Examples of Fear and Hope blended in Penitence:

BOOK VI.
Ch. iii. 4.

course; all his dealings and proceedings such towards true
converts, as have even filled the grave writings of holy men
with these and the like most sweet sentences: “Repentance
“(if I may so speak) stoppeth God in his way, when being
provoked by crimes past he cometh to revenge them with
most just punishments; yes, it tied it as were the hands
of the avenger, and doth not suffer him to have his will.”
Again, “The merciful eye of God towards men hath no
power to withstand penitency, at what time soever it comes
and again, “God doth not take it so in evil a part, though we wound that which he hath required us to
keep whole, as that after we have taken hurt there should
be in us no desire to receive his help.” Finally, lest I be
carried too far in so large a sea, “There was never any man
condemned of God but for neglect, nor justified except he
had care, of repentance.”

[4.] From these considerations, setting before our eyes our
inexcusable both unthankfulness in disobeying so merciful,
and foolishness in provoking so powerful a God, there ariseth
necessarily a pensive and corrosive desire that we have done
otherwise; a desire which suffereth us to foreswear no time, to
feel no quietness within ourselves, to take neither sleep nor
food with contentment, never to give over supplications, con-
fessions, and other penitent duties, till the light of God’s
reconciled favour shine in our darkened soul.

Fulgentius asking the question, why David’s confession
should be held for effectual penitence, and not Saul’s; answer-
eth, that the one hated sin, the other feared only punish-

ment in this world: Saul’s acknowledgment of sin was fear,
David’s both fear and also love. This was the fountain of
Peter’s tears, this the life and spirit of David’s eloquence, in
those most admirable hymns entitled Penitential, where the
words of sorrow for sin do melt the very bowels of God
remitting it, and the comforts of grace in remitting sin carry
him which sorrowed rapt as it were into heaven with ecstasies
of joy and gladness. The first motive of the Ninivites unto
repentance was their belief in a sermon of fear, but the next
and most immediate, an axiom of love: “Who can tell
whether God will turn away his fierce wrath, that we perish
not?” No conclusion such as theirs, “Let every man turn
from his evil way,” but out of premises such as theirs were,
fear and love. Wherefore the well-spring of repentance is
faith, first breeding fear, and then love; which love causeth
hope, hope resolution of attempt: “I will go to my Father,
and say, I have sinned against heaven and against thee;”
that is to say, I will do what the duty of a convert requireth.

[5.] Now in a penitent’s or convert’s duty, there are in-
cluded, first, the aversion of the will from sin; secondly, the
submission of ourselves to God by supplication and prayer;
thirdly, the purpose of a new life, testified with present works
of amendment: which three things do very well seem to be
comprised in one definition, by them which handle repentance,
as a virtue that hateth, bewaileth, and sheweth a purpose to
amend sin. We offend God in thought, word, and deed.
To the first of which three, they make contrition; to the second,
collection; and to the last, our works of satisfaction, answer-

Deo, praeteritis facinoribus offenso,
jamque justissimam: possum pro
tantia criminius inferentis, (si dici
fas est) quodammodo obisistat et
quasi invitus (ut ita diversum) de-
stra nus suspenso utor.”]
106, [ed. Commelin. 1596.] Φαιλων
βρωσων θεία προσπόνταν ανθέα
μετάγιαν. Chry. in 1 Cor. Hom. 8.
το τραπεζαίνοντα δεσμον, ου το τραπεζαί
μη διόιεσθαι θεραπεύοντα. Marc.
Erem. († circ. 410) de Poenit. ap.

3 God’s D. 1 vi. D. 2 vii. D.
wheras the chiefest thing in contrition is that alteration whereby the will, which was before delighted with sin, doth now abhor and shun nothing more. But forasmuch as we cannot hate sin in ourselves without heaviness and grief, that there should be in us a thing of such hateful quality, the will averted from sin must needs make the affection suitable; yea, great reason why it should so do: for the will by conceiving sin hath deprived the soul of life; and of life there is no recovery without repentance, the death of sin; repentance not able to kill sin, but by withdrawing the will from it; the will impossible to be withdrawn, unless it concur with a contrary affection to that which accompanied it before in evil: is it not clear that as an inordinate delight did first begin sin, so repentance must begin with a just sorrow, a sorrow of heart, and such a sorrow as renteth the heart; neither a feigned nor a slight sorrow; not feigned, lest it increase sin; nor slight, lest the pleasures of sin overmatch it.

