





THE  
LIFE

222

OF

BERNARD GILPIN.

---

SECTION I.

BERNARD GILPIN was born in the year 1517, about the middle of the reign of Henry the eighth. His forefathers had been seated at Kentmire-hall, in Westmoreland, from the time of king John; in whose reign this estate had been given by the baron of Kendal to Richard Gilpin, as a reward for services thought very considerable. Carleton, bishop of Chichester, who wrote the life of Bernard Gilpin, mentions this Richard as a person eminent in his time, both in a civil and military capacity; and gives us a story, told indeed with a fabulous air, of his killing a wild boar, which terribly infested those parts. From this gentleman the estate of Kentmire descended to the father of Bernard, Edwin Gilpin, who became prematurely possessed of it by the death of an elder brother, killed at the battle of Bosworth.

Edwin Gilpin had several children, of which Bernard was one of the youngest; an unhappy circumstance in that age, which giving little encourage-

ment to the liberal arts, and less to commerce, restrained the genius and industry of younger brothers.

No way indeed was commonly open to their fortunes, but the church or the camp. The inconvenience however was less to Mr. Gilpin, than to others; for that way was open, to which his disposition most led him. From his earliest youth he was inclined to a contemplative life; and possessed perhaps as great a share of constitutional virtue, as any man ever had. The observation of these things led his parents early to intend him for the church.

The bishop of Chichester hath preserved a story of him in his infancy, which shews how soon he could discern not only the immorality, but the indecorum of an action.

A begging friar came on a Saturday evening to his father's house; where, according to the custom of those times, he was received with great hospitality. The plenty set before him was a temptation too strong for his virtue; of which he had not sufficient to save appearances. The next morning however he ordered the bell to toll, and from the pulpit expressed himself with great vehemence against the debauchery of the times, and particularly against drunkenness. Mr. Gilpin, who was then a child upon his mother's knee, seemed for some time exceedingly affected with the friar's discourse; and at length, with the utmost indignation cried out, "He wondered how that man could preach against drunkenness, when he himself had been drunk only the night before."

Instances of this kind soon discovered the seriousness of his disposition, and gave his parents an early presage of his future piety.

His first years were spent at a grammar school; where agreeably to the compliment which history generally pays to such as afterwards become eminent, we are told he soon distinguished himself.

From school he was removed to Oxford, where

it was judged learning was most encouraged: though indeed, both the universities were at that time the seats of ignorance and superstition; and what study was encouraged was confined to perplexed systems of logic, and the subtillies of school divinity. So that the best education of those times was only calculated for very slender improvements in real learning.

At the age however of sixteen, Mr. Gilpin was entered, upon the foundation, at queen's college in Oxford: where we are informed his industry was very great, and easily reaped what knowledge the soil produced.

Erasmus about this time drew the attention of the learned world. With a noble freedom he shook off the prejudices of his education, boldly attacked the reigning superstitions of popery; and exposed the lazy and illiterate churchmen of those days. Such a behaviour could not but procure him many enemies; and provoked objections to whatever he could write. At Oxford particularly he was far from being in general esteem. Our young student had however too much of the true spirit of a scholar to take any thing upon trust, or to be prejudiced against an author from popular exceptions. Without listening therefore to what was said, he took Erasmus into his hands, and quickly discovered in him a treasure of real learning, which he had in vain sought after in the writings then most in esteem.

But as he had now determined to apply himself to divinity, he made the Scriptures his chief study; and set himself with great industry upon gaining a thorough knowledge of the Greek and Hebrew languages; in the study of which he was much assisted by Mr. Neal, a fellow of New-College, and afterwards professor of Hebrew in Oxford.

He had not been long in the university, before he was taken notice of. He was thought a young man of good parts, and considerable learning; and they who were not so well qualified to judge in either of

these points, admired and loved him for the sweetness of his disposition, and the unaffected sincerity of his manners. At the usual term he took the degree of master of arts, and about the same time was elected fellow of his college.

