Honouring the Dead, a Part of Natural Religion.

[3.] The honour generally due unto all men maketh a decent interring of them to be convenient even for very humanity's sake. And therefore so much as is mentioned in the burial of the widow's son, the carrying of him forth upon a bier and the accompanying of him to the earth, hath been used even amongst infidels, all men accounting it a very extreme destitution not to have at least this honour done them. Some man's estate may require a great deal more according as the fashion of the country where he dieth doth afford. And unto this appertained the ancient use of the Jews to embalm the corpse with sweet odours, and to adorn the sepulchres of certain.

In regard of the quality of men it hath been judged fit to commend them unto the world at their death, amongst the heathen in funeral orations, amongst the Jews in sacred poems; and why not in funeral sermons also amongst Christians? Us it sufficeth that the known benefit hereof doth counteract millions of such inconveniences as are therein surmised, although they were not surmised only but found therein. The life and the death of saints is precious in God's sight. Let it not seem odious in our eyes if both the one and the other be spoken of then especially, when the present occasion doth make men's minds the more capable of such speech. The care no doubt of the living both to live and to die well must needs be somewhat increased, when they know that their departure shall not be folded up in silence but the ears of many be made acquainted with it. Besides when they hear how mercifully God hath dealt with their brethren in their last need, besides the praise which they give to God and the joy which they have or should have by reason of their fellowship and communion with saints, is not their hope also much confirmed against the day of their own dissolution? Again the sound of these things doth not so pass the ears of them that are most loose and dissolute in life but it causeth them one time or other to wish, "O that I might die the death of the righteous and that my end might be like his!" Thus much peculiar good there doth grow at those times by speech concerning the dead, besides the benefit of public instruction common unto funeral with other sermons.

For the comfort of them whose minds are through natural affection pensive in such cases no man can justly mislike the custom which the Jews had to end their burials with funeral banquet, in reference whereunto the prophet Jeremy spake concerning the people whom God had appointed unto a grievous manner of destruction, saying that men should not "give them the cup of consolation to drink for their father or for their mother," because it should not be now with them as in peaceable times with others, who bringing their ancestors unto the grave with weeping eyes have notwithstanding means wherewith to be recomforted. "Give wine," said Salomon, "unto them that have grief of heart." Surely he that ministereth unto them comfortable speech doth much more than give them wine.

[4.] But the greatest thing of all other about this duty of Christian burial is an outward testification of the hope which we have touching the resurrection of the dead. For which purpose let any man of reasonable judgment examine, whether

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Funeral Sermons warranted by Analogy of Scripture. 441

[3] [This seems to refer to a complaint of T.-C. (i. 162) that "the device of man's brain . . . driveth away a necessary duty of the minister, which is to comfort "with the word of God the parties "which be grieved at the death of "their friends." See Def. 735; T. C. iii. 240.]

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of priests to be present at burials \(1\) let it be known that others might discharge that duty, seeing all were not priests which had rooms of public function in their synagogues; \(2\) and if any man be of opinion that they had no such form of service, thus much there is to make the contrary more probable. The Jews at this day have, as appeareth in their form of funeral prayers \(3\) and in certain of their funeral sermons published \(4\), neither are they so affected towards Christians, as to borrow that order from us, besides that the form thereof is such as hath in it sundry things which the very words of the Scripture itself do seem to allude unto, as namely after departure from the sepulchre unto the house whence the dead was brought it sheweth the manner of their burial feast \(5\), and a consolatory form of prayers appointed for the master of the synagogue threat to utter \(6\), albeit I may not deny it hath also some

\[1\] Lev. xxi. 1. "Speak unto the priests, the sons of Aaron, and say unto them, There shall none be defiled for the dead among his people." Ap. T. C. l. 161.3

\[2\] Of which a specimen was translated into Latin by Genebrard, from the Mazaror or Prayer Book of the Roman Jews, and published 1575. It may be found among the Opuscula at the end of his Chrono.

\[3\] Leo of Modena, (al. R. Jehuda Arke,) published in 1598, at Venice, several funeral orations and some elegies and epitaphs, under the title of "the Desert or Prayers of Judah." The same writer in 1563 published in Italian a History of the Customs of the Jews of his time, from the transla.

\[4\] Quod vivens in corde indicat suum.

\[5\] Deum tempus et mandata ejus serva. Nam istud est omnis dominus.

\[6\] Quæque firma in superna habitantia sub alis Numinis, in gradu sanctorum et prorum, tarn quam splendor firmamentis, collu-

\[7\] [Buxtorf. Synag. Jud. 504] [Hascabra, (a 327 jacuit, dom-

\[8\] [Leo Juda (1574-1654), a famous rabbinical scholar, head of the Synagogue at Venice. But Hooker can hardly have seen his earliest work. v. Biol. Univ.] 1887.
BOOK V.  
Ch. lxxvi. 1.

things which are not perhaps so ancient as the Law and the Prophets.