[6.] Wherefore of Grace, the highest cause from which man's penitency doth proceed; of fear, love, hope, what force and efficiency they have in repentance; of parts and duties thereof belonging, comprehended in the schoolmen's definitions; finally, of the first among those duties, contrition, which disliketh and bewailleth iniquity, let this suffice.

And because God will have offences by repentance not only abhorred within ourselves, but also with humble supplication displayed before him, and a testimony of amendment to be given, even by present works, worthy repentance, in that they are contrary to those we renounce and disclaim: although the virtue of repentance do require that her other two parts, confession and satisfaction, should here follow; yet seeing they belong as well to the discipline as to the virtue of repentance, and only differ for that in the one they are performed to man, in the other to God alone; I had rather distinguish them in joint handling, than handle them apart, because in quality and manner of practice they are distinct.

IV. Our Lord and Saviour in the sixteenth of St. Matthew's Gospel giveth his Apostles regiment in general over God's Church. For they that have the keys of the kingdom of heaven are thereby signified to be stewards of the house of God, under whom they guide, command, judge, and correct his family. The souls of men are God's treasure, committed to the trust and fidelity of such as must render a strict account for the very least which is under their custody. God hath not invested them with power to make a revenue thereof, but to use it for the good of them whom Jesus Christ hath most dearly bought.

And because their office herein consisteth of sundry functions, some belonging to doctrine, some to discipline, all contained in the name of the Keys; they have for matters of discipline, as well litigious as criminal, their courts and consistorys erected by the heavenly authority of his most sacred voice, who hath said, Die Ecclesiae, Tell the Church: against rebellious and contumacious persons which refuse to obey their sentence, armed they are with power to eject such out of the Church, to deprive them of the honours, rights, and privileges of Christian men, to make them as heathen and publicans, with whom society was hateful.

Furthermore, lest their acts should be slanderously accounted of, or had in contempt, whether they admit to the fellowship of saints or exclude from it, whether they bind offenders or set them again at liberty, whether they remit or retain sins, whatsoever is done by way of orderly and lawful proceeding, the Lord himself hath promised to ratify. This is that grand original warrant, by force whereof the guides and prelates in God's Church, first his Apostles, and afterwards others following them successively, did both use and uphold that discipline, the end whereof is to heal men's consciences, to cure their sins, to reclaim offenders from iniquity, and to make them by repentance just.

Neither hath it of ancient time for any other respect been accustomed to bind by ecclesiastical censures, to retain so bound till tokens of manifest repentance appeared, and upon apparent repentance to release, saving only because this was received as a most expedient method for the cure of sin.

[2.] The course of discipline in former ages reformed open

1 Matt. xviii. 17.
2 Cor. v. 3; 2 Cor. ii. 6.
3 Matt. xviii. 18; John xx. 23.
4 Matt. xvi. 19. 
5 1 Tim. i. 20.
Substitution of private Sacramental Confession.

bands advantageous to the enemies of God's Church, it seemed first unto some, and afterwards generally, requisite, that voluntary penitents should surcease from open confession.

* Instead whereof, when once private and secret confession had taken place with the Latins, it continued as a profitable ordinance, till the Lateran council¹ had decreed, that all men once in a year at the least should confess themselves to the priest. So that being thus made a thing² both general and also necessary, the next degree of estimation whereunto it grew, was to be honoured and lifted up to the nature of a sacrament; that as Christ did institute Baptism to give life, and the Eucharist to nourish life, so Penitency³ might be thought a sacrament ordained to recover life, and Confession a part of the sacrament.

