousness, or Exercise of their Powers.

Further, There is great Pleasure in communicating Pleasure, in a Consciousness of bestowing that on Beings, which they always must prefer, and chuse; a Being then who communicates to other Beings all that true Pleasure, or Happiness which they possess, must have Pleasure from a Communication of Happiness, which no created Being can be capable of.

*Lastly,* As the supreme Being is an independent Being, he has Pleasure which no dependent Being is, or can be capable of.

He must have great Pleasure from reflecting, that whatever he has, it is underived, held of none, nor can possibly be taken from him; that



he is self-sufficient, and his Felicity everlasting.

VIII. The perfectly happy, independent Being, who exists without Cause, must be a good Being.

A good Being is one who always wills the Happiness of Beings, and promotes it as far as he has Power.

Now a happy, independent Being, must will Happiness to other Beings.

*First*, Because Pleasure is in itself a Motive to the Will. All Beings must prefer Pleasure to Pain. They must prefer it as such, wherever it is, and in other Beings, as well as in themselves.

What they must prefer, they must will, when there is not a Motive to the contrary.

But a perfectly happy, independent Being, can have no Motive to will the contrary; that is, to will Pain, as such. Motives to will Pain, arise in weak, dependent Beings, liable to Injuries and Want, from a Sense or Dread of Pain; but a happy, independent Being, can neither fear, nor suffer, consequently, can have no Motive to will Pain as such. And if a Being can have no Motive to will Pain as such, and has always Motives to will Pleasure; that is, Happiness, then he must always will Happiness.

Again, the perfect Happiness which a Being himself enjoys, is a Motive to him to will Happiness to other Beings; and a Being always pleased and happy, always wills Happiness.

Further,

Further, as the supreme Being is a Creator, he must always will Happiness to his Creatures, he must will them that which they must always prefer; otherwise he would will in opposition to himself, he would will the Imperfection of his own Works, which is impossible.

It is abundantly evident then, that the supreme Being must always will Happiness to other Beings.

And, as he must always will the Happiness of Beings, so must he always act agreeably to his Will, and promote their Happiness as far as he has Power.

Dependent Beings subject to Pain, may often be turn'd aside from executing that which they will, by a Dread of Danger, or Consequences, but a happy, independent Being has nothing to suffer or fear; consequently, can be by nothing turn'd aside from executing that which he wills, when he has Power to do it.

It is evident then, that the happy, independent Being who is the Author of this System, is a good Being; one who always wills Happiness to other Beings, and promotes it as far as he has Power.

It follows, that his End in Creation was to communicate Happiness; and that whatever Pleasure he might himself take in the Performance, he could have none in Opposition to the Happiness of his Creatures; for then (as he always must will their Happiness) he would will in Opposition to himself, which is impossible.

We find then, the Attribute of Goodness, in the Author of this System, connected with his Happiness; and particularly we find, that his End in making sensible Beings, was to communicate Happiness to them.

But *Secondly*, We not only find the Attribute of Goodness in the Author of this System connected with his Happiness, but we likewise find in Fact that he is a good Being, and can prove it directly *a posteriori*, from his Works.

Whatever tends to our Preservation, is framed, constituted, and fitted to give us Pleasure.

What tends to our Destruction, is framed, constituted, and fitted to give us Pain.

As Things good for us grow hurtful when used immoderately, Pain is annex'd to the immoderate Use of them in order to stop us from the Evil; here is Wisdom and Goodness.

Again, as he has made us capable of contributing to the Happiness or Misery of those of our own Species, so has he annex'd Pleasure to a Consciousness of designing, or promoting of their Happiness; Pain, to a Consciousness of designing, or promoting of their Misery; and from hence we have Demonstration, that he is a good Being.

No Man makes happy, but he secretly applauds the Action; no Man makes miserable, but he secretly condemns himself. No Man designs Ill, and stands unreproach'd by himself; no Man designs Good, that has not Pleasure, even from that Intention. No Man voluntarily inflicts Misery, but to gratify some Passion or  
Desire,

Desire, which seem'd to stand in opposition to the Happiness of others; and no Man but suffers Remorse and Anguish, when the Gratification, which excited the evil Action, ceases. Nay, no Man so much as sees the Miserable without feeling Pain, unless some particular Displeasure has been conceiv'd against the Sufferer, on Account of supposed Injury to ourselves, or others.

From hence alone then, from God's annexing Happiness to a Consciousness of designing and promoting the Happiness of others, and Pain to a Consciousness of designing or promoting their Misery; and from that Pity, which is naturally in all Men, we have Demonstration that God is a good Being.

And now having proved, that God is a good Being, our Argument is compleat, that he is a wise Being, and that when he made sensible Beings, he laid down the best End, which was, their Happiness.

IX. As God is a good Being; that is, as he wills and promotes the Happiness of all Beings, so far as he has Power, so is he a Being, who in all his Actings with sensible Beings, acts according to Reason and a Fitness of Things; that is, he really promotes their Happiness.

Beings may will Happiness to other Beings, and promote it as far as they have Power, and yet fall very short of their End; of which we ourselves are sad Instances. They may want Ability to discern, or Power to execute that which is best, and most for the Happiness of

Beings. But in neither of these Cases can the supreme Being be defective, he always must know the Fitness and Unfitness of Things; what tends to the Happiness, and what to the Misery of his Creatures, and cannot possibly want Power to act agreeably to his Will.

And *First*, A Being who is Creator, who has Wisdom sufficient to form a World and suit and fit all Beings and Things to each other in order to the Preservation of the whole, and who has fitted a Variety of Things to give Pleasure to his Creatures, must know whether Beings could be made capable of Happiness; that is, whether Existence would be better than Non-Existence to them. And he also must know the best possible State of Existence for all Ranks and Orders of Beings; that is, that State which would produce the most Happiness to the whole Creation.

And as he must know whether Existence would be better than Non-Existence to sensible Beings; and also the best possible State of Existence for all Ranks and Orders of Beings; so must he always know what is best for his Creatures in all Stages of their Existence, and what will tend to the Happiness or Misery of the Creatures whom he has form'd.

And as the supreme Being, who is the Author of this System, must at all Times know the Fitnesses and Unfitnesses of Things; what will contribute to the Happiness or Misery of his Creatures; so must he always have Power to act agreeably

greeably to these Fitnesses; that is, to do that which will most contribute to their Happiness.

As he is an independent Being, his Powers are independent, consequently, cannot be limited or restrain'd by any Being whatsoever.

As he is Creator, his Power cannot be limited by his Creatures; those whom he has formed cannot successfully resist him.

And if his Power cannot be restrain'd or limited by any Being whatsoever, he has Power to act agreeably to the Fitnesses of Things; that is, to do that which will most contribute to the Happiness of Beings.

It is evident then, that as the supreme Being always wills Happiness to other Beings, knows the Fitnesses and Unfitnesses of Things, what will contribute to the Happiness or Misery of his Creatures; and has Power to act agreeably to these Fitnesses, that is, to really promote their Happiness; he must in all his Actings with such Beings, act according to Reason, and a Fitness of Things; that is, he must do that which is most for the Happiness of such Beings.

And now having proved that the Being who exists without Cause, and who is the Author of the Universe, is an intelligent, powerful, wise, good Being; and a Being, who in all his Actings with sensible Beings, acts according to Reason, and a Fitness of Things; that is, really promotes their Happiness; all the other moral Attributes, which are generally ascribed to the Deity, as Justice, Holiness, Faithfulness, &c. are included.

A Creator

A Creator can only be said to be unjust to his Creatures one of these Ways; either,

By making them incapable of Happiness.

By defeating them of any Happiness he has made them capable of.

Or by not making them happy in Proportion to their deserving to be so.

But a Being who knows the Fitnesses and Unfitnesses of Things, what will contribute to the Happiness or Misery of his Creatures; who always wills their Happiness; and in all his Actings with them acts according to Reason, and a Fitness of Things, could not make them incapable of obtaining Happiness, nor defeat them of that Happiness they were made capable of; nor so order Things that they should not be happy in Proportion to their Desert.

And as Justice is included in the Attribute of Goodness, and in acting according to Reason and a Fitness of Things, so is Holiness and Faithfulness. And as a Being who never swerves from Reason is Holy, so neither can he deceive, promise, and not perform; that is, he is faithful and true.

X. He is Omnipresent.

That is, as he always governs his Creatures in the best Manner, he is at all Times so far present with them, as to be able to do this.

XI. He is Omniscient.

That is, he must know the Nature and Powers of his Creatures, and all their Actions; a Creator must have perfect Knowledge of that which he has formed.

XII. He

XII. He is a free Agent, and does not act by Necessity, but Choice.

Now that God is a free Agent, I prove by one single Argument.

Every Man naturally thinks himself a free Agent, and blames or applauds himself after certain Actions; which blaming, or applauding of himself, is an Effect of a Consciousness, it was in his Power to have done otherwise.

Now then, if Man is not a free Agent, but is obliged in the Circumstances he is at any Time in, and Causes he is under, to do that one Thing he does, and cannot possibly do otherwise, he has Faculties given him upon the Exercise of which he is necessarily deceived, and the Author of his Existence, by giving him such Faculties has necessitated him into Error; and consequently acted contrary to Reason, and a Fitness of Things in his Creation.

But the Author of his Existence, is a Being, who always acts according to Reason, and a Fitness of Things, consequently, cannot necessitate him into Error, or deceive him; then it follows that Man is a free Agent.

But if Man is a free Agent, God must be one; otherwise, there would be an Effect without a Cause, or a Beginning without a Cause; or a Perfection in a Creature, which is not in the Creator, which is an Impossibility.

There are many other Arguments which prove Man a free Agent, and all these prove that God is a free Agent.

And



And there are many Arguments taken from the Nature of God, and his Works, which prove him a free Agent; but these having been fully urg'd by other Hands, I omit them, imagining that what I have said, is sufficient to prove my Point.

And now having proved that the Author of this System is an eternal, intelligent, wise, powerful, independent, unchangeable, good, just, holy, omnipresent, omniscient Being; and a Being who always acts according to Reason, and a Fitness of Things: We include all these Attributes in one general Word, and call him a perfect Being.

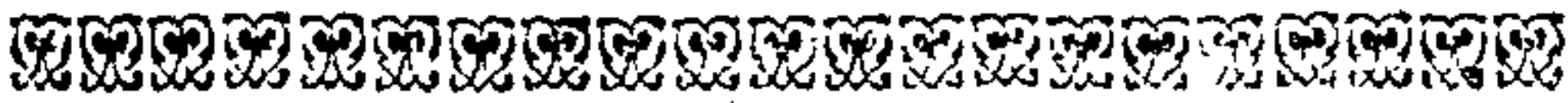
*Perfect* is a relative Word, and signifies the Agreement of something to a certain Measure, or Standard in our Minds. Thus, a Being, who always lays down the best End, and pursues it by the best Means, is perfectly wise, wise without any Default or Abatement.

Beings may be counted more or less perfect, as they possess Powers, which are capable of being Means to Happiness, and as they really exert them to that End.

And that Being who possesses all those Powers, Attributes and Qualities, which are capable of being Means to the Happiness of himself, and other Beings, in the highest, and most perfect Degree they can be possess, and who really does employ them to the End, is the best of all Beings, and a perfect Being.

We have then full Evidence, that the Being, who framed and fitted up this System, is an eternal

ternal, intelligent, powerful, wise, independent, unchangeable, good, holy, just, faithful, omnipresent, omniscient, free Being, and a Being who in all his Actings with sensible Beings, acts according to Reason, and a Fitness of Things; or, that he is a perfect Being. And whoever believes there is no such Being, must likewise believe there may be a Beginning without a Cause, or an Effect without a Cause; that is, he must believe Impossibilities, or Contradictions. And whoever does not act agreeably to the Belief of such a Being, acts directly contrary to Reason, and a Fitness of Things.



S E C T. VII.

*Enquiry the second, After Happiness.*

**W**HAT are those Actions of Man, that are agreeable to the Belief of an *eternal, intelligent, wise, good, &c.* Being? Or, supposing there is really such a Being who is the Author of Man's Existence, how must Man act, to act according to Reason, and a Fitness of Things? How must he act in order to obtain Happiness?

And this Enquiry is highly proper, previous to our Enquiry into the Evidence of a pretended

Revelation; for if the pretended Revelation should require any Practice of us inconsistent with the Attributes of the Deity, we are to reject it.

In the first Place, then, we find, that Man is form'd with certain Powers and Faculties, which Powers and Faculties must be given him by his Maker, in order to the Happiness of himself, or other Beings. It is necessary, then, that he keep all these Powers and Faculties unimpair'd, that so he may be able at any Time to do that which he is able to do naturally.

If he impairs his Powers, and Faculties, he loses the Means to his Happiness; he likewise loses a Pleasure which would naturally arise from the exerting of unimpair'd Powers and Faculties: And add to this, he must displease that Being who gave them to him.

Whatever, then, tends to weaken the Powers of either the Mind, or Body of Man, that lessens his Ability to perceive, apprehend, reason, judge, will, or act; directly tends to make Man miserable.

Under this Head it may be shewn, that all Degrees of eating and drinking, beyond what tends to Health, and Refreshment; an Indulgence in sensual Gratifications; and all those Vices which may be rang'd under the general Word Intemperance, are contrary to Man's Happiness.

2. As it is Man's Duty to keep his Powers unimpair'd, so also is it, to endeavour to preserve his Existence.

If God has made Man, and given him Means to preserve his Existence, he wills that they be made use of to that End.

Whoever, then, neglects the Means to Self-preservation, or abuses them, to the injuring of his Health, acts directly contrary to the Will of God, and consequently to his own Happiness.

And if he who neglects the Means of Self-preservation, or abuses them to the injuring of his Health, acts contrary to the Will of God, and his own Happiness; in a much greater Degree does he do so, who wilfully deprives himself of Existence. This is direct Opposition to God; is throwing him back his Favours, and is the highest Degree of Rebellion against him.

II. With regard to his own Species, it is evident, that Happiness must arise to Man,

1<sup>st</sup>, From his being a just, or righteous Being, that is, one who violates the Rights of no Man, and renders to all their Dues.

2<sup>dly</sup>, From his being a good Being, that is, one who wills and promotes the Happiness of all Mankind, as much as is in his Power.

Every Man is by the Frame and Constitution of Things, possess'd of some Right or Property, which cannot be violated without Pain and Injury to him; then God wills that this Right or Property be not violated, and that every Man be left uninterruptedly to possess that which by the Constitution of Things belongs to him.

Under this Head it may be shewn, that Murder, Adultery, Theft, Oppression, Tyranny, Slander,

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Slander, Backbiting, Deceit, Lying, Treachery, Insolence, Flattery, &c. are so many Instances of Injustice, and consequently are opposite to the Will of God.

Again, all Mankind, by the Frame and Constitution of Things, stand in certain Relations to each other, from which Relations there arise Dues and Rights which cannot be with-held from those to whom they are due, without Pain, and Injury to them; then God wills that they be not with-held, but that every Man have that which by the Constitution of Things belongs to him.

Here it might particularly be shewn, that all Undutifulness of Children to Parents, Parent's Neglect of Children, whether in point of Instruction, or Maintenance; all Disturbances of the Peace of Society, and of that of Families; all Breach of Contracts, (particularly all Breach of Marriage Contracts) Breach of Promises, &c. are with-holding of Dues, and consequently opposite to the Will of God.

And as God wills that the Rights of no Man be violated, and that all have their Dues, so must he constitute Things that Happiness must be the Effect of Righteousness, and Misery of Unrighteousness.

And could just and righteous Actions produce Misery to Man; unjust, cruel, and tyrannical ones, Happiness; God must have constituted Things contrary to Reason, and a Fitness of Things

Things, and be not a good Being; or, he must act in Opposition to himself.

2. As Happiness must be the Effect of Righteousness, yet much more must it of Goodness; and every Man must be happy in Proportion as he is a good Being, and miserable in Proportion as he is an evil one.

God always wills Happiness to the whole Creation, and has made Man capable of willing and promoting the Happiness of his Species; then God wills that Man always will Happiness, and promote it as far as he is able.

Man may not always be able to do that which tends to the Happiness of others; he may want Ability to discern what is best for them, or Power to execute it; and so far as he falls short in either of these Particulars, he is an imperfect Being. But he may always will Happiness, and God always wills that he do this; that he be a benevolent Being.

Here it may be shewn, that Envy, Hatred, Malice, Pride, are so many Instances of Malevolence, and consequently directly opposite to the Will of God.

And as God always wills that Man will Happiness, and be a benevolent Being; so does he, that he promote it as far as he has Power. Man may will Happiness, yet for the Sake of what he possesses, fall short in promoting it. He may say, *he fed, he cloath'd*; but when that which should feed and cloath, is to be parted with by himself, in that Thing desire to be pardon'd:

But

But God not only wills, but in all Actings with sensible Beings, promotes their Happiness: Consequently Man must, if he would be acceptable to God, promote Happiness whenever he has Opportunity.

He must save from Evil, or deliver out of it; feed the Hungry; cloath the Naked; visit the Sick; deliver the Oppressed; protect the Fatherless, the Stranger, and the Widow: These are Actions which God wills that Man perform as often as he has Opportunity, in consequence of Benevolence or willing Good. That is, God always wills that Man be a good Being.

And if Happiness shall be the Effect of Righteousness, yet much more, and in a far greater Degree, shall it of Goodness. If doing no Ill, with-holding not that which is due, is pleasing unto God, yet much more pleasing shall doing Good be to him. This is joining with our Maker in the great Work in which he himself is employ'd; and is resembling of the Deity.

III. Man is placed amidst Creatures of much lower Powers than himself, who are fitted to serve him with their Labour, or to be Sustenance for him. And they are not free Agents, but determin'd by Instincts to preserve themselves, and their Species; which is certain Evidence that they were form'd for the Use of some other Beings.

Some of these Creatures, however useful in the Creation, and to Man in particular Instances, yet would be destructive to him if their Species were

were numerous ; these, then, he has a Right, from his Duty of Self-preservation, to destroy. Others of them which can assist him with their Labour, or serve him for Food, and which seem form'd for no other End but the Use of Man, we presume that God wills that he should make use of. But then he is to remember, when he makes the Creatures labour, to do it with Mercy ; to lay no grievous Burden on them, and what is not proportion'd to their Strength ; to use them with no unnecessary Severity, but to be as compassionate towards them, as is consistent with their being serviceable to him. And further, when he takes away their Lives, he is to remember to do it in that Manner which is least painful to them.

This is behaving towards the Creatures acceptably to the Creator, who wills the Good of the whole Creation.

IV. With regard to the supreme Being, who is the Creator, the Preserver, and the Bestower of Happiness on Man, it is evident, that certain Duties arise from Man to this Being, in the Performance of which, he must find Happiness. And as Man has Ability to discover the Relation which he stands in to God, God must will that he discover this Relation, and that he perform towards him those Duties which arise from it.

It is true, God is not like Man, to receive Damage if we pay him not that which belongs to him ; but still it is Man's Duty to render to God  
that



that which is due to him, whether the withholding it be Injury, or not. And,

1. It is Man's Duty to God, to acknowledge with all Humility, the Power, Wisdom, and Goodness, by which he was form'd.

2. To render Thanks to the divine Majesty for his Existence, his Preservation, and his Capacity for Happiness; for all that he possesses that is desirable and good.