The reformed doctrines had hitherto made no progress in England; and as Mr. Gilpin had been bred up in the Romish church, he still continued a member of it. But though in appearance he was not dissatisfied with popery, yet it is not improbable that at this time he had his suspicions of it. The writings of Erasmus had put him upon freer inquiries than were common in those days. He had the discretion however to keep to himself whatever doubts they might have raised in him; and before he said any thing which might shake the faith of others, he determined to establish his own.

He had not long been settled in his fellowship, before a public testimony was given to the reputation he had acquired.

Cardinal Wolsey was now at the head of affairs; a minister, who not withstanding his many vices, entertained many noble designs. He saw the corrupt state of monkery in the nation, was scandalized at it, and began to think of some method to check its progress. The monastic revenues he was convinced might easily be applied to better uses; particularly in raising the credit of the universities. He was resolved therefore to make a trial; and with this view obtained bulls for the suppression of several monasteries. Being thus enabled to carry on his designs, he laid the foundation of Christ-church college in Oxford; and about this time finished it. But his care extending farther than a mere endowment, he had his agents in many of the universities of Europe, to procure men of eminence, whom he might transplant thither; and copies of the best books then extant: for he designed that his college should be the means of the restoration of learning in Eng-

land. Mr. Gilpin's character was then so great, that he was one of the first in Oxford to whom the cardinal's agents applied. He accepted their proposal, and removed to Christ-church.

Here he continued his former studies; from the nature of which, and the ingenuity and honesty of his disposition, it is highly probable he might in time have been led by his own reasonings to that discovery of truth he aimed at; but Providence rewarded a pious endeavour by throwing in his way the means of an earlier attainment of it.

King Henry the eighth was now dead; and his young successor began in earnest to support that cause, which his father had only so far encouraged as it contributed to replenish an exhausted exchequer, and gratify that pique which he had taken at the holy see. Under this prince's patronage, Peter Martyr went to Oxford, where he read divinity-lectures in a strain to which the university had been little accustomed. He began with the corporal presence; the refutation of which error, as it was one of the earliest of popery, he thought would much shock the credit of the Romish church. This was looked on as a declaration of war. The bigoted were immediately in a flame. "If these novelties prevailed, the peace of the church was at an end—nothing but confusion must ensue—religion was utterly ruined." While this was the popular clamour, the heads of the popish party began to rouse from an indolence they had long indulged, and to set about a more formidable opposition. The chief of them were Chedsey, Morgan, and Tresham; men not unlearned for the times, but whose bigotry at least kept pace with their learning.

The history of this religious war is foreign to our purpose. We are no otherwise concerned in it, than as it relates to Mr. Gilpin. His credit in the university was then so considerable, that we find the popish party solicitous to engage him to side publicly

with them; and pressing applications were accordingly made. But they found his zeal of a much cooler temper than their own. He was not indeed satisfied with the reformers, having wanted hitherto the opportunities of acquainting himself with their arguments: but on the other hand, he had never been a bigoted papist; and had, it seems, lately discovered, through a dispute he had been engaged in with Dr. Hooper, afterwards bishop of Worcester, that several of the Romish doctrines were not so well supported by Scripture as was commonly imagined. While his mind was in so unsettled a condition, he thought himself but ill qualified to espouse either side publicly. His inclination rather led him to stand by, an unprejudiced observer; and to embrace truth, whether he found her among Protestants or Papists. Such importunity was however used with him, that at length he yielded, which was matter of triumph to his party; and he appeared the next day against Peter Martyr.

Entering thus into a controversy against his inclination, he determined however to make it as useful to himself as he could. By bringing his old opinions to the test, he hoped at least he might discover, whether it was only the stamp of antiquity upon them, or their own intrinsic worth, that gave them that value, at which they had been hitherto rated. He resolved therefore to lay aside, as much as possible, the temper of a caviller; and to place truth before him as the sole object of his pursuit, from which he was determined to be drawn aside neither by prejudice nor by novelty.