But whatsoever the Jews' custom was before the days of our Saviour Christ, hath it once at any time been heard of that either church or Christian man of sound belief did ever judge this a thing unmeet, undue, unfit for Christianity, till these miserable days, wherein under the colour of removing superstitious abuses the most effectual means both to testify and to strengthen true religion are plucked at, and in some places even pulled up by the very roots? Take away this which was ordained to show at burials the peculiar hope of the Church of God concerning the dead, and in the manner of those dumb funerals what one thing is there whereby the world may perceive we are Christian men?

LXXVI. I come now unto that function which undertaketh the public ministry of holy things according to the laws of Christian religion. And because the nature of things consisting, as this doth, in action is known by the object whereabout they are conversant, and by the end or scope whereunto they are referred, we must know that the object of this function is both God and men; God in that he is publicly worshipped of his Church, and men in that they are capable of happiness by means which Christian discipline appointeth. So that the sum of our whole labour in this kind is to honour God and to save men.

For whether we severally take and consider men one by one, or else gather them into one society and body, as it hath been before declared 1 that every man's religion is in him the well-spring of all other sound and sincere virtues, from whence both herein in some sort and hereafter more abundantly their full joy and felicity ariseth, because while they live they are blessed of God and when they die their works follow them: so at this present we must again call to mind how the very worldly peace and prosperity, the secular happiness, the temporal and natural good estate both of all men and of all dominions hangeth chiefly upon religion, and doth evermore give plain testimony that as well in this as in other considerations the priest is a pillar of that commonwealth wherein he faithfully serveth God. For if these assertions be true, first that nothing can be enjoyed in this present world against his will which hath made all things; secondly that albeit God doth sometime permit the impious to have, yet impiety permitth them not to enjoy no not temporal blessings on earth; thirdly that God hath appointed those blessings to attend as handmaids upon religion; and fourthly that without the work of the ministry religion by no means can possibly continue, the use and benefit of that sacred function even towards all men's worldly happiness must needs be granted.

[2.] Now the first being a theorem both understood and confessed of all, to labour in proof thereof were superfluous. The second perhaps may be called in question except it be perfectly understood. By good things temporal therefore we mean length of days, health of body, store of friends and well-willers, quietness, prosperous success of those things we take in hand, riches with fit opportunities to use them during life, reputation following us both alive and dead, children or such as instead of children we wish to leave successors and partakers of our happiness. These things are naturally every man's desire, because they are good. And on whom God bestoweth the same 2, them we confess he graciously blesseth.

Of earthly blessings the meanest is wealth, reputation the chiefest. For which cause we esteem the gain of honour an ample recompense for the loss of all other worldly benefits.

[3.] But forasmuch as in all this there is no certain perpetuity of goodness, nature hath taught to affect these things not for their own sake but with reference and relation to somewhat independently good, as is the exercise of virtue and good works.

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1 "Si creatura Dei merito et dispensatio Dei sumus. Quis enim magis diligat quam ille qui fecit? Quis autem ordinarius recto quam is qui et fecit et diligit? Quis vero sapientius et fortius ordinaret et regere vita potest quam qui perficit? Quapropter omnem po testatem a Deo esse omnis ignominia "ordinamentem et qui non gerunt sentiunt, et qui gerunt cognos-