3. As the Supreme Being is the most powerful of all Beings, it is Man's Duty to fear him more than all other Beings; that is, to more fear to offend him.

4. As all Things are under the Disposal of Providence, it is Man's Duty to God to be patient under whatever befalls him, and never to repine at the Dispensations of the most High.

5. To trust in God. As God always knows what is best for us, as he constantly wills our Happiness, and has Power to execute what he wills, we are to trust that he will deliver us, when a Deliverance is best for us.

6. To endeavour to know his Will. As the divine Will is that Rule by which we must act, if we would obtain Happiness, we ought to endeavour after a Knowledge of it, which is to be obtain'd by a Consideration of his Attributes.

7. To perform his Will. Better is it not to know the divine Will, than to know it, and not conform to it. To know the divine Will, and not to conform to it, is setting up to be wiser than God, and is Rebellion against him.

8. As

8. As Man is an Offender before God, as he is conscious of not always conforming to his Will, it is his Duty to acknowledge himself to be such, and to beg of God to pardon him.

9. To love God. When we have Pleasure in the Happiness of a Being, we are said to love him.

If we have Pleasure in the Happiness of a Being, or if we love a Being, his Pleasure is a Motive of Action to us.

A great Motive to us to love a Being, or have Pleasure in his Happiness, is, Kindnesses received; and the Love generally arises in Proportion to the apprehended Kindnesses.

When then we consider the Supreme Being as the Author and Fountain of our Existence, and of all that we possess that is desirable and good, we are justly excited to love him, that is, to have Pleasure when his Will is conform'd to.

This I apprehend is loving of God, the Consequence of which Love is, that his Will is a Motive of Action to us separate from a Consideration of our own Interest.

And surely if any Kindnesses can excite Love, excite us to take Pleasure when the Will of a Being is conform'd to; those which we have receiv'd from the divine Being will excite it.

10. It is our Duty to God to worship him.

As we are to acknowledge God's Attributes, and our Dependency on him; to thank him for what we possess, and to implore his Pardon for our Offences against him; and as our Bodies, as

well as Souls, are his; it is proper that these Duties be accompanied with such bodily Postures, as Nature, or Custom, have made expressive of the Dispositions of our Minds. Thus kneeling is the Posture of a Suppliant; we ought then to fall on our Knees when we approach the great God of Heaven.

11. To worship him in publick. When we have discovered the Being and Attributes of God, and the Relation which we stand in to him, we ought publickly to testify to others that we acknowledge him as our God. This is Duty to Men as well as God, that they may be excited also to worship him.

12. To set apart some particular Time for his Service. As all our Time, that is, our whole Lives, are given us by him, it is our Duty to set apart some Portion of them for his Worship.

Lastly, It is Man's Duty to God to resemble him in his Attribute of Goodness, and to be a good Being. In what better State could a Being be form'd, than to have Powers given him by which he is capable of resembling his Maker? How undutiful, then, is Man to God, how ungrateful, how unworthy of what he possesses, if he does not employ them to this End?

All these are immediate Duties from Man to God; which arise from that Relation which he stands in to him. And as God gives Man Powers to discover the Relation which he stands in to himself, so must he will that he acts agreeable

able to it; and make Happiness the Consequence.

Thus I have traced out the Heads of that Conduct of Man by which he is to obtain Happiness; that is, I have shew'd what Actions of Man are agreeable to the Belief of an eternal, intelligent, powerful, wise, good, just, &c. Being. And if there is really such a Being, who is the Author of Man's Existence, it is Demonstration that the Practice which I have been describing, is his Way to Happiness.

I call this Practice natural Religion, or Virtue.

And a contrary Behaviour, Vice.

And tho' that Part of our Duty which relates to ourselves, and other created Beings, is called Morality,

And that Part of it which immediately relates to God, is Piety, or is natural Religion properly so call'd; yet when we consider all our Duties as the Will of God, and that every Breach of Morality is Opposition to him, this also is a Part of natural Religion.

And now having, from the Attributes of God, traced out Man's Way to Happiness; having shewn what must be the Means to it, if God is just, and good, I proceed farther, and would examine how far Happiness is the Effect of the Practice which I have been describing, by the Order and Constitution of Things.

And 1st, We find that keeping our Powers unimpair'd, is a Means to Health and Cheerfulness, and the great Pleasures of Thinking and

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Reasoning. And that on the contrary, all Intemperance produces Pain.

2. We find that there is a great natural Pleasure in the Esteem of Men; and this Pleasure Virtue secures to us; it not being in the Power of Man to disesteem Virtue, however he may be tempted to forsake it. On the other Side, Vice is sure to meet with Contempt; a Thing terrible to Man.

3. Doing no Injury to any, rendering to all their Dues, and doing Good, is a natural Means to the good Offices and Friendship of Men; and Self-love makes the just, the benevolent, the good, be beloved.

4. A Consciousness of Virtue fills us with pleasant Reflections, a Consciousness of Vice with painful ones. It is not in the Power of Man, as has been observed, to prefer Vice to Virtue, however he may be tempted to embrace the former, and abandon the latter. When, then, the Pleasure which invited to Vice ceases, and Man looks back on his past Conduct, a Consciousness that he has abused his Powers, acted unworthy of his Nature, and below other Beings, must fill him with Shame, Remorse, and Anguish. On the other Side, a Remembrance of Virtue, a Consciousness of having acted right, worthily, and according to the Dignity of his Nature, must give him Pleasure inexpressible.

5. We find ourselves capable of great Pleasure or Pain from Expectation; we hope, and fear, and apprehend Good or Evil before it arrives; and this Hope or Fear of Good and Evil,

vil, is very much in Proportion to a Consciousness of deserving it. When, then, we are conscious that we have acted a righteous and a good Part; that we have done ill to no Man; and extended our Goodness to many; that we have join'd with our Maker in his great Work of doing Good, and that we resemble him, we are full of just Confidence and Expectation of Good from God and Man; we have a joyful Hope and Expectation of Happiness.

On the other Side, when we have injur'd and oppress'd; been malevolent, tyrannical, and unjust, and shut our Ears to the Cries of the Needy, we are full of Fear and Dread of Evil; have Shame and Anguish at looking backward, and Horror at looking forward.

We find then that the Practice which I have been describing, the Practice of Virtue, is naturally productive of Happiness.

But tho' thus it is according to the Constitution of Things, yet many are the Facts on the other Side; and frequently do we see

The Good and Evil, just and unjust, involved in the same Calamity; and no Man knoweth the one from the other, by that which befalleth them here.

Evil Men raise themselves to Prosperity, by Injustice, Cruelty, and Oppression.

They rise even upon the Miseries of the Good, and the Good perish by the Evil.

These are frequent Facts, and they put us upon searching farther into the Dispensations of God: For this we are never to depart from,  
that

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that by Righteousness and Goodness shall Man obtain Happiness. This is as certain as the Attributes of God.

And we find, that if Virtue does not procure us Happiness in this World; if righteous and good Men are not happy; nor so in Proportion to their Desert; that this Life is not, cannot be Man's best and final State; but that he shall exist after the Dissolution of his Body, in order to future Happiness.

The Question then is, whether Happiness is always the Effect of Virtue in this World? Whether Happiness is constantly in Proportion to Righteousness and Goodness? If it is, then the Point, which I have been labouring, is yielded; Virtue is the Way to Happiness. If it is not, if Misery is sometimes the Portion of the Righteous and Good, a Fact few will dispute, then we are sure that Happiness is behind; that Man shall exist in a future State, when his present Sufferings shall be follow'd with great Felicity.

If Virtue has not its Effect in this World, we are sure that it shall have it; sure as we are that God is just and good, and always acts according to Reason, and a Fitness of Things.

And if Existence is only prolong'd to Man, and the Righteous and Good cease from suffering, and the Evil from oppressing, the former will be happy in their own Reflexions, and the latter miserable in theirs, without any positive Rewards or Punishments from God; tho' that

there shall be Rewards and Punishments from him, is rational to expect.

As then God always wills Happiness to his Creatures, and acts according to Reason, and a Fitness of Things; has made Man capable of obtaining Happiness; as Virtue is the Way to Happiness; as the Virtuous are not always happy in this World, nor so in Proportion to their Virtue; it follows, that their Existence shall be prolong'd after the Dissolution of their Bodies, in order to their future Happiness.

We prove then Man's future Existence, from the Attributes of God, and the Miseries which often attend righteous and good Men in this World.

And as we prove Man's future Existence from the before-mention'd Particulars, so from a Consideration of the Nature and Powers of Man, we find it reasonable to expect it.

We cannot apprehend that Reasoning and Thinking are Properties of Matter, but of a different and superior Substance, having great Experience of the Properties of Matter, and never finding that it had any of this Sort; nay, as far as we know any Thing of Matter, it is utterly incapable of such Powers and Properties.

And if Reasoning and Thinking are not Properties of Matter, but of a different and superior Substance, then the Dissolution of a certain Composition of Matter, the ceasing to exist of the Body of Man, is no Reason why a different and superior Substance should cease to exist.



If two Substances have the same Nature, Powers, and Properties, the Dissolution of the one gives us Reason to expect the Dissolution of the other; but if they have different Natures, Powers, and Properties, we have no Reason to apprehend that that which happens to the one, will also to the other. Nay, we have Reason to expect the contrary.

Lastly, It seems absurd to suppose that such Powers as Man is possess'd of, his Powers of Reasoning, Thinking, Judging, &c. should be given for so short a Time as the Life of Man, and to so little Purpose as only to procure a transient Pleasure.

It is rational then to expect Man's future Existence, from a Consideration of his Nature and Powers: But from the Goodness and Justice of God we depend on it; we depend that God will proportion Happiness to Virtue, and that the Judge of all the Earth will do right.

And now having from the Attributes of God proved that Man must be capable of obtaining Happiness, and that Virtue is the Means by which this Happiness is to be obtain'd; I proceed a Step farther, and prove that it shall be everlasting.

And I prove it from God's Goodness and Power.

God always wills Happiness to his Creatures.

Has Power to continue in Existence the Beings whom he has form'd.

Then he will always continue Existence to the Happy; and those who by a Right Use of their  
Powers

Powers have obtain'd Happiness, shall enjoy it to all Eternity.

Whether then the Virtuous obtain Happiness on this, or the other Side of the Grave, the Difference is but of small Importance to them; this is certain, they shall obtain it; and when it is obtain'd, they shall enjoy it to all Eternity.

Everlasting Happiness to the Righteous and Good, is a Consequence of God's Justice, Goodness and Power. If it is asked, Who is equal to the Task which I have set? Where is the Man who lives and falls not short of his Duty? I answer, God is no hard Taskmaster; he knew what we should be capable of before he form'd us; saw our necessary Failings and Imperfections, and would not have form'd us if we had not been capable of obtaining Happiness, notwithstanding these Failings and Imperfections. These then are not a Bar to our Happiness.

But so far as Man wilfully shuts his Eyes against his Duty; so far as he yields to present Pleasure in Opposition to Reason; so far as he is unjust, cruel, and tyrannical, a Spreader of Unhappiness; so far as he is malevolent, a Disposition hateful to God, and detested by him; that is, so far as he is an evil Being; so far, for any thing that I can find to the contrary, he must take the Consequence, and fall short of Happiness.

The most rational Method, after such Behaviour, most certainly is to be very sorry, and to ask God pardon for the Offence against him; and to be very diligent for the future;

and we hope God will forgive it; but still we cannot say that this Man is in the same Condition with him who has always walk'd uprightly. God may forgive him, but he hardly will approve of himself.



## S E C T. VIII.

*Enquiry the third, After a Revelation.*

**I**S it rational to expect that God will reveal himself?

And this Enquiry is highly proper, previous to an Enquiry into the Evidence of a pretended Revelation; for, if it is not agreeable to the Attributes of God for him to reveal himself, a farther Search will be to no Purpose.

Now if we consider the Attributes of God abstractedly, there arises no Argument against a Revelation; and if it was not unworthy the divine Being to create, it appears not to be unworthy of him to direct, take care of, and govern.

Is there any Objection against a Revelation from a Consideration of the Nature of Man? Surely there appears none; we find Mankind, notwithstanding their Reason, often falling short of Happiness; ignorant of natural Duties, and of the Means to Happiness, or which is worse, and of much more fatal Consequence to them, not practising what they know.

And,

*Enquiry after a Revelation.* 51

And 1<sup>st</sup>, We find great Part of Mankind ignorant of several natural Duties, and of the Means to Happiness.

If we consider Mankind in the Beginning just come out of the Hands of their Maker, we shall find them (unless divinely instructed) entirely ignorant of almost all natural Duties, and of the Means to Happiness; without Reason to guide them, (there being no Reasoning before Experience) nor any Motives to act by but present Pain and Pleasure.

They must indifferently take either Good or Evil, having no Ideas or Notions of either, nor Instincts to direct them to what alone was good for them, nor to the Quantities, which would conduce to Health and Life.

They must learn Temperance by Excess; Truth by Error; and to search after the greatest Good, by experiencing that certain Degrees, or Kinds of present Pleasure produce Pain.

Such must be the Condition of Mankind at first, if left to themselves without a Revelation; their first Guides would be Pain and Pleasure, and these very insufficient ones; they could not lead them to all the Happiness which they were naturally capable of, nor so much as secure them from taking things immediately destructive to them.

2. After Mankind has had the Experience of their Forefathers to build their Conduct on, after some Knowledge has been transmitted to them from others, yet we find great Numbers not able by their own Powers to find out all

52 *Enquiry after a Revelation.*

natural Duties, and very few the great Motive (Eternal Happiness) to the Performance of them.

And 1<sup>st</sup>, Some want natural Abilities to discover all natural Duties. It is true, after Mankind has subsisted some Time, the Duties of Morality must lye obvious to very mean Capacities, if they will faithfully enquire after them; but so will not our immediate Duties to God; Fear may cause us to mistake the Deity, and consequently not to worship him in a Manner suitable to his Nature and Attributes.

2. Many that have Ability, yet want Opportunity to trace out all their natural Duties, and the Obligations to them. Great Part of Mankind are necessitated to get their Bread by the Sweat of their Brows, and have not Leisure to search after all that Knowledge which may be beneficial to them.

3. Multitudes are kept from Truth by the Craft of interested Deceivers. Such is the Misfortune of Mankind, that they have not been left to follow the Dictates of their own Reason, but have been led backward from Truth.

Religion in many Ages and Nations has been calculated to serve some private Views, and then imposed on Mankind as Divine. Morality has been corrupted, and the grossest Absurdities placed in its Room. This has been a most pernicious Blow to natural Religion, and to our Discovery of Truth by Reason.

It is evident then that if all Mankind have entirely been left to themselves without a Revelation, particularly if God did not reveal himself

self to Mankind as soon as he had form'd them, some Part of them must have been ignorant of several natural Duties, and consequently must have fallen short of Happiness which they are naturally capable of.

It follows then, as there is no Objection against a Revelation from the Attributes of God consider'd abstractedly, so there is none from a Consideration of the Nature of Man; on the contrary, Instruction in our natural Duties, seems highly beneficial to Man, and on that Account from the divine Goodness we hope for it.

Particularly we hope, and trust, that God when he form'd Mankind did not leave them to grope in the Dark, in a worse Condition than the Brutes, who have Instincts to guide them to what alone is good for them, and never to Excesses in it; we hope that divine Wisdom supply'd Man's Want of Experience, and taught them their Way to Happiness.

And we will farther hope, that God who sees the many constant Impediments on Mankind to the Discovery of all their natural Duties; the Weaknesses of their Natures; the Necessities upon them to get their Bread by Labour; and the Prejudices which they lye under from the Impositions of Deceivers; either has interposed, or will interpose to guide them to Truth.

2. As Mankind often fail in another Particular, a Particular where a Failure is of much more fatal Consequence to them than a Want of Knowledge of their Duty, that is, in the Practice of it, we also in this Case hope for divine Assistance. If

## 54 *Enquiry after a Revelation.*

If Man falls short in the Knowledge of his Duty, he loses a Happiness which he is naturally capable of, if in the Practice of what he knows, he exposes himself to the divine Displeasure, and to his own severe Reflexions lasting as his Existence. In the first Case he loses Happiness, in the second he procures to himself Misery.

As then it does not appear disagreeable to the Attributes of God for him to instruct Mankind in their natural Duties, neither does it to assist them in the Performance of them; to help them in a Case where a Failure is of most fatal Consequence to them.

Possibly God may make farther Manifestations of himself to faster bind Mankind to their Duty; he may give new Motives to our Obedience, find Means which may help to be a Security of our Virtue; or contrive Methods for our Happiness, which humane Reason cannot invent.

We cannot say God cannot, or will not do this or more; and as it does not appear unsuitable to his Nature for him to assist us, we from his Goodness hope that he will do it.

And now having found that a Revelation does not appear unsuitable to the Attributes of God, or Nature of Man; we should next proceed to examine into the Evidences of a pretended one, namely the Christian Religion, but first think it proper to consider what has been lately delivered by a considerable Writer, which if true, will overthrow what I have been advancing under the two last Particulars, which was,

That

That if Mankind are entirely left to themselves without a Revelation, great Part of them must be ignorant of several Duties, and consequently fall short of Happiness which they are naturally capable of; and that it appears agreeable to the Attributes of God for him to instruct them in their natural Duties.

And, that there is no Argument from the Attributes of God, or Nature of Man, why God should not reveal to Mankind Truths not discoverable by humane Reason.

The Sum of what this Gentleman has advanced that seems to affect my Argument, follows.

That God has from \* the Beginning given Mankind some *Rule, Law or Religion*, in the Observation of which they must obtain Happiness, or be acceptable to him.

That he has given all Men, at all Times, sufficient Means to know this *Rule, Law or Religion*.

That the *Law, Rule or Religion* cannot be more extensive than the Means of knowing it.

That the only Means of knowing this *Rule, Law or Religion* which has been given to all Men, is the Use of those Faculties by which they are distinguished from Brutes; and that the using these after the best Manner they can, must answer the End for which God gave them, and justify their Conduct.

That this *Law, Rule or Religion* is perfect.

That nothing can be added to it.

Now then as that only is a Perfect *Law, Rule,*

\* Christianit; as Old as the Creation, Ch. 1. 1a, 3, 4, 5.



or *Religion* which includes all the Means to Happiness, (for a *Law, Rule, or Religion*, which does not include all the Means to Happiness is manifestly Imperfect, and may have something added to it by God, namely Means to more or greater Happiness, it being suitable to his Attributes to afford us Means to all possible Happinesses) according to this Gentleman (since the *Law* cannot be more extensive than the Means of knowing it) every Man can by the Use of those Faculties by which he is distinguish'd from the Brutes, obtain all the Happiness which he is naturally capable of, or which any Man is naturally capable of, and the *perfect Law, Rule or Religion*, includes nothing which every Man cannot perform.

And as the *Law, Rule or Religion*, measured by the natural Faculties of all Men, includes all the Means to Happiness, it follows that God will not reveal to Mankind \* any natural Duties which all Men by their Reason cannot discover to be such; nor Truths undiscoverable by humane Reason.