But he soon found his adversary's arguments too strong for him: they came authorized from the holy writings in so forcible a manner, that he could not but acknowledge them of a nature quite different from the wire drawn proofs, and strained interpretations of Scripture, in which he had hitherto acquiesced. We need not therefore wonder, if the dis-

putation was soon over. Mr. Gilpin had nothing of that pride of heart, through which men often defend suspected opinions; but gave up his cause with that grace which always attends sincerity. He owned publicly, that he could not maintain it; and determined to enter into no more controversies till he had gained the full information of which he was in pursuit.

This ingenuous regard for truth was shewn in the more advantageous light by the bigotry of his fellow disputants; whose inflamed zeal, and fierceness of temper, discovered little of the scholar, and less of the Christian. In his conduct appeared an honest desire of information only; in theirs, the pride of opposition struggling against conviction.

Peter Martyr took notice of this difference of behaviour, and would frequently say, that, "As for Chedsey, Morgan, and the rest of those hot-headed zealots, he could not in truth be much concerned about them; but Gilpin seemed a man of such uprightness of intention, and so much sincerity, both in his words and actions, that it went to his heart to see him still involved in prejudice and error. The rest, he thought, were only a trifling, light sort of men, led into an opposition more by vain glory, and a desire to distinguish themselves, and support their party, than through any better motives; but Mr. Gilpin's ingenuity of behaviour, and irreproachable life, left room for no such suspicion with regard to him; and he could not but own, he considered his espousing any cause as a very great credit to it." He would often likewise tell his friends, "It was the subject of his daily prayers, that God would be pleased at length to touch the heart of this pious papist with the knowledge of true religion."—And he prayed not in vain; for Mr. Gilpin, from this time, became every day more reconciled to the reformers.

Having been thus staggered by his adversary's arguments, the first step he took, after he had im-



plored the divine assistance, was to recollect, and carefully commit to paper, the substance of what had passed in this controversy; and of those points, in which he had been hardest pressed, he resolved to enter into the strictest examination.

But before he could reconcile himself to this work, many distracting scruples arose in his mind. Though he could not but discover something questionable in many of his old opinions; yet when he considered they were still deeply rooted in the minds of almost the whole nation, embraced by the greatest part of Europe, and had been through many centuries supported by the authority of princes and councils, he thought great deference was due to so awful a majority, and could not without much perplexity, think of making his own private judgment a test of the public faith. His suspicions however forced him at length upon an examination; though with a design, it is probable, to confirm, rather than confute his old opinions. But he soon found that to be an impossible task. The more he considered the tenets of popery, the less defensible they appeared. If he tried them by reason, he found them utterly unable to stand that proof; and if he endeavoured to reconcile them with Scripture, he could not but observe, by what unnatural interpretations it was only to be effected.

He endeavoured likewise to acquaint himself with the history of popery, that he might discover in what age its several questioned doctrines first appeared. From this search into antiquity he observed, that none of them obtained in the earlier and purer ages of the Christian church, but were all the inventions of later times, when ignorance and credulity prevailed, and gave sufficient opportunity for designing men to establish any creed that suited them.

Seven sacraments, he found, had never been heard

of before the time of Peter Lombard; which was above eleven hundred years after Christ

The denial of the cup to the laity appeared plainly a doctrine intended, in corrupt times, to give a mysterious superiority to the clergy. No traces of it could be found till near a thousand years after the sacrament was first instituted.

The doctrine of transubstantiation took its rise indeed sooner; but not however till the eighth century: at which time also the notion of the Lord's Supper being a propitiatory sacrifice was first heard of.

Very late also appeared the doctrine of an action's being morally good, without any regard to the intention to the doer; commonly called the doctrine of the *opus operatum*. It seemed plainly intended for no other end but to enrich its teachers.