Temporal Good being always in Order to a higher End,

and none shew countenance of love towards them as much as by pitying them in their misery; that the sins of the ungodly shall bereave them of peace; that all counsels, compotes, and practices against God shall come to nothing; that the lot and inheritance of the unjust is beggary; that the name of unrighteous persons shall putrefy, and the posterity of robbers starve. If any think that iniquity and peace, sin and prosperity can dwell together, they err, because they distinguish not aright between the matter, and that which giveth the form of happiness, between possession and fruition, between the having and the enjoying of good things. The impious cannot enjoy that they have, partly because they receive it not as at God's hands, which only consideration maketh temporal blessings comfortable, and partly because through error placing it above things of far more price and worth they turn that to poison which might be food, they make their prosperity their own snare, in the nest of their highest growth they lay foolishly those eggs out of which their woful overthrow is afterwards hatched. Hereby it cometh to pass that wise and judicious men observing the vain behaviours of such as are risen to unwonted greatness have thereby been able to prognosticate their ruin. So that in very truth no impious or wicked man doth prosper on earth but either sooner or later the world may perceive easily how at such time as others though: then most fortunate they had but only the good estate which fat oxen have above lean, when they appeared to grow their climbing was towards ruin.

The gross and bestial conceit of them which want understanding is only that the fullest bellies are happiest. There-

1 Prov. x. 7.
3 "Tales cultores et dilectores Deos. rum istorum, quorum etiam imitatiore in sceleribus et flagitiis se esse latantur, nullo modo curant "pessimam ac flagitiissimam non esse remp. Tandum stet, inquit, tum tum floreat copia referat, "victoriis gloriae; vel quod est felicis pace secures sit. Et quid ad nos? immo id ad nos magis per augeat, quae quotidians effusionibus suppetant, per quas sibi etiam infirmito sublat quisque potens. Obsequantur divitibus pauperes causa satanis, atque ut eum patrocinius quieta inertia perfruantur, divites pauperibus ad clientelas et ad ministerium sibi fastus abuantur. Populi plaurit, non consultoribus utilitatem suarum, sed largitcibus volupta-
fore the greatest felicity they wish to the commonwealth wherein they live is that it may but abound and stand, that they which are riotous may have to pour out without stint, that the poor may sleep and the rich feed them, that nothing unpleasant may be commanded, nothing forbidden men which themselves have a lust to follow, that kings may provide for the ease of their subjects and not be too curious about their manners, that wantonness, excess, and lewdness of life may be left free, and that no fault may be capital besides dislike of things settled in so good terms. But be it far from the just to dwell either in or near to the tents of these so miserable felicities.

[5] Now whereas we thirdly affirm that religion and the fear of God as well induceth secular prosperity as everlasting bliss in the world to come, this also is true. For otherwise godliness could not be said to have the promises of both lives, to be that ample revenue wherein there is always sufficiency, and to carry with it a general discharge of want, even so general that David himself should protest he “never saw the just forsaken.”

Howbeit to this we must add certain special limitations; as first that we do not forget how crazed and diseased minds (whereof our heavenly Physician must judge) receive often-

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1. [See Wisd. iv. 11.]
2. [Prov. xxx. 8.]
3. [Ps. xxxvii. 25.]

**Limitations of the temporal Promises to Religion.**

Times most benefit by being deprived of those things which are to others beneficially given, as appeareth in that which the wise man hath noted concerning them whose lives God mercifully doth abridge lest wickedness should alter their understanding; again that the measure of our outward prosperity be taken by proportion with that which every man’s estate in this present life requireth. External abilities are instruments of action. It contenteth wise artificers to have their instruments proportionable to their work, rather fit for use than huge and goodwill to please the eye. Seeing then the actions of a servant do not need that which may be necessary for men of calling and place in the world, neither men of inferior condition many things which greater personages can hardly want, surely they are blessed in worldly respects that have wherewith to perform sufficiently what their station and place asketh, though they have no more. For by reason of man’s imbecility and proneness to elation of mind, too high a flow of prosperity is dangerous; too low an ebb again as dangerous, for that the virtue of patience is rare, and the hand of necessity stronger than ordinary virtue is able to withstand. Salomon’s discreet and moderate desire we all know, “Give me O Lord neither riches nor penury.” Men over high exalted either in honour or in power or in nobility or in wealth; they likewise that are as much on the contrary hand sunk either with beggary or through dejection or by baseness do not easily give ear to reason, but the one exceeding apt unto outrages and the other unto petty mischiefs. For greatness delighteth to show itself by effects of power, and baseness to help itself with shifts of malice. For which cause a moderate indifferent temper between fulness of bread and emptiness hath been evermore thought and found (all...