In Answer then to this Gentleman, I say, that the *Law, Rule or Religion* measured by the Use which every Man is capable of making of those

\* This first Conclusion, *that God will not reveal to Mankind any natural Duties which all Men by their Reason cannot discover to be such*, is not this Gentleman's: He supposes God may reveal to Mankind all natural Duties; but such a Supposal is inconsistent with the Perfection of the *Law, Rule or Religion*, given to all Mankind; and if the *Law, &c.* given to all Mankind is perfect, and can have nothing added to it, then God cannot reveal to Mankind any natural Duties not discoverable by the Reason of all Men.

Faculties by which he is distinguish'd from Brutes; cannot be a *perfect Law, Rule, or Religion,* or secure to every Man all the Happiness he is naturally capable of, or which some Men are naturally capable of, unless we give up the Attributes of God.

For if the Creator of Man is a just, good, and powerful Being, and a Being who, in all his Actings with his Creatures, acts according to Reason, and a Fitness of Things, it demonstratively follows, that every Man has several Duties to himself, to God, and to Mankind, from the Performance of each of which must arise Happiness; that every Act of Temperance, Righteousness, Goodness, Piety, produces Happiness; that it recommends to God's Favour, and secures to us pleasant Reflexions lasting as our Existence.

It follows then, that the more our Duties are known and practis'd, the greater is our Happiness; and that where there is Ignorance of the Relation which we stand in to God, and Man, and of the Duties arising from thence; where there is not Knowledge to lead to all Actions of Temperance, Righteousness, Goodness, Piety, there must be a falling short of Happiness; at least of that Happiness which proceeds from a Reflexion on our Actions.

And, as it is undoubted Fact that some Men cannot by the Use of their natural Faculties obtain equal Knowledge of natural Duties, of Temperance, Righteousness, Goodness, Piety, with others, nor what themselves are capable of obtaining with Instruction, it follows, that they  
I cannot

cannot by the Use of their Faculties obtain equal Happiness with others, nor what themselves are naturally capable of obtaining.

If it is said, that what is the Duty of some Men, is not the Duty of others, it being impossible that can be any Man's Duty, which he has not Opportunity of knowing to be such; \* but that *all have Knowledge sufficient for the Circumstances they are in.*

I answer, One of the Points I insist on is, that some Men, on account of greater Knowledge than others, have more Duties; but then I also insist, that if they have more Duties, they have a greater Capacity for Happiness, since that can be no Duty which does not produce Happiness.

All, in the Circumstances they are in, shall be capable of some Degree of Happiness; and no Man shall ever suffer, that is, receive Punishment, for not doing that which he had not Power to do: But all Men cannot by the Use of their Faculties obtain equal Happiness with others, it being impossible for those who never had it in their Thoughts to do certain Actions, to have all that Pleasure which naturally and necessarily attends the Performance of them.

It is evident then, that if the Creator of Man is a just, good, and powerful Being, and a Being who in all his Actings with his Creatures, acts according to Reason, and a Fitness of Things, that the *Law, Rule, or Religion* mer-

\* Christianity as old as Creation, *ch.* 1. *p.* 5.

jur'd by the Use which all Men are capable of making of those Faculties, by which they are distinguish'd from the Brutes, and which includes nothing which every Man with the meanest Capacity, and fewest Opportunities, cannot discover to be a Duty, (since the Law cannot be more extensive than the Means of knowing it) is a very imperfect *Law, Rule, or Religion.*

If yet the Justice of God should this Way be impeach'd for not letting all Men have equal Opportunities or Capacities for Happiness; for so constituting Things that some Men by the Use of their natural Powers cannot obtain that Happiness, which others are capable of obtaining by the Use of theirs, nor what themselves are capable of obtaining by Instruction: I return, it is undoubtedly certain, and a Consequence of God's Attributes, that he has constituted Things in the best possible Manner for the Good of the whole; but where Generations of Beings exist who are free Agents, there must be different Opportunities or Capacities for Happiness, since Vice naturally impairs the Powers and Faculties of Beings. And where there is not free Agency, there can be but a small Capacity for Happiness. And all that Happiness which arises to Man from God's Favour, and his own Reflexion on his Actions, proceeds from his being a free Agent.

We find then, upon a Review of our Argument, that all Mankind cannot by the Use of those Faculties which distinguish them from

Brutes, obtain all that Happiness which they are naturally capable of, and that all have not equal Opportunities or Capacities for Happiness, and consequently, that the *Law, Rule, or Religion*, measured by the Use which every Man is capable of making of his Faculties, is an imperfect Law, Rule, or Religion; and that, as it is imperfect, it is suitable to the Attributes of God for him to add to it, and to reveal to Mankind all those natural Duties from the Practice of which they may obtain Happiness.

This Gentleman's Argument then, not overthrowing what I advanced in the first Place; proceed we to see how far it affects what I deliver'd in the second, which is,

That it does not appear disagreeable to the Attributes of God, for him to reveal to Mankind Truths not discoverable by humane Reason.

The Reason given by him why God will not reveal to Man any such Truths, is, because the *Rule, Law, or Religion*, which God has at all Times given to all Men, and is discoverable by the Use of those Faculties by which they are distinguish'd from Brutes, is *perfect*.

But we have proved that this *Rule, Law, or Religion*, is very imperfect; and that it does not include all the Means to Happiness.

There is, then, from hence, no Manner of Proof that God will not reveal to Mankind Truths not discoverable by humane Reason.

But perhaps it will be said, that the *Law, Rule, or Religion*, discoverable by humane Reason, though not by the Reason of every Man, is *perfect*; that this includes all the Means to Happiness, and can have nothing added to it.

But then I would ask the Proof of such an Assertion, and what Reason we have to think that this is a perfect *Law, Rule, or Religion*.

The Reason why the *Law, Rule, or Religion* given to all Men, is *perfect*, will not prove that that which is only given to a few, is *perfect*.

And if it is suitable to the Attributes of God for him to reveal Truths which some Men by their Reason cannot discover, (as we have proved it is, and it will follow if we allow that God can at all reveal himself) why is it not suitable to his Attributes to reveal Truths which no Men by their Reason can discover? We cannot possibly say God cannot, or will not do this.

Having, then, no Manner of Proof that this is a perfect *Law, Rule, or Religion*, we cannot conclude it to be such, and consequently cannot conclude that God will not reveal to Mankind Truths not discoverable by humane Reason, but must wait to see whether he does or not.

That an Observation of this Law will give us a high Degree of Happiness, is certain; but whether it is perfect, or imperfect, whether it does, or does not include all the Means to Happiness, we cannot possibly say, having no Evidence on either Side *a priori*.

## 62 *Enquiry after a Revelation.*

God may, for any Thing appears to the contrary, make Discoveries to Man that humane Reason could not have attained to, from whence may arise new Duties, and an Increase of Happiness; as also he may, seeing our Deviation from Reason, and the fatal Consequences of it to us, find Methods to engage us to our Duty, which Man could not have thought of; and he may give new Motives to our Obedience, or direct us to Means which may help to be a Security of our Virtue.

From a Remembrance then of our own Failings, and God's Goodness, we are inclin'd to hope for Assistance; but the Method of his assisting us it is impossible to discover.

Finding then, that the *Law, Rule, or Religion*, discoverable by the natural Faculties of all Men, is an imperfect *Law, Rule, or Religion*, that it does not include all the Means to Happiness;

And no Proof being offer'd why the *Law, Rule, or Religion*, discoverable by humane Reason, though not by the Reason of every Man, is a *perfect Law, Rule, or Religion*, it follows, that what this ingenious Gentleman has offer'd, will not overthrow what I advanced, which was,

That it does not appear disagreeable to the Attributes of God for him to reveal to Mankind their natural Duties; nor, to assist them in the Performance of them, or reveal to them Truths not discoverable by humane Reason.

Proceed

Proceed we then, as we were going, to examine into the Christian Religion, and the Evidence of it.

Always remembering in our Search, a Caution which we set out with, and that is, not to receive any Thing as God's Word, which is not agreeable to his Nature or Attributes, whatever be the pretended Evidences of it.

Particularly, even our own Senses are to be distrusted when the Attributes of God are contradicted: For not these are so good Evidences to us of a transient Act, or Appearance of Things, as they are of God's Goodness, they being constant Evidences of this during our whole Existence.



S E C T. IX.

*Enquiry the fourth.*

**W**HAT Evidence have we that the Christian Religion is a divine Revelation?

And in the first Place, is it worthy of God, and suitable to his Nature, and agreeable to that Scheme of natural Religion which we have already founded on the Attributes of the Deity? If it fails here, if it contradicts the Attributes, we are not to receive it.

And



## 64 *Enquiry into the Evidence*

And in our Examination of this Point, we are to take in the whole Christian Scheme. And as the Christian Religion is founded upon one antecedent to it, namely, the Religion of the *Jews*, which it acknowledges to be divine, this also must be brought to the Test.

And here we find, according to this whole Religion, (considering both as making one) that Man was form'd happy, placed in a Seat of Felicity, yet being a free Agent liable to lose his Happiness.

And that God did not leave him to himself, but as soon as he had form'd him, kindly let him know the Terms on which he stood, how he would forfeit, and how preserve his Happiness.

That, notwithstanding Man had divine Instruction, yet he abused his Liberty, and suffer'd the Consequence. He sinn'd, and was excluded from the Seat of his Felicity, and consequently all Mankind was excluded from it with him.

That God did not suffer Mankind to remain in this Condition, to spend a few Years here in Labour and Sorrow, and then to return to the Earth from whence they were taken, but having lost their Happiness on Earth, he made them capable of Happiness in the Heavens.

And to the End they might not mistake their Duty, and fall short of Happiness, God himself vouchsafed to instruct them; he gave them divine Precepts; he sent to them Preachers of Righteousness; he warned them by Punishments on the Wicked, and by Deliverances of the Good; he sayed a few righteous Persons when  
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he destroyed the rest of the World; he gave a Law from Heaven writ on Tables of Stone, wherein was expressed our Duty to God and Man; and he sent a divine Person, his Son; to assume our Nature, and set us a perfect Example. And he accepts his perfect, for our imperfect Righteousness, provided we sincerely endeavour to do our Duty, and heartily repent of all our Offences against him.

Here is a Method for our Happiness, which human Reason could not have contrived, but worthy of the divine Being, and suitable to his Attributes. God will forgive us our Offences against him, for the Sake of the perfect Righteousness of *Jesus Christ*, provided we sincerely repent of them, and endeavour to do our Duty.

We before, from the divine Goodness, hop'd for Pardon, but Reason could give us no Assurances of it.

And to enable us to imitate the perfect Example of this our Saviour, he gave us a Rule for our Conduct, agreeable to what we had before discover'd from the Attributes, and to which if we faithfully attend, we cannot be mistaken in our Duty.

1. With regard to our selves, we are commanded to be temperate, sober, and chaste; *every one to possess \* his Vessel in Sanctification and Honour, and to flee youthful Lusts, which war against the Soul.*

\* 1 Thess. iv. 4.

2. With regard to others, we are commanded to invade the Rights of no Man; to *render<sup>a</sup> to all their Dues*; are shown what are those Dues; and have a strait Rule given us, whereby to measure our Actions to all Mankind; and that is, to do *to them<sup>b</sup> as we would they should do to us*.

And we are not only required to do no Injury, and to render unto all their Dues, but we are also commanded to do Good; told, that if we would be Disciples of our Master, and inherit the Blessing, we must be *merciful, kind, tender-hearted, forbearing one another, forgiving<sup>c</sup> one another, even as God for Christ's Sake has forgiven us*; that, if we would be set at the Right Hand of our Saviour when he judges all Men, we must *feed the Hungry<sup>d</sup>, cloath the Naked, visit the Sick, comfort the Fatherless, the Stranger, and the Widow*; that if we would have *Treasure in Heaven*, we must give to the *Poor*; and if we would be *Children of the most High*, we must resemble him who does Good to all, and maketh his *<sup>e</sup> Sun rise on the Evil, and the Good, and sendeth Rain on the Just and the Unjust*.

And we are assur'd that unless the Motive to all our Charity be pure Benevolence, a sincere Delight in the Happiness of our Fellow Creatures, *not even our<sup>f</sup> whole Substance given to feed the Poor, will profit us any Thing*.

<sup>a</sup> Rom. xiii. 17.

<sup>b</sup> Mat. vii. 12.

<sup>c</sup> Eph. iv. 22, 23.

<sup>d</sup> Mat. xxv. 34. to the End.

<sup>e</sup> Mat. v. 45.

<sup>f</sup> 1 Cor. xiii.

3. In this Religion the Attributes of the Deity which we had discover'd by Reason, are declar'd to us, and our Duty to God is delivered agreeable to these Attributes.

Here God is described an *eternal* <sup>g</sup>, *unchangeable* <sup>h</sup>, *almighty* <sup>i</sup>, *omnipresent* <sup>k</sup>, *omniscient* <sup>l</sup>, *wise* <sup>m</sup>, *holy* <sup>n</sup>, *just* <sup>o</sup>, *good* <sup>p</sup> Being; we are commanded to *worship*, to *obey*, to *fear*, and to *love* him, and at all Times to trust in him. And we are instructed in the Times and Manner in which he will be worshipp'd.

Further, We have in this Religion Means for the Security of our Virtue.

A Sabbath, or one Day in seven, is appointed wherein we are to rest from our Labour, and remember God's Goodness in creating, and afterwards his Goodness in both creating and redeeming us.

Sacrifices and Ordinances are instituted under the *Jewish* Dispensation, by which that People were to be reminded of their Imperfections, their Sins, and their Dependency on the divine Being; and Baptism, and the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper under the *Christian*, in the one of which we are solemnly initiated into our Religion, made Members of *Christ's* Church; and in the other we commemorate the Love of our

<sup>g</sup> Deut. xxviii. 27.      <sup>h</sup> Mat. iii. 6. James i. 17.      <sup>i</sup> Gen. xvii. 1. xxviii. 3. xxxv. 11, &c.      <sup>k</sup> Psalm cxxxix. Prov v. 21. xv. 3. Heb. iv. 13, &c.      <sup>l</sup> Job xlii. 2. Psalm cxxxix, &c.      <sup>m</sup> Psalm cxlvii. 5. Rom xi. 33.      <sup>n</sup> If. lvii. 15. Psalm xcix. 3. & ciii. 1. & cxlv. 21, &c. cxi. 9. & Rev. xlix.      <sup>o</sup> If xlv. 21. Zeph. iii. 5. Deut. xvi. 18. Prov. xvi. 11. Psalm lxxxix. 14.      <sup>p</sup> 1 Chron. xvi. 34. Ezra iii. 11. Psalm c. 5. cvi. 1. cvii. 1.

Saviour, testify our selves to be his Disciples, receive Pardon of our Sins, and repeat our Professions of conforming to his Laws.

Lastly, We are assured that the Soul of Man, his thinking Part, never dies, and that eternal Misery will be the Portion of Vice, as well as eternal Happiness of Virtue; that the *Unclean*, the *Extortioners*, and *Unjust\**, those who *shut their Ears to the Cries of the Nedy*, shall go away into everlasting Misery, but the *Righteous into Life eternal* †.

From a Consideration of the Nature of the Soul of Man, its Powers, and Properties, we found it reasonable to conclude it not material, but of a Substance distinct from, superior to, and more durable than the Body of Man; and that it should be form'd for perpetual Existence, is agreeable to Reason; and if so, then it follows, that when it is conscious that it has abus'd its Powers, acted unsuitably to its Nature, and below other Beings, it will have painful Reflections during its Existence.

This Religion, then, appearing worthy of God, and suitable to his Nature, the next Question is, What is the Evidence of it? For it will not follow that because it is worthy of God, it is his Revelation, but it will follow, that it is rational for us to proceed in our Enquiry.

We proceed then, to an Examination of the Evidence of the Christian Religion, and in

\* Gal. v. 19, 20, 21.

† Mat. xxv. 46.

order to judge of it, think it first proper to consider what kind of Evidence is to be expected; and supposing God would reveal himself, what Proof may we rationally expect him to give us of such a Revelation?

This is certain, if the Revelation is for the Benefit of all Mankind, and ought to be received as Truth by all those to whom it is communicated, the Evidence of it should be sufficient to determine the rational Assent of all those to whom it is communicated, as well those who live after, as at the Time when such a Revelation is given. The Christian Religion, then, being of this Sort, (for the Benefit of all Mankind, and requiring Belief from all those to whom it is communicated) it ought to have such an Evidence, as is sufficient to determine the rational Assent of all Men.

Now then, we can think of no Evidence so certain to all Mankind, as that which is given in the Works of Nature; and it is reasonable to expect that the supreme Being should give Mankind Evidence of his Will, after the same Manner as he gave them Evidence of his Existence and Attributes, that is, in his Works. And as he led us to a Knowledge of his Being, or gave us Evidence of his Being, by the Works of Nature; so we may justly expect he would give us Evidence of his Will in the same Works, and by shewing his Power in Nature. And how is it that the supreme Being can give us Evidence of his Will in the Works of Nature? Why, as the Existence of Things, and the constant, regular,  
uniform

uniform Laws by which Bodies move or rest, are a Proof of an *eternal, intelligent, &c.* Being; so a Change in these Laws would be an Evidence of his Will; and as no Being can change his Laws, he being sole Lord of Nature, without his Consent, and as he cannot consent they should be chang'd to give Evidence to Falshood, (for that would be to act in Opposition to his own Will) it follows, that a Change in these Laws is full Evidence that what is deliver'd, came from him.

We call a Change in the Laws of Nature, a Miracle.

Now then, as it is rational to expect this Evidence of a Revelation, so we find this is the Evidence pretended by those who would press on us the Christian Religion: We are then to examine, whether the Christian Religion has this Evidence or not. And in this Search we ought to be very careful, it being certain that if this is the Evidence to be expected, this is the Evidence that Counterfeits will pretend to be in Possession of.

In order then, to find whether the Laws of Nature were chang'd at the Promulgation of the Christian Religion, we are to examine,

1. Whether the pretended Facts are Changes in the Laws of Nature.

2. Whether there really ever were such Facts.

Now to know whether the pretended Facts are really Changes in the Laws of Nature, we must explain what we mean by the *Laws of Nature*.

That

That constant, regular, uniform Way, by which Bodies are determin'd to Motion or Rest, and the constant, regular Connexions betwixt certain known Causes and Effects, we call Laws of Nature. And when certain Bodies at Rest, move without any external Force; when certain Bodies in Motion, move in a different Manner from what they were ever known to move; when certain known Causes produce different Effects, from what they have been ever known to produce; different from what themselves can produce the next Moment, and different from what all others of a like Nature with themselves ever can produce; then we may justly and properly say that the Laws of Nature are chang'd; that something is effected which could not be effected naturally.

A Miracle then being a Change in the Laws of Nature, in order to know that there is really a Miracle, 'tis necessary first to know the Laws of Nature; and it is impossible to prove the Laws of Nature are chang'd, unless we first know what are these Laws. Particularly, should we see a new Appearance in the Heavens, we could not say that the Laws of Nature were chang'd; we know not all Nature, nor all the Laws or Powers of Bodies; and this might be a constant, regular Effect of a certain Cause, for any Thing we can say to the contrary. And Time may bring us to a Knowledge of the Cause of this Effect, as it has to a Knowledge of the Cause of Eclipses, which have been, and perhaps



haps yet may in some Places be ignorantly reputed Miracles.