They define therefore their private penitency² to be "a sacrament of remitting sins after baptism:" the virtue of repentance, "a detestation of wickedness," with full purpose "to amend the same, and with hope to obtain pardon at God's hands." Wheresoever the Prophets cry Repent, and in the Gospel Saint Peter maketh the same exhortation to the Jews as yet unbaptized, they will have the virtue of repentance only to be understood; the sacrament, where he adviseth Simon Magus to repent, because the sin of Simon Magus was after baptism.

Now although they have only external repentance for a sacrament, internal for a virtue, yet make they sacramental repentance nevertheless to be composed of three parts, contrition, confession, and satisfaction: which is absurd; because

¹ Concil. Later. iv. A.D. 1215, under Innocent ii. can. 21. "Omni utriusque sexus filiis, post
   nis urrisque sexus filiis, post-
   quam ad annos discretioris per-
   venerit, omnia sea solus peccata
   confiteatur fidelier, saltem semel
   in anno, proprio sacerdote et in
   junctam sibi poenitentiam studet
   pro viribus adimplere, suspiciens
   reverenter ad minus in Pascha
   Eucharistiae sacramentum." t. xi.
   p. 172, 3.
² Soto[Spanish Dominican, 1494-
³ Est enim penitentia, sacramen-
   tum remissionis peccatorum que
⁴ Idem. ed. dis. q. 2. art. i. p. 359. "Est detestationem, et odium, et
   abominationis peccati, cum
   firme proposito emendandi vitam,
   spe venieris divinitus obtinendae.
   Haec nuncup pro poenitentiae vir-
   tun definitione habenda est."

transgressors by putting them unto offices of open penitence; especially confession, whereby they declared their own crimes in the hearing of the whole Church, and were not from the time of their first convention capable of the holy mysteries of Christ, till they had solemnly discharged this¹ duty.

Offenders in secret, knowing themselves altogether as unworthy to be admitted to the Lord's table, as the others² which were withheld, being also persuaded, that if the Church did direct them in the offices of their penitency, and assist them with public prayer, they should more easily obtain that they sought, than by trusting wholly to their own endeavours; finally, having no impediment to stay them from it but bashfulness, which counteracted not the former inducements, and besides was greatly eased by the good construction which the charity of those times gave to such actions, wherein men's piety and voluntary care to be reconciled to God, did purchase them much more love, than their faults (the testimonies of common frailty) were able to procure disgrace; they made it not nice to use some one of the ministers of God, by whom the rest might take notice of their faults, prescribe them convenient remedies, and in the end after public confession, all join in prayer unto God for them.

[3.] The first beginners of this custom had the more followers, by means of that special favour which always was with good consideration shewed towards voluntary penitents above the rest. But as professors of Christian belief grew more in number, so they waxed worse, when kings and princes had submitted their dominions unto the sceptre of Jesus Christ, by means whereof persecution ceasing, the Church immediately became subject to those evils which peace and security bringeth forth; there was not now that love which before kept all things in tune, but every where schisms, discords, dissensions amongst men, conventicles of heretics, bent more vehemently against the sounder and better sort than very infidels and heathens themselves; faults not corrected in charity, but noted with delight, and kept for malice to use when deadliest opportunities should be offered. Whereupon, forasmuch as public confessions became dangerous and prejudicial to the safety of well-minded men, and in divers
Illogical Notions of Confession as a Sacrament.

BOOK VI.
Ch. iv. 3.

contrition, being an inward thing, belongeth to the virtue and not to the sacrament of repentance, which must consist of external parts, if the nature thereof be external. Besides, which is more absurd, they leave out absolution; whereas some of their school-divines, handling penance in the nature of a sacrament, and being not able to espy the least resemblance of a sacrament save only in absolution (for a sacrament by their doctrine must both signify and also confer or bestow some special divine grace), resolved themselves, that the duties of the penitent could be but mere preparations to the sacrament, and that the sacrament itself was wholly in absolution. And albeit Thomas with his followers have thought it safer, to maintain as well the services of the penitent, as the words of the minister, necessary unto the essence of their sacrament; the services of the penitent, as a cause material; the words of absolution, as a formal; for that by them all things else are perfected to the taking away of sin; which opinion now reigneth in all their schools, sithence the time that the council of Trent gave it solemn approbation; seeing they all make absolution, if not the whole essence, yet the very form whereunto they ascribe chiefly the whole force and operation of their sacrament; surely to admit the matter as a part, and not to admit the form, hath small congruity with reason.