It is evident then, that we must be fully acquainted with the constant, regular, uniform Determination of certain Bodies; the constant, regular Connexions betwixt certain known Causes and Effects; the Powers of certain Causes to produce certain Effects, and their natural Inability to produce certain other Effects, before we can say that the Laws of Nature are changed; that there is not a natural Connexion betwixt Cause and Effect, that is, that there is a Miracle.

Those who carry this Matter farther, and say we know not all the Laws of Nature, the Laws and Powers of Bodies, and consequently cannot say that ever the Laws of Nature are chang'd, argue not justly. It is not necessary that I know all the Laws of Nature, nor even all the Laws and Powers of any one Body, nor all the Effects of certain Causes, to say that the Laws of Nature are chang'd. There may be many Powers in Bodies, and even in those which we are most acquainted with, yet undiscovered; and there may be many Effects not known by us, which may proceed from certain Causes: But then all Bodies of the same Nature will be moved by the same Laws, and the same Causes will regularly and constantly produce the same Effects. But when Bodies move contrary to those Laws, by which all Bodies of the same Nature move, and contrary to those by which them-

selves

ſelves have hitherto moved; and when certain known Causes produce new Effects in ſingle Inſtances, and ſuch Effects in which naturally there is no Connexion betwixt Cause and Effect; then we may juſtly ſay that the Laws of Nature are changed. And now having ſeen what is a Change in the Laws of Nature, and that ſuch a Change is the Evidence to be expected of a Revelation, we proceed to examine the pretended Facts, and to ſee whether theſe were Changes in the Laws of Nature.

And no ſooner do we examine, but we find the pretended Facts given in Evidence of the Chriſtian Religion, are of this Sort; and allowing the Facts, they are really Changes in the Laws of Nature.

To inſtance, The Laws of Nature were changed, when the *Sick, Lame, Wither'd, Blind, Deaf, Dumb*, were cured of all thoſe Maladies by the ſpeaking of a Word, by the touching of Clothes, or by an Ointment made of Spittle and Clay; here was no natural Connexion betwixt Cause and Effect, a Word, a Touch, Spittle and Clay will not naturally, by any Power of their own, reſtore Health, Limbs, Eyes.

The Laws of Nature were chang'd, when *Peter* walk'd upon the Sea; the Sea will by no Power of its own ſupport walking Perſons, and in that Inſtance acquired a new Power.

The Laws of Nature were chang'd, when *Jeſus* raiſed *Lazarus* from the Dead by the ſpeaking of a Word; a Word will not natu-  
L rally

rally restore Life, nor do we know any Cause, except the divine Power, equal to that Effect.

The Laws of Nature were chang'd, when *Jesus* shew'd himself alive after his Crucifixion.

The Laws of Nature were chang'd, when Persons spoke Languages they never learnt.

But I need not instance farther; it is very evident, that if there really ever were such Facts as these above-mention'd, they were Changes in the Laws of Nature. We proceed then to the next Thing to be enquired after, which is, What is our Evidence of the Facts?

In the first Place, then, we are to consider, What is the Evidence to be expected? Now a Miracle being a Change in the Laws of Nature, it must be of the Essence of a Miracle, that is to give Evidence, not to be frequent. The Reason is, we know nothing of the Laws of Nature *à priori*; and our whole Knowledge of these Laws must arise from long Observation and Experience, from seeing the constant, regular, uniform Determinations of Bodies, the Powers of certain Causes to produce certain Effects, and the Inability of such Causes to produce certain other Effects. Had we not then a long Experience of the constant regular Determinations of Bodies, Powers of Causes, &c. we could say nothing of a Miracle. And were Interruptions to the Laws of Nature frequent, we could not tell what were the Laws of Nature; and consequently could not say that these Interruptions

tions were Miracles. (By the Way we may remark, that if God would reveal himself to Man soon after he had created him, Miracles would not then be an Evidence to him of a Revelation; and if the supreme Being would early communicate his Mind to Man, he must do it by Vision and immediate Speaking to him. And as this was the Way according to the Christian Scheme, that God did at first communicate his Will to Man, it reflects Credit upon that Scheme.)

It is plain then, that 'tis of the very Essence of a Miracle, that is to give Evidence, not to be frequent; and if so, then historical Evidence is all the Evidence that some Persons can ever have, that there really were any Miracles. The Question then is, whether we have this Evidence? Whether we have Reason to believe that the History of *Jesus* and his Apostles is a true History; that the Persons who relate and bear Testimony to this History, had full Knowledge of what they relate and bear Testimony to. And

I. Were not deceived themselves.

II Were Men of Integrity, and did not deceive others.

In the first Place, if Persons relate and bear Testimony to a History of Facts, and pretend to be themselves present at, Eye-witnesses of, and concern'd in, those Facts, and if the pretended Facts are of such a Nature as to have lasting, visible Effects; then it is Demonstration that such Persons must have full Knowledge

whether there ever were, or were not such Facts, and consequently could not possibly be deceived themselves.

2. If the same Persons have been never known to falsify, or deceive in other Instances; if they have no Blot in their Characters; and to deceive us in this Instance is entirely contrary to their Interest; then we have Reason to think they do not deceive us in it, but faithfully relate what they have Knowledge of.

We are then, in the first Place, to examine whether the Persons who relate and bear Testimony to the History of *Jesus* and his Apostles, pretend to be themselves present at, Eye-witnesses of, and concern'd in, the Facts which they relate, and bear Testimony to, and whether the pretended Facts had such lasting visible Effects, that they could not possibly be mistaken concerning them, nor deceiv'd themselves.

And here we find that these Persons do actually pretend to be themselves present at, concern'd in, and Eye-witnesses of, the Facts which they relate and bear Testimony to; and the pretended Facts had lasting, visible Effects; so that they could not possibly be deceived themselves, and not know whether there ever were, or were not such Facts.

Thus *Matthew* and *John* give us a History of Facts, and pretend to be themselves present at, concern'd in, and Eye-witnesses of, those Facts; and the pretended Facts had lasting, visible Effects; it is evident, then, that these Persons must  
have

have full Knowledge whether there ever were, or were not, such Facts.

Again, two other Historians, called *Mark* and *Luke*, give us the same History; and *Luke* besides, publishes another History of Facts, in which, *Peter, James, John, Paul*, and other Disciples of *Jesus*, were the chief Actors. This Account he publishes, whilst these Persons were yet alive, and must have denied the Facts, if there had been no such, or themselves not Parties in the Imposture.

Further, Tho' *Matthew, Mark, Luke*, and *John*, only were the direct Historians of the Life and Actions of *Jesus* and his Apostles, yet *Peter, James, John*, and *Jude*, according to the Relation of the above-named Historians, were constant Attenders of *Jesus*; and these Persons themselves refer to the related Facts, in their several Epistles to different Churches; and the whole that they write is grounded upon a Supposition of the Facts.

We must reckon, then, as Attesters of the History of *Jesus, Matthew, John, Peter, James, Jude, Mark, Luke*; the five first of which pretend to be themselves present at, Eye-witnesses of, and concern'd in, the Facts which they relate, and bear Testimony to; and Attesters of the History of the Apostles, *Luke, Peter, James, John*, and *Paul*.

And as one Part of the *Christian* History depends on the other Part of it, and *Jesus's* Disciples, according to their own Account of Things, acted by his Authority and Commission,  
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it is evident, that if they did not the Actions which they pretend they did, neither did He the Actions which they ascribe unto him; and if he did not the Actions which they ascribe to him, neither did they the Actions which they pretend they did; but it is impossible for Persons to be deceiv'd in their own Case, and not know whether they really do, or do not make the Lame walk, the Blind see, the Dead come to Life, &c. consequently all these Persons must be grand Cheats if there were no such Facts.

As to the common Objection of Enthusiasm, it can have no Weight here, the Things testify'd by these Persons, being of that Nature, that they could not possibly be deceiv'd concerning them: And though a warm Imagination may be so far impos'd on, as to apprehend Visions and Revelations when there are really no such Things; yet no Persons in their Senses, no Persons who can deliver to the World a consistent Scheme of Morality, can be so far deceived, as to imagine that they make the Blind see, the Lame walk, the Dead come to Life, or that they speak in Languages which they never learnt, if there were no such Facts.

It is then beyond Contradiction evident, that the Persons who relate, and bear Testimony to the History of *Jesus* and his Apostles, had full Knowledge whether there ever were, or were not such Facts as they relate and bear Testimony to, and consequently were not deceiv'd themselves. The next Thing then to be enquir'd after, is,

*Idly, If*

Illy, If they were ever known to falsify or deceive in any one Instance; and if it was contrary to their Interest to deceive.

1. In the first Place, then, they were never known to falsify or deceive in any one Instance; they had no Blot in their Characters; and their very worst Enemies could not reproach them with Immorality.

2dly, It was against their Interest to deceive.

That to deceive, was contrary to their Interest in this World, is evident, because Persecution and Death were the Consequence of the Imposture, if it was one. And that it was contrary to all future Prospects is evident, because it is not possible for human Nature to have so absurd Notions of the Deity, as that his Favour is to be purchas'd by inventing a Lie, and persevering in it. Possibly, indeed, Persons may have lied for God, that is, they may have supported a Cause which they apprehended to be his, with Falshood; but then, they thought it was really his Cause; and no Body has been so absurd as to imagine, that the Favour of the Deity is to be purchas'd by inventing a Lie concerning Him, by asserting that to be his Cause, which they certainly know to be not so; which is lying not for, but against, in Opposition to Him.

If it be said, That though it is true th<sup>at</sup> these Persons acted contrary to worldly Interest, yet they might have another Notion of Things at first, and that particularly *Jesus*, the Ring-leader of this Sect, design'd making himself a King; and  
that



that after his Decease his Disciples acted upon the same worldly Motives. I answer, It no where appears that *Jesus* design'd making himself a King; on the contrary, He constantly disclaim'd whatever tended that Way, and declar'd that his Kingdom *was not of this World*. And as to his Disciples, whatever Notion they at first might have of worldly Advancement, yet the repeated Declarations of their Master, his ignominious Death and Sufferings, and their own cruel Treatment in the World, fully appriz'd them of what they were to expect on Earth, and that *Bonds, Persecution, Hatred of all Men, and Death*, were to be the only Portions they were in this World to expect.

Again, What View to worldly Advancement had *Paul*, a learned and ingenious Man, in good Repute in his own Nation, and who well knew what Fate the Spreaders of *Christianity* were to expect, from the Part he had acted towards them?

But to put this Matter out of Question, whatever Prospect of worldly Interest Persons may have living, they can have none dying: These Persons seal'd their Testimony with their Blood, and laid down their Lives to confirm the Truth of what they deliver'd.

Now the Question is, What could make them behave after this Manner? Our Reasoners tell us, That every Effect must have a necessary Cause, and a Cause suited to the Effect. Let them then tell us what is the necessary Cause of this Effect, and what could be the Motive to so many

Persons to suffer not only Persecution, but Death, for the Sake of a known Falshood. Here they renounce Earth; and if they have a Thought of Heaven, they renounce this too. In this Case they must chuse Pain, as Pain, and renounce Pleasure as such; which yet it will not be allow'd that any Man is capable of doing.

If it be said that they were Atheistical Persons, disbeliev'd a God, and consequently had no future Prospects; then I ask, What made them renounce this World? If it be said they believ'd a God, and their own future Existence, then I demand how they came to renounce his Favour for nothing; how they came knowingly and purposely to purchase Misery in the next World, with Misery in this?

If it be yet objected, That after they had once published their Story, (whatever was their Motive of doing it) Pride made them resolutely adhere to it. I answer, When we argue that a certain Behaviour is the Effect of Pride, we should either shew from the Nature of Pride that it may have such an Effect, or give Examples where there really has been such Pride in the World. But if we can do neither of these, (as most certainly in the present Case we cannot) then we cannot argue that the Behaviour of these Persons was the Effect of Pride.

It is true that many Persons have laid down their Lives for erroneous Opinions, but then it must be remembered, that these suffer'd for Error as Truth; but we find no Instances where several Persons have agreed to lay down their

Lives to maintain a known Cheat and Falshood, without any Prospect of Interest or Gratification to themselves. Criminals will die with a Lie in their Mouth, but it is in Hopes of saving their Lives, their Reputations, or Estates; and they don't persevere in a Cheat, without a Motive to it.

And what yet strengthens the Evidence that these Persons were not Deceivers, is the great Number of them; and if it is irrational to think that one Person would lay down his Life to maintain a known Falshood, it is yet more irrational to think that many Persons should agree to do it; that they should be true to Falshood, and to each other. And indeed considering the Nature of Mankind, their Desire of Life, Aversion to Pain, and Love of Pleasure, 'tis no less than Demonstration that these Persons did not die to maintain a known Cheat.

To conclude this Head, No greater Evidence can be given of any Proposition, than the Nature of that Proposition will admit; and when a Proposition has the highest Evidence that can be given to it, it ought to be receiv'd as Truth, or all Propositions of the same Nature that have only the same, or a less Evidence, to be rejected as Falshood. No higher Evidence can be given that any Persons are Persons of Integrity, and do not deceive us, than we have that those who relate and bear Testimony to the History of *Jesus* and his Apostles, are Men of Integrity, and do not deceive us. Consequently we cannot rationally

tionally receive any History, and reject that which they deliver'd to us.

As to the Point, Whether those who relate and bear Testimony to the History of *Jesus* and his Apostles, did give this Evidence of their Integrity, and lay down their Lives for the Sake of what they deliver'd; this is out of Question with all: And the Sufferings and Death of the Founders of *Christianity*, was so open, and publick, so circumstantiated, has suffer'd so many Reproaches, and stands in so many Records, that the greatest Opposers of this Religion have not been hardy enough to deny it: And it can no more be doubted, that the Founders of *Christianity* suffer'd and died for it, than it can be doubted whether there were such Emperors as *Tiberius, Nero, Trajan, &c.* in whose Times they suffer'd, &c.

We have then the highest Evidence the Nature of the Proposition will admit, that the Persons who relate and bear Testimony to the History of *Jesus* and his Apostles, had full Knowledge of what they relate and bear Testimony to, and were not deceiv'd themselves; and also that they were Men of Integrity, and did not deceive others. Then it follows, that the History which they deliver'd ought to be receiv'd as a true one.

But farther, We have not only the Testimony of these Persons for the Truth of the Facts, but we have likewise other collateral Evidence and Circumstances.

Thus those who dispute about the Facts, and pretend that they were not true Miracles, acknowledge the Facts.

Those who ascribe them to diabolical Power, acknowledge the Facts; here then is the Testimony of Enemies.

Again, The pretended Facts were of such a Nature, and had such lasting visible Effects, that every Body who lived at the Time when they were pretended to be done, had Opportunity to inform themselves concerning the Truth of them. Thus the meanest Person, if he had not himself been present, might easily have inform'd himself whether *Jesus* open'd the Eyes of the Blind; rais'd *Lazarus* from the Dead; and whether *Peter* and *John* had made a Cripple, who had lain a long Time at the Gate of the Temple, walk. They might have had the Testimony of a Thousand People, if they had not had that of their own Eyes, that one had been blind, another lame; and could themselves examine how far these Cures were wrought, and if *Lazarus* had been dead, and was then alive.

And since it is of the Essence of a Miracle that is to be an *Evidence* to us, that the Laws of Nature be chang'd in such Instances, where we have a full Knowledge of the Laws of Nature, it is evident that Cheats are liable to be discover'd; and the most illiterate Person knows the Laws and Powers of some Bodies, and Causes; particularly, he knows that Spittle and Clay will not open the Eyes of the Blind; nor the speaking of a Word raise the Dead to Life, consequently

sequently has it in his Power to examine whether there be a Miracle or not.

Again, The great Number of Converts to *Christianity* in the Time of the Apostles, is an Evidence of the Facts.

That there were a vast Number of these early Converts, is by none disputed; and it is incredible that so many Persons should embark in a Religion contrary to all worldly Interest, if they had not thoroughly examin'd the Facts on which this Religion was founded. True, vast Numbers of Converts have been made to false Religions, but with this Difference from the present Case; these Religions had the Support of worldly Power, and the embracing of them suited worldly Interest. But there are no Instances, where a vast Number of Persons embark'd in a Religion contrary to both these; a Religion which propos'd no other worldly Preferment to its Followers, than Bonds, Stripes, and Death; which gave no Relief from *Persecution in one City*, but *Flight into another*; and which stood charg'd with this frightful Motto, *Take up your Cross and follow me*. It could be only the Evidence of this Religion, which made so many Persons engage in it under such disadvantageous Circumstances.

Again, No Instances of Cheat or Imposture being found with regard to the pretended Facts, it is an Evidence on the Side of the Facts.

We do not say, that the not discovering of a Cheat, is an Evidence that there is no such;  
for

for then it would follow, that there could be no such Thing as a Cheat undiscovered; but we say, and justly, that when many Persons are engaged to search out a Cheat, their not finding any is a probable Argument that there is none to find.

Here was the Jew, to the last Degree tenacious of his Law and Modes of Worship, which every Day were losing ground by the increase of Christianity; the new Converts, whose Discovery of a Fraud would have restored them again to the World, and whatever was dear in it; and the Pagan, utter Enemy to the setting up of what he call'd New Gods; all endeavouring to detect the Imposture. One Argument for the Facts then is, they stood the Examination of a vast Number of Persons, whose Interest it was to detect them.

*Lastly*, considering the selfish, and worldly Views of all Impostors, and the corrupted State of natural Religion at the Time when the Gospel was deliver'd, it seems utterly impossible that this Gospel should come from such Persons.

This is certain, Impostors have always worldly and selfish Views when they endeavour to impose on Mankind. And the particular Motives to the Deceits of every Impostor, who has yet appear'd in the World, may be traced out *à posteriori* from his Religion.

But from the Religion given us by *Jesus* and his Apostles, no worldly, or selfish Views are

to be traced out in its Founders. All is agreeable to the divine Attributes; and from the End of this Religion, its Doctrine and Precepts, we ascend to the divine Wisdom and Goodness, the only Causes that appear equal to such an Effect.

And when we consider how illiterate these Persons were; how low their Station in the World; and their Want of Opportunities to deceive; this Argument will receive farther Weight.

Again, a Consideration of the corrupted State of natural Religion at the Time when the Gospel was deliver'd, gives us farther Reason to believe that this Gospel came from God.

The Teachers amongst the Jews had very much corrupted natural Religion by their Traditions. They laid a great Stress on the Ceremonials of the Law, and neglected that, for which alone the Ceremonials were instituted. They made a Gift to God stand in the room of their natural Duty to their Parents; and a punctual Payment of Tithe in Trifles, excuse a Neglect of the weightier Matters of the Law, *Judgment, Justice, and Mercy.*

Thus stood the Case with the Teachers: How then must it be with the Taught? Could the Illiterate, when their natural Notions were corrupted, when led backward from Truth, understand more than those who sat in *Moses's* Chair? This can hardly be thought possible. Consider the State of the Jews, when *Jesus* appear'd, and read the Sermon on the Mount, and then judge whether



whether this was the Performance of a Man, who had all his Teaching from the Scribes and Pharisees.

We have then the highest historical Evidence, which is all the Evidence we possibly can have in the present Case, of the Truth of the pretended Facts; and we must, if we are consistent with ourselves, either receive this Evidence, and acknowledge the Facts, or receive no historical Evidence, and acknowledge no Facts but what ourselves are Witnesses of.

I now but put the Christian History, as to Evidence, equal with other Histories, which we every Day receive as true ones, and act upon the Supposition of their being such; but we may fairly carry the Argument farther, and say, that we have no History which has such Testimony, which was deliver'd, and witnessed by so many Persons, present at, and concern'd in the Facts which they deliver, and bear Testimony to; and where the Historians and Witnesses gave such Evidences of their Integrity; and which besides is confirm'd by so many collateral Evidences.



## S E C T. X.

**S**O far then the Christian Religion is right as to the Matter which it contains, and as to the Manner in which it is deliver'd; it at present stands worthy of God, and is supported by the best Historical Evidence; but still we find

Objections

Objections against it, which come now to be consider'd.

And *First*, it is objected that *Jesus*, the Author of of this Religion pretends to be prophesied of in the *Jewish* Books; that he says, the *Scriptures* \* *testify of him*, that *Moses* † *wrote of him*, that had the *Jews* believed *Moses*, they would have believed him, for he wrote of him; but, that it does not appear that the *Scriptures* testify of him, that *Moses* wrote of him: Consequently he is an Impostor.

Now then, we so far agree with the Objector, as to acknowledge that *Jesus* pretends to be prophesied of in the *Jewish* Books; and that if it appears, that these Books do not foretel him he is not to be received as a Teacher from God. We proceed then to examine this Point, whether he is really foretold in the *Jewish* Books or not; and in order to it must a little consider the Nature, End, and Evidence of Prophecy.

When the divine Being, by the Mouth of a Person is pleased to foretel future Events, the foretold Events are call'd Prophecies, and the Person who foretels them a Prophet.

If the divine Being is pleased to instruct a Person to foretel future Events, that is, to prophecy, it is for some good End, either for the Sake of the Generation when the Prophecies are deliver'd, or that when they shall be fulfill'd.

\* John v. 39.

† John v. 46.

If Prophecies are design'd for the Sake of the Generation when they are deliver'd, then must the Evidence of them attend their Delivery, and God give his People Assurance, that what is then spoken shall surely come to pass. As thus, if God designs to comfort a Nation in Distress, or Sorrow, by foretelling future Ease and Deliverance to them, or their Posterity; then does he give that People Assurance that the Things promised or foretold shall certainly come to pass.

If Prophecies are design'd for the Sake of the Generation when they shall be fulfill'd, then must the Evidence of them attend their Completion, and the Event agreeing with antecedent Descriptions of it, must give Evidence to those Descriptions that they came from God, and that it was by him that the Event was foretold.

Now, though all future Events can only be known, or foretold by God, yet it will not follow that all Events which agree with antecedent Descriptions of them, give those Descriptions the Evidence of Prophecy. Many Persons from a Knowledge of Causes, may foretel future Events; not certainly, because there are future Contingences which no Man can foresee, but probably, and what they foretel frequently comes to pass; and also antecedent Descriptions of Events, when it is in humane Power to fulfil them, may come to pass from a Belief that they are Prophecies; the Actions of Men being greatly affected by their Imaginations, and a Belief

lief that a Thing will arrive, being often a Means to make it do so; or, they may come to pass from a Desire to have them received as Prophecies; and Persons may fulfil them, because they would be accounted to be foretold by God.

But though these are Cases in which an Event agreeing with an antecedent Description of it will not give Evidence to that Description that it came from God, yet in many others it will, and particularly, it will in the following ones.

*First,* If the Event foretold depends not on natural Causes, but comes to pass contrary to the Course of Nature, we are sure that the foretelling of it was Prophecy: For as no Being can change the Laws of Nature but the Lord of it, so can no Being foretel these Changes but him. In this Case there is the highest Evidence of Prophecy.

*Secondly,* If the Event foretold depends on natural Causes, yet if foretold long before it arrives, and it is not in humane Power upon a Knowledge of the antecedent Declaration to bring it to pass; then that antecedent Declaration is to be look'd on as a Prophecy, since no Being but him who was the Framers of Nature, and who gave to all Beings, and Things Existence, can foresee a Train of Events to come, and what shall be brought to pass according to the Course of Nature.

*Thirdly,* If foretold Events depend on natural Causes, and it is in humane Power to fulfil

them, yet if the Time for those Events is limited, and the Persons who fulfil them are ignorant of them, then the foretelling such Events is to be received as Prophecy: Future Times, and Seasons, and the Order of Events to come, being only known to him who appointed Successions of Events, and allotted to every Thing that exists, its Duration, and particular Place in the Succession of Beings or Things.

*Fourthly*, If several Events are foretold which concur, and suit with each other, in order to some visible End or Design, the foretelling such Events must be acknowledg'd to be Prophecy; since that Being alone who framed, and fitted Beings, and Things to each other, in order to the Preservation or Happiness of the whole System of created Beings, can foretel concurring Events.

And now having a little consider'd the Nature, End, and Evidence of Prophecy; and given some Instances, wherein Events give Evidence to antecedent Descriptions of them that they came from God, we proceed to see whether *Jesus* makes out his Claim, and fulfils Prophecies.

And *First*, we are to observe that as Prophecy may be given for the Sake of the Generation when it is deliver'd, as well as for that when it shall be fulfill'd, it follows that if *Jesus* only answers Descriptions in the *Jewish* Books, though such as consider'd singly would receive no Evidence from their Completion, he makes out his Claim to Gentile as well as Jew, and ought to be receiv'd by both, as that Person he pretended to be.

The Case is, he had the Evidence of Miracle and wanted no other; but he must answer antecedent Descriptions in the *Jewish* Books, because he says he does; if then he answers such Descriptions, his Evidence from his Miracles is in full Force, and on their Account alone he ought to be received as a Teacher from God by all Men.

*Secondly*, If he answers Descriptions in the *Jewish* Books, though such as consider'd singly would receive no Evidence of coming from God from their Completion, yet then has he to the *Jews*, who acknowledge these Descriptions divine, the Evidence of Prophecy.

For, as these Descriptions must belong to that Person whom they suit, if the *Jews* acknowledge they are Prophecies, then they also must acknowledge the Person who fulfils them foretold by God.

*Thirdly*, If he answers antecedent Descriptions, which receive Evidence that they came from God, from their Completion, then has he the Evidence of Prophecy to all Men; and if that which is foretold concerning him be above the Power of Nature, then has he the highest Evidence of Prophecy.

And now having given some Instances in which *Jesus* must be allow'd to make out his Claim, we proceed to examine whether he does really make it out; that is, we proceed to an Examination of the *Jewish* Books, and as he particularly claims to be foretold by *Moses*, *Moses* we will in the *first* Place examine.

And

And here we find that *Moses* declares that a Prophet shall arise with these Characters,  
*A Man raised up amidst his Brethren<sup>a</sup>.*  
*And like unto<sup>b</sup> Moses.*

That he should have this Office, to be in the Place of God, and speak the Words of his Mouth: *I will<sup>c</sup> put my Words into his Mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.*

And also that a Punishment should attend the not hearkening to him, *And it shall<sup>d</sup> come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my Words which he shall speak in my Name, I will require it of him.*

And that the Evidence which should be given him whereby the People should know that what he spake was really the Words of God, should be this, speaking in the Name of the Lord, and having the Thing which he speaks follow and come to pass. *When a Prophet<sup>e</sup> speaketh in the Name of the Lord, if the Thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the Word which the Lord hath not spoken.*

We are then to observe concerning this Prophet.

1. That he was to deliver something of great Importance, what he was to deliver being called the *Words of God's Mouth*, and a Penalty being annex'd to the not hearkening to it.

<sup>a</sup> Deut. xviii. 15.

<sup>b</sup> —xviii. 15.

<sup>c</sup> —xviii. 18.

<sup>d</sup> —xviii. 19.

<sup>e</sup> —xviii. 22.

2. That a particular Evidence was to be given to him.

3. That the particular Evidence to be given him was to be given for a particular End and Intent, namely, as a Mark by which the People should know that what had been delivered to them by this Prophet was really the Words of God. *And if thou say \* in thy Heart, How shall we know the Word which the Lord hath not spoken? When a Prophet speaketh in the Name of the Lord, &c.*

4. That something new, something which had not been delivered before, was to be delivered by this Prophet, there being no need of any particular Evidence, or any Evidence at all to be given to what had been before delivered by *Moses*; this having already had the Evidence of Miracle. Neither would the People ask, or God promise to give any more Evidence to this.

It follows then, that the Prophet described by *Moses* could not possibly be, as some imagine, only certain Persons who were to tell what was become of lost Goods, &c. because,

1. There manifestly was no Need of any Evidence to be given, whereby the People should know, that certain Persons were able to tell them what was become of their lost Goods, but their really telling what was become of them, the Thing proving itself. And to suppose that any other Evidence was promised to such Persons, is to suppose that an Evidence was promised which

\* Dent. xviii. 21.



could not possibly be of any Service to those to whom it was promised : For if upon their applying to a certain Person to restore them their lost Goods, this Person did restore them, there wanted no Evidence of his Ability to do it ; and if he did not restore them, no Evidence would persuade them that he did, or that he was a proper Person to be apply'd to on such Occasions. And to suppose that the only Evidence promised whereby the People should know, that certain Persons were able to restore them their lost Goods, was really restoring of them, appears from God's Answer to it an impossible Supposition : For in that Case, the Enquiry put by God into the Mouth of the People would be this, *How shall I know who shall be able to tell me what is become of my lost Goods?* God's Answer, *He that does tell you what is become of them is able to do it.*

*Secondly,* It was to be required of them if they did not hearken to this Prophet, which could not possibly have been the Case, if his Business had only been to tell what was become of lost Goods ; it being manifestly no Crime not to seek to, and hearken to this Sort of Persons, who at best were only tolerated by the true God to keep his People from seeking to false ones.

And *Thirdly,* The timing of this Promise, as well as the Penalty annexed to the not receiving the Words of this Prophet, *as the Words of God's Mouth,* shews, that what he was to deliver was of much more Importance to Man-

kind, than only telling them what was become of their lost Goods.

Thus, When the People were frightened at the Manner in which God had delivered the Law, and said, <sup>a</sup> *Let me not hear again the Voice of the Lord my God, neither let me see this great Fire any more, that I die not* : God answered, *They have* <sup>b</sup> *well spoken that which they have spoken.* (Their Request is what I approve of.) *I will raise them up a Prophet from among their Brethren, like unto thee, and will put my Words in his Mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.* (When I again deliver new Commands unto the People, I will speak unto them in the Person of a Man like unto Thee.) *And it shall come to pass that whosoever will not hearken to my Words, which he shall speak in my Name, I will require it of him.* (Whoever does not hearken to the Words of this Prophet as to the Words of God, I will punish his Disbelief.) *But the Prophet who shall presume to speak a Word in my Name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the Name of other Gods, even that Prophet shall die.* (An Impostor, one who shall presume to give Laws in my Name without my Commission ; or one who shall draw my People into Idolatry, shall be put to Death.) *And if thou say in thy Heart, How shall we know the Word which the Lord hath not spoken ?* (If God

<sup>a</sup> Deut. xviii. 16. Exod. 20. 9.

<sup>b</sup> Deut. xviii. 17, &c

will require it of me if I don't hearken to this Prophet, or if I hearken to a Deceiver, you must tell me how I may infallibly know the one from the other.) Why, thus shall ye know an Impostor, *When a Prophet speaketh in the Name of the Lord, if the Thing follow not, nor come to pass (if God does not bear him witness by some extraordinary Sign) that is the Thing which the Lord hath not spoken.*

Now then that the Thing which was to follow or come to pass was some extraordinary Sign, something Miraculous, is certain; otherwise the Prophet, which was to be hearken'd to; could not have been distinguished from an Impostor; and if the Thing which was to come to pass could be effected by human Power, an Impostor might pass for the Prophet.

It is evident then that the Prophet, who should be hearken'd to in all that he should deliver, was to have the Evidence of Miracles; the Evidence which *Moses* had, whom it was promised he should resemble.

Now then we are to see, whether *Moses's* Characters of a Prophet, and the promised Evidence meet in *Jesus*, and whether we have Reason to think him that Prophet whom *Moses* describes.

*He is raised up from amidst his Brethren.*

He resembles *Moses* in the working of Miracles.

He delivered a Doctrine worthy of God and suitable to his Nature.

And he spake in the Name of the Lord, and the Thing which he spake, followed and came to pass; He work'd Miracles. What hinders then that Jesus is not acknowledged as the Prophet foretold by Moses?

See his own Claim and Argument. *The Works that I do, <sup>a</sup> bear witness of me that the Father hath sent me. The Father <sup>b</sup> that sent me, beareth witness of me. The Works that I do in <sup>c</sup> my Father's Name, they bear witness of me. If I do not the Works of my Father, <sup>d</sup> believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the Works, that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him. Believe me for the very <sup>e</sup> Works Sake. If I had <sup>f</sup> not done among them the Works which none other Man did, they had not had Sin. (If my Miracles, my Evidence from God, had not been more clear, more convincing than any other Man's, who has ever yet appeared in the World, their Infidelity had not been so unpardonable.) Again, <sup>g</sup> Do not think that I will accuse you; there is one that accuseth you, even Moses in whom ye trust; for had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, &c.*

Here then, in Jesus, is the very Prophet Moses describes, and in his Miracles the very Evidence Moses promised; both Character and Attestation answer in every Point and Cir-

<sup>a</sup> John v. 36.  
<sup>d</sup> John x. 37, 38.  
22, & 24.

<sup>b</sup> John viii. 18.  
<sup>e</sup> John xiv. 11.  
<sup>g</sup> John v. 45, & 46.

<sup>c</sup> John x. 25.  
<sup>f</sup> John xv.

cumstance; and he has a Right to be acknowledged as that Prophet which *Moses* foretold.

We see, not only *Jesus* applies this Prophecy to himself, but also <sup>a</sup> *Peter* and <sup>b</sup> *Stephen* apply it to him, and argue with the *Jews* that it is fulfill'd.

If it should be said, false Prophets may do Signs and Wonders, or work Miracles, otherwise the *Jews* could not have been caution'd not to be deceived by such Means, and consequently, that whatever can be a possible Character of a false Prophet, cannot be the Evidence of a True one:

I answer, false Prophets can never work Miracles; and as no Being can change the Laws of Nature without the Consent of the Lord of it; so cannot he consent to the changing of his Laws to give Evidence to Falshood, for that would be to act in Opposition to himself.

<sup>c</sup> But Impostors may to some Persons appear to work Miracles; they may by a Knowledge of certain Powers of Nature, of which the Vulgar are Ignorant, seem to them to do Things above the Power of Nature; and on that Account there is need of Caution against them.

If it is yet urged that these Words of *Moses* are not applicable to *Jesus* only, but to all

<sup>a</sup> Acts iii. 22.  
*Miracles par Mir. Serres.*

<sup>b</sup> Acts vii. 37.

<sup>c</sup> See *Traité de*

other Prophets who work Miracles ; I answer, they are in all Parts only applicable to *Jesus*, as appears not only from the *Jewish* History, but also from the Confession of one of their own Prophets in the Time of <sup>a</sup>*Ezra*, since which there is no Pretence that any Person has appear'd like unto *Moses*.

But granting the Thing, granting that these Words were in all Parts applicable to other Persons besides *Jesus*, yet it would not lessen the Evidence which they give him. Suppose God Almighty should distinguish a Succession of Persons from the rest of Mankind by particular Characters, and foretel them by these Characters, it would not lessen the Evidence of any particular Person amongst them, that others were foretold also. When a Person appears, and answers Descriptions which only could be foretold by God, we are to receive him as witnessed by Prophecy; and if another appears and answers the same Descriptions, we are to receive him also as foretold by God, and our receiving him will not lessen the Evidence of the first; it will not, unless God cannot endue two Persons with equal Powers.

Putting then a Case which our Opposers would desire, and which certainly is not the true one; that is, that these Words of *Moses* are applicable to other Persons who worked Miracles, yet it will not lessen the Evidence which they give *Jesus*; and whilst he works Miracles, and

<sup>a</sup> Deut xxxiv. 10.

teaches a Doctrine worthy of God, he has a Right to be received as foretold by *Moses*.

If it is said that those Words of *Moses* are no Prophecy at all, but are only a Criterion whereby to try a Prophet from an Impostor, I answer, they cannot be only such a Criterion, for they directly foretel the Appearance of a Person. <sup>a</sup> *And the Lord said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet like unto thee, and I will put my Words into his Mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I command him, &c.*

We find then upon an Examination of *Jewish* Books that *Jesus* fulfils Prophecy, and also that he has the highest Evidence of it; he answers antecedent Descriptions, which could only be given by the Lord of Nature.

And we might go on to shew that *Jesus* not only fulfils this Prophecy of *Moses*, but also many others in the *Jewish* Books; and that there are many Descriptions in these Books, of a Person who was to appear and be a Blessing to Mankind, with several Circumstances which were to attend his Appearance, and also the Time of it, which were fulfilled in *Jesus*, and at his Appearance: But of these I shall speak afterwards; it being evident that from this Prophecy alone *Jesus* has made out his Claim, and has a Right to be received as foretold by God.

<sup>a</sup> Deut. xviii. 17, 18.

Proceed we then to answer another Objection; and it is urged,

2. That *Jesus* not only pretends to be the Prophet foretold by *Moses*, but also the *Messiah* of the *Jews*, a Person expected under another Character besides that of a Prophet; but he is not this Person; consequently, an Impostor.

I answer, If *Jesus* has a Right to be receiv'd as the Prophet foretold by *Moses*, then has he a Right to be receiv'd as the *Messiah* of the *Jews*; since that Prophet has a Right to be hearkned to in whatever he should deliver, and *Jesus* declares <sup>a</sup> himself to be this Person.

But, say the *Jews*, or others for them, the *Messiah* was to appear under a different Character than that in which *Jesus* appear'd; consequently, *Jesus* is not this Person.

Let then the Objector make out this Point; let him give clear, and express Characters of a *Messiah* in the *Jewish* Books, and then shew that these do not belong to *Jesus*: Let him, I say, give clear and express Characters of a *Messiah*; otherwise we cannot regard the Objection, and we cannot set doubtful Interpretations and uncertain Meanings against a Testimony supported by both Miracle, and Prophecy.

But, upon an Examination of the *Jewish* Scriptures, we find that the *Jews* can do no such Thing; on the contrary, several acknowledged Characters of the *Messiah* are found in

<sup>a</sup> John iv. 26.)



*Jesus*. Particularly, he is of the Tribe, Family, and Town of which the *Jews* confess that the *Messiah* was to be born; and he appeared at a Time when they themselves expected him; and during a Period in which, unless their own Books are Imposture, he must have appeared, as will be seen afterwards.