Again, forasmuch as a sacrament is complete, having the matter and form which it ought, what should lead them to set down any other part of sacramental repentance, than confession and absolution, as Durandus hath done? For

* parts E.


2 [St. Aquin. Summ. Theol. p. ii. de Sacram. q. xxv. al. 84. art. iii.]

3 Oportet quod ea qua sunt ex parte ponde mentis, sive sint verba sive facta, sint quaedam materia hujus sacramenti, ea vero, quod sunt ex parte sacer doris, se habeant per modum formae. p. 297. Venet. 1566.]

4 Sess. xiv. c. 3. "Docet sancta Synodas sacramenti ponde mentis forma, in qua praeclare ius pater esse, in illis ministri verbi posse esse, Ego te absolvero. Sunt autem quae materia hujus sacramenti ipsius ponde mentis actus, nempe contritio, confessio, et satisfactio."

5 [In iv. sent. d. xvi. q. 1. § 4. Prieter materiam et formam in sa-

Of Confession as Part of the Virtue of Repentance.

BOOK VI.
Ch. iv. 4.

touching satisfaction, the end thereof, as they understand it, is a further matter, which resteth after the sacrament administered, and therefore can be no part of the sacrament. Will they draw in contrition with satisfaction, which are no parts, and exclude absolution, a principal part, yea, the very complement, form, and perfection of the rest, as themselves account it?

[4.] But for their breach of precepts in art, it skilleth not, if their doctrine otherwise concerning penitency, and in penitency, touching confession, might be found true. * We say, let no man look for pardon, which doth smoother and conceal sin, where in duty it should be revealed. The cause why God requireth confession to be made to him is, that thereby testifying a deep hatred of our own iniquities, the only cause of his hatred and wrath towards us, we might, because we are humble, be so much the more capable of that compassion and tender mercy, which knoweth not how to condemn sinners that condemn themselves. If it be our Saviour's own principle, that the conceit we have of our debt forgiven, proportioneth our thankfulness and love to him at whose hands we receive pardon, doth not God foresee, that they which with ill-advised modesty seek to hide their sin like Adam, that they which take it up under ashes, and confess it not, are very unlikely to requite with offices of love afterwards the grace which they shew themselves unwilling to prize at the very time when they sue for it; inasmuch as their not confessing what crimes they have committed, is a plain signification, how loth they are that the benefit of God's most gracious pardon should seem great? Nothing more true than that of Tertullian, "Confession doth as much abate the weight of men's offences, as concealment doth make them
Jewish Confessions voluntary and occasional.

once every year was made, both severally by each of the people for himself upon the day of expiation, and by the priest for them all, acknowledging unto God the manifold transgressions of the whole nation, his own personal offences likewise, together with the sins, as well of his family, as of the rest of his rank and order.

They had again their voluntary confessions, at all times and seasons, when men, bethinking themselves of their wicked conversation past, were resolved to change their course, the beginning of which alteration was still confession of sins.

Thirdly, over and besides these, the law imposed upon them also that special confession which they in their books call confession of that particular fault for which we namely seek pardon at God’s hands. The words of the law concerning confession in this kind are as followeth: ‘When a man or woman shall commit any sin that men commit, and transgress against the Lord, their sin which they have done’ (that is to say, the very deed itself in particular) ‘they shall acknowledge.’ In Leviticus, after certain transgressions there mentioned, we read the like:

‘When a man hath sinned in any one of these things, he shall then confess, how in that thing he hath offended’.

For such kind of special sins they had also special sacrifices, wherein the manner was, that the offender should lay his hands on the head of the sacrifice which he brought, and should there make confession to God, saying, ‘Now, O Lord, that I have offended, committed sin and done wickedly in thy sight, this or this being my fault; behold I repent me, and am utterly ashamed of my doings; my purpose is, never to return more to the same crime’.

Finally, there was no man amongst them at any time,