But, say the *Jews*, according to these Scriptures the *Messiah* was to be a temporal Prince, and to reign visibly over the *Jews*. Let then the *Jews* producetheir Evidence for such an Assertion; let them produce plain and express Testimony out of their own Books that the *Messiah* was to be a temporal Prince, and at his first Appearance on Earth to reign visibly over the *Jews*: But the *Jew* cannot do this, nor is there any such Testimony concerning the *Messiah* in his Books: On the contrary, if we search the *Jewish* Books we shall find that those very Texts, on which the *Jews* ground their Expectation of a temporal *Messiah*, relate only to a Spiritual one, such a one as *Jesus* pretended to be. And if the *Jews* say, that the following Texts, and others of the same Nature, are not the Grounds on which they expect a temporal *Messiah*, they must produce those that are, and shew that what they produce really do relate to the *Messiah*, and cannot possibly belong to any other Person.

*In that* <sup>a</sup> *Day shall the Branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious.* <sup>b</sup> *Unto us a Child is*

<sup>a</sup> Isaiah iv. 2:

<sup>b</sup> Isaiah ix. 6, 7.

born, unto us a Son is given, and the Government shall be upon his Shoulder; and his Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the Increase of his Government and Peace there shall be no end, upon the Throne of David, and upon his Kingdom to order it, and to establish it with Judgment and with Justice from henceforth even for ever; the Zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this. But <sup>a</sup> thou, Bethlehem Ephrata, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that is to be Ruler in Israel; whose Goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. <sup>b</sup> There shall come forth a Rod out of the Stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his Roots. And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, the Spirit of Counsel and Might, the Spirit of Knowledge and of the Fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick Understanding in the Fear of the Lord, and he shall not judge after the Sight of his Eyes, neither reprove after the Hearing of his Ears; but with Righteousness shall he judge the Poor, and reprove with Equity, for the Meek of the Earth: And he shall smite the Earth with the Rod of his Mouth, and with the Breath of his Lips shall he slay the Wicked. And Righteousness shall be the Girdle of his Loins, and Faithfulness the Girdle of his Reins. And in <sup>c</sup> Mercy shall the

<sup>a</sup> Mic v. 2.

<sup>b</sup> Isaiah xi. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

<sup>c</sup> Isaiah xvi. 5.

Throne be established, and he shall sit upon it in Truth, in the Tabernacle of David, judging and seeking Judgment, and hastening Righteousness. Behold<sup>a</sup> a King shall reign in Righteousness, &c. Behold, the Days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute Judgment and Justice in the Earth. In his Days Judah<sup>b</sup> shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his Name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness. Behold my<sup>c</sup> Servant whom I uphold, my Elect in whom my Soul delighteth: I have put my Spirit upon him, he shall bring forth Judgment unto the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his Voice to be heard in the Streets. A bruised Reed shall he not break: and the smoking Flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth Judgment unto Truth. He shall not fail, nor be discouraged, till he has set Judgment in the Earth: and the Isles shall wait for his Law. Thus saith God the Lord, he that created the Heavens, and stretched them out, he that spread forth the Earth, and that which cometh out of it, he that giveth Breath unto the People upon it, and Spirit to them that walk therein: I the Lord have called thee in Righteousness, and will hold thine Hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a Covenant to the People, for a Light to the Gentiles: To open the blind Eyes, to bring

<sup>a</sup> Isaiah xxxii. 1.  
2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

<sup>b</sup> Jer. xxiii. 5, 6.

<sup>c</sup> Isaiah xlii. 1.

out the Prisoners from the Prison, and them that sit in Darkness out of the Prison-house. I am the Lord, that is my Name, and my Glory will I not give to another, neither my Praise to graven Images. Behold, my <sup>a</sup> Servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high. As many were astonished at thee, (his Visage was so marred more than any Man, and his Form more than the Sons of Men) so shall he sprinkle many Nations, the Kings shall shout their Mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard, shall they consider. I saw <sup>b</sup> in the Night Visions, and behold, one like the Son of Man, came with the Clouds of Heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him Dominion and Glory, and Kingdom, that all People, Nations, and Languages should serve him: his Dominion is an everlasting Dominion, which shall not pass away, and his Kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. <sup>c</sup> Rejoyce greatly, O Daughter of Zion; shout, O Daughter of Jerusalem: behold thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having Salvation, lowly, and riding upon an Ass, and upon a Colt the Foal of an Ass. Sing <sup>d</sup> and rejoyce, O Daughter of Zion: for lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord. And many Nations shall be joined to the Lord in that Day,

<sup>a</sup> Isaiah lii. 13, 14, 15.    <sup>b</sup> Dan. vii. 13, 14.    <sup>c</sup> Zech. ix. 9.  
<sup>d</sup> Zech. ii. 10, 11, 12.

and shall be my People: and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the Lord of Hosts hath sent me unto thee. And the Lord shall inherit Judah his Portion in the Holy Land, and shall chuse Jerusalem again. <sup>a</sup> And the Lord shall be King over all the Earth, in that Day there shall be one Lord, and his Name one. In that <sup>b</sup> Day there shall be a Root of Jesse, which shall stand for an Ensign of the People; to it shall the Gentiles seek, and his Rest shall be glorious. And he will <sup>c</sup> destroy in this Mountain, the Face of the Covering cast over all People, and the Veil that is spread over all Nations. He will swallow up Death in Victory, &c. Say to them <sup>d</sup> that are of a fearful Heart, Be strong, fear not: behold your God will come with Vengeance, even God with a Recompence, he will come and save you. Then the Eyes of the Blind shall be opened, and the Ears of the Deaf shall be unstopped; then shall the lame Man leap as an Hart, and the Tongue of the Dumb sing: for in the Wilderness shall Waters break out, and Streams out of the Desert. And the <sup>e</sup> Glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all Flesh shall see it together: for the Mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. And the <sup>f</sup> Gentiles shall come to thy Light, and Kings to the Brightness of thy Rising. I will <sup>g</sup> also give thee for a Light to the Gentiles, that thou mayst be my Salvation

<sup>a</sup> Zech. xiv. 9.<sup>b</sup> Isaiah xi. 10.<sup>c</sup> Isaiah xxv. 7, 8.<sup>d</sup> Isaiah xxxv. 4, 5, 6.<sup>e</sup> Isaiah xl. 5,<sup>f</sup> Isaiah lx. 3.<sup>g</sup> Isaiah xlix. 6.<sup>h</sup> Isaiah lxi. 1, 2.

unto the End of the Earth. The <sup>a</sup> Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good Tidings unto the Meek, he hath sent me to bind up the Broken-hearted, to proclaim Liberty to the Captives, and the Opening of the Prison to them that are bound. Seventy Weeks are determined upon thy People, and upon thy holy City, to finish the Transgression, and to make an end of Sins, and to make Reconciliation for Iniquity, and to bring in everlasting Righteousness, and to seal up the Vision and Prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. <sup>c</sup> And in the Days of these Kings shall the God of Heaven set up a Kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the Kingdom shall not be left to other People, but it shall break in pieces, and consume all these Kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. <sup>e</sup> And the Lord shall reign over them in Mount Zion, from henceforth even for ever. <sup>d</sup> And all thy Children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the Peace of thy Children.

Now we say, that either these Characters and Circumstances of a King and Kingdom, with others of a like Nature are the grounds, on which the Jews found their Expectation of a Temporal *Messiah*, or they are not: If they are, then we can prove (and it is evident to every impartial Enquirer who considers these Texts) that they only can relate to a Spiritual

<sup>a</sup> Dan. ix. 24.

<sup>b</sup> Dan. ii. 44.

<sup>c</sup> Mic. iv. 7.

<sup>d</sup> Isaiah liv. 13.

King and Kingdom, such a King as *Jesus* pretended to be, and such a Kingdom as he pretended his was; and that it is impossible to apply them to a Temporal one. If these are not the Texts on which the *Jews* found their Expectation of a Temporal *Messiah*, they must produce those that are; and before we acknowledge that the *Messiah* was to be a Temporal Prince, contrary to the Evidence of Miracle and Prophecy, we must see clear and express Testimony that he was to be such; it must be proved from Words that admit no other possible Meaning; but, as has been observed, the *Jew* has no such clear and express Testimony that the *Messiah* was to be a Temporal Prince, nor any Expressions concerning his being such which admit no other possible Meaning: then *Jesus* is the *Messiah* for any thing yet found in the *Jewish* Books to the contrary.

We pass on then *Thirdly*, To another grand *Jewish* Objection which is this, The *Jews* were commanded to observe their Law *for ever*: but *Jesus* and his Apostles abolished this Law; therefore *Jesus* and his Apostles are Impostors.

The Question then is, whether God required of the *Jews* a perpetual Observation of their whole Law, and whether the Expressions concerning the Duration of this Law, can have but one possible Meaning; which is, that it was God's Will that it should be observed *for ever*, and never give way to another Dispensation.

In order to resolve this Point, we must remember that in a Divine Revelation no one Part can contradict another, and particular Texts must first be reconciled betwixt themselves, before any Thing can be advanced from any of them.

Now *Moses* and other Prophets commanded the *Jews* to observe *for ever* the Law given to them by God.

*Moses* likewise assures them, that a Prophet should arise *like unto himself*, who should *speak to them the Words of God*, and to whom if they *did not hearken*, it would *be required of them*.

And the Calling of the Gentiles is foretold by many of the Prophets.

Those Texts then which require a perpetual Observation of the *Jewish* Law; and that particular one which commands, that *a Person who speaks in the Name of the Lord, and the Thing which he speaks, follows and comes to pass, should be hearkened to*; and those which foretel the Calling of the Gentiles, must have all such Meanings as are consistent with each other.

When then a Person appears with the promised Evidence, the *Jews* were to hearken to him, and to receive him as the promised Prophet. But when this Person, or those who act by his Authority and Commission, abolish the Law of *Moses*, then were the *Jews* to examine the Expressions concerning the Duration of their Law, and to see whether these Expressions



sions can possibly be understood according to the Sense put on them by those who abolish this Law; whether this Law may give way to another Dispensation.

This is the true Point to be considered here: for if the Expressions concerning the Duration of this Law can be understood in a limited Sense, and do not strictly mean a perpetual Duration; then we ought to understand them in that Sense which is put on them by those who have the Evidence of Miracle and Prophecy.

And upon examination of these Texts we immediately find that they are not only capable of being understood in a limited Sense, but that really they can have no other; the Calling of the Gentiles being inconsistent with a perpetual Observation of the Law of *Moses*, some part of this Law consisting in a Separation of the *Jews* from other Nations.

Upon the whole then, the true State of the Matter seems to be this: The Law was to be observed as long as it was a Law, till the Power who made should abolish it; till the Prophet should arise who should be as a God to the People and give them a new Dispensation; till the happy time when the Gentiles should be called, and all Nations serve the Lord.

The *for ever* does not relate to the Law but to the Peoples Duty; they were to observe it *for ever*, that is, as long as it was a Law.

And

And in this Sense is the Expression *for ever* understood when it relates to Laws promulg'd by a human Legislator. The People are required to observe them *for ever*, that is, as long as they are Laws; but the Legislator does not by this Expression preclude himself from annulling these Laws, if he thinks fit so to do, nor do the People understand the Expression in this Sense.

Suppose that God when he gave these Laws; designed they should be abolished, and give way to another Dispensation; would he not, think we, have commanded the *Jews* to observe them for ever? Doubtless he would have done this, it being their indispensable Duty to do so; to observe them as long as they were Laws, and until he pleased to abrogate them. We cannot suppose he would acquaint them with the designed Change, which would have been a probable Means to have lessened their Esteem for That which it was their Duty to observe.

Yet again, We may and ought to conclude that several of the Expressions concerning the Duration of the *Jewish* Law related only to the Moral Part of it; and as to this, it is very evident that *Jesus* according to his own Words, might properly be said to *come not to destroy the Law, but to fulfill.*

And we may yet farther observe that the Expression *for ever* is often used in a limited Sense in the *Jewish* Scriptures; thus an ever-  
Q lasting

lasting Priesthood is promised to <sup>a</sup> *Aaron and his Sons*.

Again, from God's own Expressions concerning this Law we have Reason to think it was only occasional, and given for a Time; thus he says, *he gave them* <sup>b</sup> *Statutes which were not good, &c.*

Again, from the Nature and Office of the Person foretold by *Moses*, and the particular Evidence which was to be given him, it is evident that he was to be Author of a new Dispensation.

In a word, The *Jew* must, to make the Expressions in his own Books concerning the Duration of the *Jewish* Law any Objection against *Jesus's* being the Prophet foretold by *Moses*, or the *Messiah* of the *Jews*, shew that these Expressions can have but one possible Sense, which is, that this Law was to be observed as long as the World should last, and never give way to another Dispensation; but, as has been seen, the *Jew* cannot possibly do this, therefore the Expressions in the *Jewish* Books concerning the Eternity of the *Jewish* Law, can be no Objection against *Jesus's* being the Person he pretended to be.

*Fourthly*, It is objected that *Jesus* and his Apostles apply'd many Places of Scripture to themselves, which did not belong to them; consequently are Impostors.

<sup>a</sup> Exod. xl. 15. Numb. xxv. 13.]

<sup>b</sup> Ezra xx. 25.

Before we examine into the Truth of this Charge, we may remark that it is very strange, that Persons who were in possession of the very best Evidence which could be given them, Miracle and Prophecy, and who had Craft enough to deceive thus far, should yet be so weak as to invalidate their own Evidence by Misapplications. We might rather expect they would have let their Cause rest upon a good Footing, when they had once got it there, and not have taken the most probable Step to the Ruin of it. But be this as it will, certain it is that only Impostors can misapply: The Question then is, whether the Texts apply'd by *Jesus* and his Apostles, are Misapplications.

Now if *Jesus*, or his Apostles, affix'd a Sense to Words which they could not possibly bear; if they apply'd Characters to themselves which could not belong to them, if they pretend to be spoken of when they are not spoken of, then they are guilty of Misapplications, and are Impostors.

But we must observe, that nothing but their affixing impossible Meanings, can be called Misapplications; and as they were in possession of Miracle and Prophecy, they have a Right before all other Persons, to interpret Difficulties; and a possible Sense supported by Miracle and Prophecy, ought to be received before that which is only the Product of Human Judgment.

We are then to proceed to an Examination of the objected Places, and in order to this,

think it proper to take a View of the *Jewish Dispensation*.

The *Jewish Dispensation* consisted of many *Rites, Ceremonies, and Sacrifices*, which seem in their own Nature to have no Worth or Excellency in them, and to have nothing to commend them but the Commands of the Legislator.

Again, The Legislator himself places no Worth or Excellency in them, tells the *Jews* that he gave them *a Statutes which were not good*; and assures them that the most punctual Observation of these *Statutes* would be to no purpose, nor render them acceptable to him, if they were deficient in other Duties.

This is the *Jewish Law* as we find it: Now let us see the Gospel Account of it.

And this acquaints us that these *Rites, Ceremonies, Sacrifices*, and whole Law, were preparatory to, and symbolical of, the Dispensation by *Jesus*; that they were given *only for a Time, and because of Transgression*, and until the Dispensation should arrive, *promised to Abraham four hundred Years before the giving of the Law*, in which *all the Families of<sup>b</sup> the Earth were to be blessed*, in which *Jesus appeared to bless us, in turning<sup>c</sup> every one of us from our Iniquities*. Thus the Author to the *Hebrews*, Being *d made perfect*, he became the Author of *Eternal Salvation unto all them that obey him*.

<sup>a</sup> Ezek. xx. 25.    1 Ch. Isaiah  
iii. 26.

<sup>d</sup> Heb. v. 9.

<sup>b</sup> Gal. iii. 8, 17

<sup>c</sup> Act

By <sup>a</sup> his own Blood be entered in once into the holy Place, having obtain'd Eternal Salvation for us. Once <sup>b</sup> in the End of the World, hath he appeared to put away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself.

Now in what Manner the first Dispensation was symbolical, and representative of the second, this Author in several Chapters sets before us. He says, that the *Priests under the Law serve as an* <sup>c</sup> *Example and Shadow of Heavenly Things, that the High* <sup>d</sup> *Priest went alone, once every Year, into the Holy of Holies, the Holy Ghost this signifying, that the Way into the Holiest of all, was not yet made manifest while as the first Tabernacle was yet standing: Which was a Figure for the Time then present, in which were offered both Gifts and Sacrifices, &c. And speaking of the Rites, Sacrifices, and Sprinklings under the Law by the Blood of Calves and Goats; he says, It was therefore necessary <sup>e</sup> that the Patterns of Things in the Heavens should be purified with these, but the Heavenly Things themselves [represented by those Patterns] with better Sacrifices than these. For Christ is not enter'd into the Holy Places made with Hands, which are the Figures of the true, but into Heaven it self, now to appear in the Presence of God for us.*

This is this Author's Account of the Jewish Dispensation; and those strangely mistake

<sup>a</sup> Heb. ix. 12.

<sup>b</sup> Heb. ix. 26.

<sup>c</sup> Heb. viii. 5. ix. 24.

<sup>d</sup> Heb. ix. 7, 8.

<sup>e</sup> Heb. ix. 23, 24.

Things who say that these Places in the *Hebrews* are only *Allusions* or *Accommodations*. He plainly tells us, That the *Priests, High-Priests, Tabernacles, Sacrifices* and *Law* were *Shadows, Patterns, Figures, Examples* of the *Dispensation* by *Jesus*. And *Jesus* himself says, That the *Law* <sup>a</sup> and *Prophets* prophecy'd until *John*. That he <sup>b</sup> came to fulfil the *Law* and *Prophets*; and that till *Heaven* and *Earth* pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the *Law* till all be fulfilled; that is, the *Law* should in no Part be abolish'd till that *Dispensation* should arrive, of which the *Law* was only a *Resemblance*. Again *Jesus* says, he <sup>c</sup> will not eat any more of the *Passover* till it be fulfilled in the *Kingdom of Heaven*: That is, till the *Lamb* is sacrificed, which this *Paschal Lamb* was to represent.

Now then, this being the Account which *Jesus* and his *Apostles* give us of the *Jewish Dispensation*, the Question is, Whether it is a possible one? If it is, it will follow that it ought to be received as a true one, being supported by *Miracle* and *Prophecy*.

And upon the first View we find that this is not only a possible Account of the *Jewish Dispensation*, but likewise the most rational and consistent one that can be given of it; and if it was suitable to the *Divine Wisdom* to give *Jesus* to live and die for the Sake of *Mankind*, it is reasonable to expect that a Mode of Wor-

<sup>a</sup> Matth. xi. 13.

<sup>b</sup> Matth. v. 17, 18.

<sup>c</sup> Luke xxii. 16.

ship, which himself would institute, should bear Resemblance to this great propitiatory Sacrifice; That the whole *Jewish* Dispensation should shew forth his Death before he came, after the same Manner as that Sacrament which he himself instituted, does shew forth his Death since he is come.

The *Jews* cannot object to the Reasonableness of such an Institution, they who were commanded to express their Deliverances by Symbols of them, who yearly offered up the <sup>a</sup> *Paschal Lamb*, the *Firstlings* <sup>b</sup> of their Flocks, and who observed the *Feast* <sup>c</sup> of *Tabernacles*.

And other Nations cannot object to it, it being a common Practice with them, as may be shewn from many Instances taken from different Countries, to celebrate great Deliverances by Symbols of those Deliverances.

But, as before, not so much as this is wanted in the present Argument; and if the Account given of the *Jewish* Dispensation by *Jesus* and his Apostles is only a possible one, it ought to be receiv'd as a true one.

And if it ought to be receiv'd as a true one, many of those Difficulties, which arise from certain Applications made by these Persons, will vanish, as will appear from a Consideration of them.

Farther, As God might make the Law symbolical of the Gospel, so might he, if he pleas'd, purposely make some Events under the first

<sup>a</sup> Exod. xii.

<sup>b</sup> Exod. xiii.

<sup>c</sup> Lev. xxiii. 34.



Dispensation, resemble others under the second; the Reason why he should do this may be consider'd afterwards; all we at present want is, that it be allow'd possible for him to do it. But it must be allow'd possible for him to do it, there being nothing in this Way of acting disagreeable to his Attributes.

Again, It is likewise possible for God, that is, it is not unsuitable to his Nature, to give the *Jewish* Nation Signs of temporal Deliverance which should bear Resemblance to a greater Deliverance, the Appearance of the *Messiah*. As he often pointed out temporal Deliverances by Signs of them, as may be shewn from many Instances, it could be no Contradiction to his Attributes to make these Signs, if he pleased, Signs also of that great Deliverance.

Yet once more, If the first Dispensation was given for the sake of the second, and only added *for a Time because of Transgressions*, as from a View of both Dispensations it is rational to think it was, then we may expect that the Prophets under the first should be full of Descriptions of this last; that what they deliver should tend to something farther than the present State of Things, and to draw the People's Attention to the great Deliverance design'd for them.

We now proceed to examine some Applications made by *Jesus* and his Apostles, in order to see whether they are impossible ones.

We will divide the apply'd Texts into two Sorts; and first speak of those which seem to be indeterminate, neither applicable to the present Circumstances of Affairs at the Time of Delivery, nor to the Person of the Prophet who delivered them.

*Secondly,* Of those which seem determinate, that is, which at first View appear to relate to the Person of the Prophet, present Times, or State of Things.

Of the first Sort are the following ones. *All ye<sup>a</sup> shall be offended because of me this Night: For it is Written, I will smite the Shepherd, and the Sheep of the Flock shall be scattered abroad. And he<sup>b</sup> was number'd with the Transgressors, &c.*

These Places are apply'd to *Jesus* by himself; now the Question is, what is the Evidence that they related to him?

*First,* They exactly in all Parts and Circumstances correspond with the Character of *Jesus*.

*Secondly,* There is the Evidence of Miracle and Prophecy that they do relate to him.

But we want not so much as this in the present Argument; and if it cannot be proved that these Texts could not possibly relate to *Jesus*, it cannot be proved that he has misapply'd them: But it cannot be proved that they could not possibly relate to *Jesus*, then it cannot be proved that he has misapply'd them.

<sup>a</sup> Matth. xxxvi. 31. Zech. xiii. 7.  
Eziah liii. 13.

<sup>b</sup> Mark xv. 28.

Secondly, The following Texts from the Manner in which they are delivered, at first View seem to relate to the Person of the Prophet, Time of Delivery, or the then State of Things. Behold, <sup>a</sup> a Virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call his name Emanuel. When <sup>b</sup> Israel was a Child, then I loved him, and called my Son out of Egypt. They <sup>c</sup> gave me Gall for my Meat and in my Thirst they gave me Vinegar to drink. <sup>d</sup> They part my Garments among them, and cast Lots upon my Vesture. They <sup>e</sup> weighed for my Price thirty Pieces of Silver. And the Lord said unto me, cast it unto the Potter: A goodly Price that I was prized at of them. And I took the thirty Pieces of Silver, and cast them to the Potter in the House of the Lord. <sup>f</sup> I will declare the Decree: The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this Day have I begotten thee. Ask of me and I shall give thee the Heathen for thine Inheritance, and the uttermost Parts of the Earth for thy Possession. <sup>g</sup> I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my right Hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my Heart is glad, and my Glory rejoiceth, my Flesh also shall rest in Hope. For thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell; neither wilt thou suffer thy Holy one to see Corruption. Thou wilt shew me the Path of Life; in thy Presence is Fulness of

<sup>a</sup> Matth. i. 23.    *Isaiah* vii. 14.    <sup>b</sup> Matth. ii. 15.  
*Hosea* xi. 1.    <sup>c</sup> *Psalms* lxxix. 21.    <sup>d</sup> Matth. xxvii. 35.  
*Psalms* xxii. 18.    <sup>e</sup> Matth. xxvii. 9.    *Zech.* xi. 12.  
<sup>f</sup> *Psalms* ii. 7, 8.    <sup>g</sup> *Psalms* xvi.

*Joy, and at thy right Hand there are Pleasures for evermore.*

These, and many other Places which at first View seem to relate to the Times in which they were spoken, or the Person of the Speaker, are produced, and differently apply'd by *Jesus*, and his Apostles.

The Point we are next to examine then is, whether the Applications made by these Persons are possible Ones.

And no sooner is this Point examin'd, but we find that though some of these Texts do at first View seem to relate to the Times in which they were spoken, or the Person of the Speaker, yet that they really do not, but must relate to other Persons, or Times. Thus, of those cited, *Thou art my Son, this Day have I begotten thee. I will give thee the Heathen for thine Inheritance, and the uttermost Parts of the Earth for thy Possession.* These were Circumstances never applicable to *David*, and consequently, he could not in these Places speak of himself. So the Words cited out of the sixteenth Psalm could not relate to *David*; he could not call himself the *Holy One*, this Term being unsuitable to his Character, and to that Humility which appeared in his Writings. And those particular Expressions, <sup>a</sup> *They gave me Gall for my Meat, and in my Thirst they gave me Vinegar to drink,* <sup>b</sup> *they part my Garments among them, and cast Lots upon my*

<sup>a</sup> Psalm lxi. 21.

<sup>b</sup> Psalm xxii. 18.

*Vesture*, which were apply'd to *Jesus* by one of his Apostles, we have reason to think from *David's* History, were Circumstances that never happen'd in his Life.

Now, then if these Characters and Circumstances delivered by *David* could not relate to himself, they must relate to some other Person; and if they do this, he has the best Right to them whom they suit, and who can give the Evidence of Miracle and Prophecy that they really relate to him.

But *Secondly*, As for those Texts which directly suit the Circumstances of Affairs when delivered, the Person of the Prophet, or the then State of Things, the Answer is direct; and if it was not unsuitable to the Wisdom of God, to let some Events under the first Dispensation resemble the great Events under the Second; if it was no Contradiction to his Attributes sometimes to give his People a Sign of temporal Deliverance, which should bear Resemblance to the greatest Deliverance they were capable of receiving: Then could it be no Misapplication to apply the Words of the first Event to the Second, of the Sign to the Thing signify'd, they being directly according to the Will of God fulfilled in both Cases.

To instance, Supposing God when he gave *Abaz* a Sign of Deliverance from *Pekah*, and *Remaliab*, likewise intended that this should be a Sign of that great future Deliverance of Mankind, by a Child born of a Virgin; then, when *Jesus* was born of a Virgin, might *Matthew* properly

properly say, *Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled, which was spoken of the Lord by the Prophet, (That it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the Prophet, when he gave a Sign which prefigured the Birth of the Messiah,) Behold a Virgin shall be with Child, &c.*

Thus again, Supposing God when He sent his People into *Egypt*, designed sending his own Son thither, and intended that one Event should prefigure the other, then, when *Jesus* came out of *Egypt*, might *Matthew* again justly say, *That it might be fulfilled, which was spoken of the Lord by the Prophet, saying, (That this Event might come to pass according to the Will of God, and the Expression of the Prophet concerning a former one that prefigured it,) Out of Egypt have I called my Son.*

But not so much as this is wanted in the present Argument; it is not necessary that the Sign given to *Abaz* should be a Sign of the Birth of the *Messiah*; or the Event of *Israel's* being called out of *Egypt* prefigure the calling of the *Messiah* from thence, to make *Matthew's* Application just. For if a *Messiah* was intended, the whole Manner and Circumstances of his Life and Death must be also predetermined by God. Well then might *Matthew* when *Jesus* was born of a Virgin, or when he came out of *Egypt*, upon a Consideration of God's determinate Counsel and Knowledge, say, *Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the Prophet,*  
(That

(That this Event which God has long ago determin'd should come to pass, may now do so according to the Expression of the Prophet; *Behold a Virgin shall be with Child, &c. Out of Egypt have I called my Son.*

But we need not seek for many Solutions of the above propos'd Difficulty; one possible one is sufficient, as has been before observed.

The whole Mistake concerning these Applications seems to be taking them in a wrong View, and imagining that *Matthew* brings them as Proof that *Jesus* is the *Messiah*. He offers at no such Thing, nor is it his Business in this Place. He is only telling a plain Narrative, the History of *Jesus*, and by the Way remarks upon several Events in which the Will of God was fulfill'd according to the Expressions of the Prophets.

In short, unless it can be proved, that the Texts applied by *Matthew* could not possibly relate to *Jesus*; that God could not, if he pleased, make Events under the first Dispensation resemble others under the Second; give Signs of temporal Deliverance which should be Signs also of Deliverance by *Messiah*; and that the Manner and Circumstance of the Appearance of the *Messiah*, was not predetermin'd by God; it cannot be proved that he has been guilty of Misapplication; but neither of the above mentioned Particulars, (much less all of them) can be proved; then it cannot be proved that *Matthew* has been guilty of Misapplication.

But *Secondly*, Another Mark of Falshood is objected against the Christian Religion, and that is, *Matthew* makes a false Quotation, and says, *He [Jesus] <sup>a</sup> came and dwelt in a City called Nazareth: That it might be fulfill'd which was spoken by the Prophets, he shall be called a Nazarene.*

This Objection is almost too slight to answer. Suppose the *Jews* had a Tradition, which arose from the Mouth of some of their Prophets, that the *Messiah* was to be a *Nazarene*; this is a much more easy Supposition than that *Matthew* should make a false Quotation, which would manifestly have been an Injury, and could not possibly have been any way an Advantage to his Cause. As then we are sure, that if *Matthew* was not an Impostor, he could not, and as we have Reason to think that if he was one, he would not make a false Quotation, we ought not to look upon it as such, notwithstanding we cannot, at so great a Distance of Time, find whence it is produced.

But another Objection yet remains, and that is, *Elias* was to come before the Coming of the *Messiah*; but *Elias* is not come; consequently, *Jesus* is not the *Messiah*.

The Argument stands thus. The Followers of *Jesus* do not pretend to say that *Elias* is come, if *John Baptist* is not *Elias*: But *John Baptist* is not *Elias*, (Proof his <sup>b</sup> own Words;); then *Elias* is not come.

<sup>a</sup> Matth. ii. 23.

<sup>b</sup> John i. 21.



Now the Account given by *Jesus* of this Matter is this, that *John Baptist* was the <sup>a</sup> *Elias* which was to come; that he was the Person promised by the Prophets under the Name of *Elias*.

The Query is, whether this is a possible Account of the Matter, whether this Assertion of *Jesus's* concerning *John Baptist* is consistent with *Jewish* Prophecy, that is, whether the calling one Person by the Name of another whom he resembles, whose Character he takes, and by whose Spirit and Power he acts (which is the Account given of *John Baptist* by the Angel <sup>b</sup> *Gabriel*) is agreeable to *Jewish* Scriptures.

This Way of Speaking is certainly agreeable to *Jewish* Scriptures, where we often find the Characters and Offices of Persons given us in their Names, and the same Person called by different Names. Instances of the first Kind are frequent; of the second, the following one is sufficient. It is said, that <sup>c</sup> *David*, the Son of <sup>d</sup> *David*, and the <sup>e</sup> *Lord* shall reign over the House of Jacob for ever.

It follows then, that provided *John Baptist* acted by the Spirit and Power of *Elias*, acted as *Elias* would have himself acted, if he had been upon Earth; it was not unsuitable to *Jewish* Prophecy to foretel him under the Name of *Elias*; but *John Baptist* did act in the Spirit and

<sup>a</sup> Matth. xi. 14.

<sup>b</sup> Luke i. 17.

<sup>c</sup> Ezek. xxxvii. 25.

<sup>d</sup> Jer. xxxiii. 17, 21.

<sup>e</sup> Micah iv. 7.

Power of *Elias*; act as *Elias* would himself have acted, if he had been upon Earth, for which we have the Evidence of Miracle and Prophecy; then it was not unsuitable to *Jewish* Prophecy to foretel him under the Name of *Elias*. And if it was not unsuitable to *Jewish* Prophecy to foretel *John Baptist* under the Name of *Elias*, then *Jesus's* Assertion that *John Baptist* was the promised *Elias*, was not unsuitable to *Jewish* Prophecy; and if *Jesus's* Assertion concerning *John Baptist* is neither unsuitable to *Jewish* Prophecy, nor is an impossible one, then it ought to be received before any other whatsoever, having the Evidence of Miracle and Prophecy, and *John Baptist* ought to be received as the promised *Elias*.

That the speaking of Persons under the Names of others, whom they resemble, is common to other Nations besides the *Jews*, is too well known to need Instances.



## S E C T. XI.

AND now having shewn that the *Christian* Religion has the Evidence of Miracle and Prophecy; that the *Jews* cannot consistently, with a Belief of *Moses*, reject *Jesus* as not being the *Messiah*, the Person he pretends to be; and having seen the Insignificancy of the Objections commonly urged against him, I proceed to shew,  
S That

That the *Jews* are so far from being able to prove *Jesus* not the *Messiah*, that on the contrary, their own Books are Imposture, if he is not this Person.

I pass by all those repeated Promises above produced of a *King* and *Kingdom*, *Deliverances*, *Blessings*, &c. which if not fulfilled in *Jesus*, are yet unfulfilled, and consequently are justly suspected of never coming from God; and only insist on the following ones.

God in a particular Manner calls *Abraham* from his Kindred and his Countrey, and three Times solemnly assures him<sup>a</sup>, *That in him and his Seed all the Nations of the Earth should be blessed*. Now there is no Pretence that all the Nations of the Earth have been really blessed in *Abraham*, or in any Person descended from him, unless it be in *Jesus*; and though we were to understand the Words according to the Sense which some put on them, (which doubtless is not the obvious and literal one) that is, that *Abraham* should be a Standard of Blessedness to Mankind, and People should say when they bless, *God make you as Abraham*, they are even in this Sense unfulfilled; *Abraham*, or any of his Descendants, having never been a Standard of Blessedness to any Nation, (unless perhaps a short Time to the *Jewish*) much less to all; and the Seed of *Abraham*, but in the fourth or fifth Generation from him, fell into Bondage and Slavery, recovered but short-lived Prosperity, came again into Distress, and have continued many Ages in

<sup>a</sup> Gen. xii. 3. xviii. 18. xxii. 18.

a Condition that is the Reverse of Blessedness.

This Promise is then yet unfulfilled, or fulfilled in *Jesus*; if it is unfulfilled, then there is a Mark of Falshood in the *Jewish* Religion, it being impossible for God to promise and not to perform in due Time.

If it be replied that this Promise is yet to be fulfilled, and that *a Thousand Years with the Lord are as one Day*; I answer, that though *a Thousand Years with the Lord are as one Day*, yet they are not so with Man; and that when the supreme Being condescends to communicate himself to Man, he must act with him according to his Nature, as well as his own; he cannot then give so solemn a Promise of such a Nature to *Abraham*, and not fulfil it in above three thousand Years, and besides let the Seed of *Abraham* continue for many Generations in such a distressed and dispersed Condition, that all Hopes and human Prospect of its being ever fulfilled, ceases.

If the *Jew* yet tells us, That according to our Account of Things, this Promise was not fulfilled till near two thousand Years after it was given, and that what might for wise and good Reasons be deferr'd so long, might for as wise and good ones be deferr'd longer; I again return, That though the promised Blessing was so long deferr'd, yet by constant Revelations from God, the Prospect of its being fulfilled increased, and God kept up the Hopes and Expectations of the *Jews* by other Prophecies, which pointed out the Time, Manner, and Circumstances of this Blessing; he renew'd and confirm'd it to them

by the Mouth of his Prophets. But now as all Prophecy has ceased for above two thousand Years, there is no Prospect of its being ever fulfilled, and it stands as a Mark of Imposture in the *Jewish* Religion, if *Jesus* is not the *Messiah*.

This is the plain and direct View, in which this Text is to be consider'd; and those strangely mistake Things, who considering it simply, give it in Evidence of the *Christian* Religion. *Jesus* must be first proved the *Messiah*, before we can apply the Blessedness; and those who deny his being the *Messiah*, deny the Blessedness. Yet this Text affords a strong Argument to the *Jew*, that *Jesus* is the *Messiah*; and as he cannot pretend that it is fulfilled in any Person if not in *Jesus*, he is driven to acknowledge, either that God promised and did not perform, or that *Jesus* is the *Messiah*.

2dly, *Jacob* blessing his Sons, declares, that *The Scepter* <sup>b</sup> *shall not depart from Judah, nor a Lawgiver from between his Feet, until Shiloh come.* Here then is a remarkable Person foretold to come into the World before a certain Period; the Question then is, whether the Person foretold is the *Messiah*, or some other Person: But the *Jews* cannot possibly apply this Prophecy to any other Person; then it is yet unfulfilled, or fulfilled in *Jesus*. If it is yet unfulfilled, then there is a Mark of Falshood in the *Jewish* Religion, the Period being manifestly past before which *Jacob* declared that this Person should appear.

<sup>b</sup> Gen. xlix. 10.

3dly, *Moses's* Promise to the People, that God would send them *a Prophet like unto himself*, who should be in the Place of God, *and speak the Words of his Mouth*, &c. is fulfilled, or not fulfilled. If it is not fulfilled, there is another Mark of Falshood in the *Jewish* Religion; if it is fulfilled, that it can be fulfilled in no other Person than *Jesus*, is evident, from the *Jewish* Accounts of their own Prophets, none of whom were like unto *Moses*, and from the direct Confession of one of them, Deut. xxxiv. 10, 11. *And there arose not a Prophet since in Israel like unto Moses.*

4thly, All those Promises to *David* of *establishing his Throne for ever*, *letting his Seed remain as long as the Sun and Moon endureth*, &c. must be fulfilled in *Jesus*, or are Delusion and Imposture. Ten Tribes were rent from *David* in the second Generation after him, and all Government has been taken from his Family for above these seventeen hundred Years: Shall we then assert that God promised and did not perform; or that these Promises may yet be fulfilled, notwithstanding there has been so long an Interruption to all Dominion in the House of *David*? The Point is evident; either these Promises are *Jewish* Forgeries, or they are fulfilled in *Jesus*.

Indeed it seems as if God by taking ten Tribes from *Rehoboam*, purposely design'd to shew the People that it was not a temporal Kingdom which was to be established in the House of *David*, and that these Promises had another Signification.

<sup>c</sup> Psalm lxxxix.

And if we consider the last Words of the Son of *Jesse*, we have Reason to think that he himself understood as much. <sup>d</sup> *The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his Word was in my Tongue. The God of Israel said, The Rock of Israel spake to me, he that ruleth over Men must be just, ruling in the Fear of God: And he shall be as the Light of the Morning, when the Sun riseth, even a Morning without Clouds; as the tender Grass springing out of the Earth by clear shining after Rain. Although my House be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all Things and sure: For this is all my Salvation, and all my Desire, although he make it not to grow.*

5thly, The fifty-third Chapter of *Isaiab* relates to the *Messiah*, or it does not relate to him; if it does not relate to the *Messiah*, then the *Jew* must shew to whom it does relate, and who that Person is that is so great, that *Kings shut their Mouths at him*, yet is led like a *Lamb to the Slaughter wounded for our Transgressions; bears the Sins of many; makes Intercession for Transgressors; sees his Seed, and prolongs his Days, after his Soul is made an Offering for Sin*; Let them shew who this Person is, if it be not the *Messiah*. If they cannot do this, then there is another Mark of Falshood in the *Jewish* Religion, the Time for the Appearance of this Person being so limited by the Prophet *Daniel*, (as will appear presently) that he must be already come, if *Daniel* is not an Impostor. For that

<sup>d</sup> 2 Sam. xxiii. 2, 3, 4, 5.

*Isaiab* and *Daniel* both describe the same Person, is evident from comparing the Characters given by each of them.

6thly, The following remarkable Prophecy is fulfilled in *Jesus*, or the Person who delivered it is an Impostor. *Seventy Weeks are determin'd upon thy People, and upon thy holy City, to finish the Transgression, and to make an End of Sins, and to make Reconciliation for Iniquity, and to bring in everlasting Righteousness, and to seal up the Vision and Prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy, &c. And after threescore and two Weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: And the People of the Prince that shall come, shall destroy the City, and the Sanctuary, and the End thereof shall be with a Flood, and unto the End of the War Desolations are determined.*

Now this Prophecy cannot possibly be applied to any Person who has yet appeared in the World unless it be *Jesus*: And though the *Jews* and some Persons for them, would fain apply it to one of their own High-priests, yet it is impossible they should do this, the Character of the Person, and Work he was to perform as *finishing Transgression, making an End of Sins, bringing in everlasting Righteousness, sealing up the Vision and Prophecy, &c.* being no way applicable to any such Person.

If then this Prophecy cannot possibly be applied to any Person who has yet appeared in the World unless to *Jesus*, then it is fulfilled in him, or is unfulfilled: But it cannot possibly be

§ Dan. ix. 24, & 26.



unfulfilled, unless *Daniel* who delivered it, is an Impostor; because according to him this Person was to appear before the Destruction of the *City* and *Sanctuary*, and both these have been destroy'd seventeen hundred Years.

That this Prophecy is applicable to *Jesus* in all its Parts, is confess'd by the Adversaries of *Christianity*, when they take Pains to shew that it is a *Christian* Forgery.

If we consider this Prophecy rightly, we shall not need to be critical in a Calculation of *Daniel's seventy Weeks*; it is enough that it was to be fulfilled before the Destruction of the *City* and *Sanctuary*: So that these being destroy'd, it must be fulfilled, or *Daniel*, who delivered it, an Impostor.

The true End of this remarkable Prophecy (like the fifty-third Chapter of *Isaiab*) seems to be, to take off Objections which might arise on Account of a suffering *Messiah*, and to confirm and establish the Weak in future Ages. Thus,

As *Abraham* had been assured *that in his Seed all the Families of the Earth should be blessed*; *Moses* had told the People that *God would raise them up a Prophet from amongst their Brethren, who would speak to them the Words of God, and to whom they should hearken*; and *Nathan, Isaiab, Jeremiab*, and other Prophets, promised that *the Throne of David should be established for ever*; that a *King should rule in Righteousness*, &c. and were full of Descriptions of this *King and Kingdom*, lest the *Jews* might from hence conceive Hopes of a temporal Prince and world-

ly Prosperity and Grandeur, God kindly guarded them against so dangerous a Mistake, and let them know by his Prophet *Isaiab*, that the Prince who was to be their Deliverer, was to have *no outward Form or Comeliness, but to be a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with Grief*; that the Evil he was to deliver them from, was *their Sins*; and that the Manner in which he was to do it, was by *Wounds, Sufferings, Stripes, Death*; and again, he by *Daniel* confirms this, perhaps unacceptable, Truth, and fixes a *Period*, namely, the Destruction of their *City and Sanctuary*, before which, he assures them their Prince should be thus treated and cut off.

7thly, The Time is so limited for the fulfilling another remarkable Prophecy, that it must be fulfilled, or the Person who delivered it an Impostor, *† The Lord whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his Temple: Even the Messenger of the Covenant, whom ye delight in: Behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts.*

Now there is no Pretence, nor can be any, that this Text is fulfilled, if not in *Jesus* (in his being the *Messiah*, and in Person in the Temple) and if it is not fulfilled, then neither can it ever be; the Temple being destroyed. And if it neither is, nor can be fulfilled, unless *Jesus* is the *Messiah*, then it is either fulfilled in him, or is Delusion and Imposture.

So again, those other Texts, *I will shake all Nations, and the Desire of all Nations shall come, and I will fill this House with Glory, saith*

† Malachi iii. 1.

g Hag. ii. 7, 9

*the Lord of Hosts. The Glory of this latter House shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of Hosts,* can in no Sense be true, according to the best Accounts of both Temples, if *Jesus* is not the *Messiah*.

Again, lastly, There are several Prophecies concerning the Calling of the *Gentiles*, which are yet unfulfilled, or fulfilled by calling of them to the *Christian* Religion. If they are yet unfulfilled, then we cannot reconcile with the Wisdom and Justice of God his suffering so remarkable and amazing a Conversion of *Gentiles* to a false Religion, which was a direct Way to draw the *Jews* into Error by an Application of this Event to their Prophecies; if they are fulfilled, that they can only be fulfilled in the Conversion of the *Gentiles* to *Christianity*, is evident.

Now if one remarkable Text standing for many Ages unfulfilled, raises Suspicion of Falseness, several Texts doing so, and some of them such as now never can be fulfilled, are evident Proofs of it.

We can have no greater Certainty of a Revelation than we have, that God cannot deceive; that he will not require our Assent to his Will without giving us sufficient Evidence that it is such; that he will deal with us according to our Nature, &c. He cannot then promise to *Abraham*, that in his Seed all the Families of the Earth should be blessed, and yet defer this Blessings above three thousand Years; to *Moses*, that he would raise up a Prophet like unto himself, who should speak the Words of God, yet never

never send any such Person; to *David*, to *establish his Throne for ever*, yet immediately rend ten Tribes from him, and let his Seed be scattered seventeen hundred Years together over the Face of the Earth; to *come suddenly to his Temple*, and *fill it with Glory*, yet let the Temple be destroyed so that 'tis impossible he should do this; to *make an End of Sins*, to *make Reconciliation for Iniquity*, and to *bring in everlasting Righteousness*, and to *seal up the Vision and Prophecy*, yet never send any Person on such an Errand. These are direct Impossibilities; and I must conclude, according to my Proposition, That the *Jewish Religion* is Imposture, if *Jesus* is not the *Messiah*.

It is remarkable, and worth observing, that the Evidence to a *Jew* of *Jesus's* being the *Messiah*, increas'd with the Difficulties which arose against it; and that every Circumstance was guarded, which might be an Occasion of stumbling to them. This seems to be the Wisdom of God.

Thus, When *Jesus* appear'd and preached the true God; gave the most perfect System of Morality, and work'd Miracles; he ought to have been received as a Teacher from God, on account of his Miracles, and also as the Prophet foretold by *Moses*. And accordingly, as has been observed, he expects their Conviction upon this Evidence, *Believe me for the very Works Sake, &c.* *If I had not done among you the Works which no other Man did, &c.* And again, when *John* sent two of his Disciples to

ask him, <sup>h</sup> *Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?* He only answers by recounting his Works, *Go and shew John, says he, those Things which ye do hear and see: The Blind receive their Sight, and the Lame walk, the Lepers are cleansed, and the Deaf hear, the Dead are raised up, and the Poor have the Gospel preached to them. And blessed is he who-so-ever shall not be offended in me.* (The Number and Nature of my Works, my Miracles, are full Evidence that I am the promised Prophet, and blessed is he, who not prejudiced by worldly Views, can receive this Evidence, and be my Disciple.)

Here then, the Works of *Jesus*, his Miracles, were full Evidence that he was the Prophet *Moses* foretold, and the promised *Messiah*. But when he came to suffer, then had the *Jews* a Stumbling-block, owing to their own Prejudices and worldly Attachments. Now was the Hour come, when *blessed was he who was not offended at a suffering Messiah*. Now was it Time for the *Jews* again to look into their Books to which *Jesus* over and over kindly refers them. Here *Isaiab*, *Daniel*, and *Zachary*, set them right by telling them, that the *Messiah* was to be a *Man of Sorrows*, and acquainted with Grief; that he was to pour out his Soul to Death; that after *threescore and two Weeks* he should be cut off, but not for himself; and that the Sword should awake against a *Man that was Fellow to the Lord of Hosts*.

<sup>h</sup> Matt xi. 3, 4.

Again, When Persecution arose, which was another Bar to Flesh and Blood, then were those remarkable Prophecies concerning the calling of the *Gentiles*, fulfilled, and fulfilled under this extraordinary disadvantageous Circumstance, that the Conversion was to a persecuted Church.

When the City and Temple were destroy'd, then had the *Jews* Demonstration that the *Messiah* was come, or that *Daniel*, who told them that the *Messiah* should be cut off before this Period; and *Malachi* and *Haggai* who had promised that *the Lord should come suddenly to his Temple*, and that *the Glory of the second House should be greater than that of the former*, were Impostors.

And at this Day the dispersed and distressed Condition of the *Jews*, as well as their unfulfilled Prophecies, is an Evidence against them.

Though it is not necessary that God, after he has once revealed himself, should give fresh Evidences to his Revelation in different Ages, yet 'tis necessary that he do not mislead and give Grounds for Hope of Deliverance, yet not let this Deliverance ever arrive; and further let an Impostor arise to whom the Characters of the promised, and expected Person, are so suitable, that by that Means he draws Multitudes into Error. In this Case the People favour'd with a Revelation, are in a worse Condition than all others, one Part of them being deceived by an Impostor, the other left to languish in fruitless Hopes and Expectations.

But, if the *Jewish* Religion advances Inconsistencies

sistencies and Impossibilities, if *Jesus* is not the *Messiah*; on the contrary, change the Prospect, and, if he is this Person, the whole of it is rational and consistent.

In the first Place, it is rational to expect that the *Messiah*, a Person who was *to speak the Words of God*, to be hearken'd to *in all Things*, and to be the Author of a new Dispensation, should be foretold by the *Jewish* Prophets, particularly by *Moses*, this being a connecting Evidence, an Evidence that the Author of the first was the Author of the second Dispensation; that the very God who brought the People out of *Egypt*, and gave them their Law, also sent them that Person who abolished it. And as it is rational to expect that the *Messiah* should be foretold in the *Jewish* Scriptures, so in *Jesus* we find a Concurrence of all the prophetic Characters of the *Messiah*; he is truly the *Blessing* promised to *Abraham*, and in the Saviour of the World *all the Families of the Earth are blessed*; the Prophet *Moses* describes, *He delivered a Doctrine worthy of God, and spake in his Name, and the Thing which he spake followed and came to pass*; he had the divine Attestation that (according to his own Declaration) *he did not speak of himself, but i whatever the Father commanded, that he spake*; he is the King promised to *David*, *Isaiab*, and *Daniel*; in his divine Nature truly reigns over the *House of Israel for ever*; does not judge after the Sight of his Eyes, neither reprove after the Hearing of his Ears, but with Righteousness

<sup>i</sup> John xii. 49.

judge the Poor, and reprove with Equity; and his Kingdom is such as shall not pass away, nor be left to other Hands, but shall stand for ever; he is the Man of Sufferings, *Isaiab*, *Daniel*, and *Zachary* describes; he is born of the Tribe, Family, and in the Town foretold; he appeared at the promised, and what's more, at the expected Time: When therefore all Things concur, when Miracle, Prophecy, and prophetic Characters all meet in *Jesus*, where is the Ground for Infidelity? Why is not *Jesus* acknowledged the *Messiah* of the *Jews*?

One Thing we must observe, and that is, that in a Dispute betwixt a *Jew* and a *Christian* who both acknowledge the Divinity of the Old Testament, the *Christian* Evidence, the Evidence that *Jesus* is the *Messiah*, increases with Time, and consequently the *Jewish* Cause grows every Day worse and worse. And as by the Confession of the *Jews*, their Prophecies are unfulfilled, if not fulfilled in *Jesus*, they have every Day more Reason than other to believe they are fulfilled in him, or are Imposture.

On the other Hand, every independent Argument for the Divinity of the *Jewish* Religion, is a Proof of *Christianity*.

As to the *Deist*, the Evidence to him that *Jesus* is the *Messiah*, the Person he pretended to be, in short is this; *Jesus* appears and teaches a Doctrine worthy of God, and worked Miracles to confirm his divine Mission. Whilst then *Jesus's* Miracles are not invalidated, he has a Right to be receiv'd as a Person sent from God. But

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he also pretends to fulfil Prophecies, and to be spoken of in a certain Book, he must then fulfil Prophecies, and be spoken of in this Book. By this Book then, which he appeals to, he must be try'd; and if it appears that he makes an impossible Claim, he is to be rejected. But no sooner is this examin'd, but we find that he does not make an impossible Claim; on the contrary, such a Person, as he appears to be, is exactly described and foretold in this Book. And further we find that he has the highest Evidence of Prophecy.

If any *Doubt* yet remains concerning the Meaning of certain Texts, it must be remembered that a possible Sense supported by Miracle and Prophecy, ought to be received before any other whatsoever.

## C O N C L U S I O N.

**H**itherto we have considered several Applications made by *Jesus* and his Apostles, as not vacating the Evidence of Miracle and Prophecy: We now proceed to look on them in another View, and to examine how far they may be reckoned to give Evidence, and be judged rational Parts of a great Design.

And *First*, Though these Characters and Circumstances might not singly be sufficient to prove a Revelation, yet join'd with Miracle and Prophecy, they give additional Evidence, and form a threefold Cord not to be broken.

Miracle alone was sufficient Evidence that *Je-  
sus*

*Jesus* was sent by God; his fulfilling Prophecies proved him to be the *Messiah* of the *Jews*; and the prophetic Characters and Circumstances come in as it were over and above, to guard against those Prejudices and unreasonable Doubts of Mankind, which might possibly arise at the Manner of his Appearance and Sufferings. And surely, it is not only probable that the *Christian Religion* is a divine Revelation, which would be sufficient to determine every rational Enquirer to embrace it; but it is no less than Demonstration, that Miracles, clear and express Prophecies, and a Number of prophetic Characters, and Circumstances, cannot meet in an Impostor.

2dly, As some of the prophetic Characters and Descriptions of the *Messiah* might be given to remove Offences, which might arise from his mean Appearance and Sufferings; so might others which describe his Grandeur, Offices, and Kingdom, be delivered wholly for the Sake of that Generation to which they were given, to keep up the Hopes and Expectations of the People, and make them have a constant Eye to this great Deliverer.

3dly, If *Jesus* be the Person he pretends to be, the Deliverer of us from our Sins, then the Dignity of his Person, and Importance of his Errand, make it reasonable to expect that the Prophets who lived before him should be full of Characters and Descriptions of him; and these Characters and Descriptions may teach us in what Manner we should receive and honour him.

4thly, As the making the Ceremonies and Sa-

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crifices,

crifices under the *Jewish* Law resemble the Sacrifice by *Jesus*, was a proper Mode of Worship for God to institute, because in these was the Death of *Jesus* the great Sacrifice constantly shewed forth; so was it reasonable God should make the first Dispensation a Pattern of the second, that the *Jews* might be inclined to part with the first, give the Shadow for the Substance, when the perfect Dispensation should arrive.

This is one View of the Author to the *Hebrews* in his shewing a Resemblance betwixt the Law and the Gospel; and they strangely mistake Things, who say that this Author is proving *Christianity* by typical Arguments. He is so far from attempting to prove *Christianity* at that Time, that he declares he will not do it, that *leaving the <sup>k</sup> Principles of the Doctrine of Christ, he will go on to Perfection.* And he gives a Reason why he will not do it, namely, because he look'd on it as an impossible Work *to renew again by <sup>l</sup> Repentance, those who had once been enlightened* and were fallen off; he could not hope to offer new Arguments which might convince such Apostates. Writing then as to Believers, he goes on to set before them the Difference betwixt the Law and the Gospel; the *Imperfection of the one, and the Perfection of the other*: He shews them how unable the Law was to do what they wanted of it, *take <sup>m</sup> away Sins*, but that in the Dispensation by *Jesus*, *their <sup>n</sup> Sins and Iniquities would be remembred no more.* That the

<sup>k</sup> Heb. vi. 1, &c.

<sup>l</sup> Heb. vi. 4, 5, 6, &c.

<sup>m</sup> Heb. x. 4.

<sup>n</sup> Heb. x. 17.

o Law could make nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better Hope did; that under the first Dispensation, the High-priest, p who offered for the Sins of others, himself wanted a Sacrifice; that under the second, we had a q High-priest who was holy, barmless, undefiled, separate from Sinners, who after he had once offered one Sacrifice for Sins, for ever sat down on the Right Hand of God; that the Dispensation by Moses was only a Pattern, Example, Shadow, Figure of the Dispensation by Jesus. From the Imperfection then of this Dispensation, this first Covenant, as he calls it; from its being unable to take away Sins; its being only a Shadow, Pattern, Figure of the second; as well as from God's Promise to the Jews to give them a new r Covenant, this Author proves that God never intended that it should remain always, but that as it grew old, it should vanish away, that there should be a s disannulling of the Commandment going before, for the Weakness and Unprofitableness thereof; and that the Priesthood being t changed, there was of Necessity a Change also of the Law.

5thly, If some Events under the first Dispensation were made to resemble others under the second, it was of great Use to the Jews to reconcile them to Difficulties under this last, and was a training of them up to believe the Mysteries of the Gospel.

Thus, if they should make a Difficulty of be-

o Heb. vii. 19. p Heb. vii. 27. q Heb. vii. 26. x. 12, &c.

r Heb. viii. 6, 7, &c. to the End of the Chapter.

s Heb. vii. 18.

t Heb. vii. 12.

believing that *Jesus* bore their Sins on the Cross, this Difficulty would rationally be removed when they remembered that the Scape-Goat bore their Sins into the Wilderness. If they should object to the Possibility of *Jesus's* Resurrection after lying in the Grave three Days, they might remember that *Jonas* was delivered from the Belly of the Whale after lying there an equal Time. If they doubted of Salvation by looking to a crucified Saviour, *Moses* would put them in mind that the *Israelites* were healed of bodily Diseases by looking on the Serpent. Thus could not the *Jews* rationally object to the second Dispensation, on account of any Difficulties it contained, when they were used to believe equal Difficulties in the first.

To conclude, If God was pleased to give Signs of Deliverances and Blessings under the first Dispensation which resembled others under the second, which pointed to the great Deliverance by *Jesus*; he by this lets us see the Insignificancy of temporal Felicity consider'd abstractedly and by it self, and that there is but one Deliverance of Importance to Mankind, the Deliverance by *Jesus* the Redeemer.

F I N I S.