Thus, into whatever part of popery he examined, he found great abuses: the true simplicity and spirit of Christianity were gone; totally lost in the inventions of men. But what he first began to object to in the popish creed, and was most disgusted at, were indulgences, prayers before images, and disallowing the public use of the Scripture.

The rites and ceremonies of the Romish church pleased him as little as its doctrines: many of them appeared trifling; many of them ridiculous; and not a few plainly impious. That affected ostentation, and theatrical pomp, which accompanied them all, seemed a strange deviation from the simplicity of apostolic times; and had, he could not but observe, the worst influence upon the people, as it led them from the practice of virtue, to put their trust in outward performances.

They who have been bred up in a purer religion, may perhaps wonder, that a man of so much sense and learning, and especially of so much honesty and sincerity, needed so long a course of reasoning to

discover errors of so gross a kind. But if his conduct may not be accounted for by prejudice, it was however such as will always be expected from a fair mind in the same circumstances. The matter under his consideration was of the last importance; it required therefore the utmost caution. His good sense led him early to doubt; yet, considering what an established creed his doubts opposed, his humility made those very doubts suspected. He knew not indeed how to proceed: he was distracted by a thousand scruples: the fault might be in himself—or, it might be in his religion—papist and protestant could not both be in the right—either might be in the wrong—yet each had something to say that was plausible. He hoped however that a merciful God would regard the difficulties he had to struggle with, and exact nothing from him beyond his power—every thing in his power he was determined to do. Agreeably to this resolution, he went on with the examination of religious matters, omitting nothing that could contribute to his due information.

While he was engaged in this work, an event fell out, which gave the last shock to his old prejudices.

Europe had now been so long distracted by religious dissensions, that it was universally thought necessary to summon a general council, which might deliberate on the best expedients to remove them. This prevailing desire was listened to very heedlessly at Rome. A scrutiny into religious matters was an alarming thing to every true papist. The consequence was easily foreseen; and the prudent pope was very unwilling to have the pool stirred, lest it should be too evident how much it wanted cleansing. But discontent and clamour running high, and nothing appearing likely to appease the universal murmur but a council, one was at length convened at Trent. The pope had now recourse to an after-game. Since he could not avoid this dreaded

council, he contrived however to manage the members of it with such address, that his power, far from being shaken by them, was in fact only the more confirmed. Instead of repairing what was decayed, their only care was to prop the old ruin as it stood. But among all the measures then taken in support of ecclesiastical tyranny, the completest was a bold decree, that the traditions of the church should be esteemed of equal authority with the Scriptures themselves.

A determination of so extraordinary a nature was received with astonishment by every well-wisher to religion. "All opportunity (the reformers cried out) is now lost! Since traditions are equal with Scripture, and these traditions are in the hands of the conclave, it cannot be doubted, whose sense they will always speak. The Romanists have now a fund of authority for all their extravagancies. Alas! instead of stopping the breach, they have now so far widened it, as to destroy all hope of its ever closing again."

Mr. Gilpin, among the rest, took great offence at these proceedings. Hitherto, notwithstanding his objections to popery, there was something in an established church which he knew not how to get over. The word schism greatly perplexed him: nor could he easily persuade himself of the lawfulness of a separation from the church of Rome, corrupt as she was in other respects, while she professed to draw her rule of faith from the Scriptures. But when he found, by the publication of the council of Trent, that she had carried her authority to such an height of arrogance as to set up her own unwritten word against the Scriptures; it was high-time, he thought, for all sincere Christians to take the alarm. The designs of the papists were now too plain; and if they meant well to religion, they meant it in such a manner, that a good conscience could not comply with them. For himself, he was obliged to con-

clude, from this direct opposition of their own authority to the authority of Scripture, that their sole view was to establish their declining power: nor could he otherwise consider popery than as a perplexed system of priest-craft, superstition, and bigotry; a religion converted into a trade, and used only as a cloak for the tyranny and avarice of its professors. In a word, he thought it now sufficiently evident, that the church of Rome was plainly antichristian; and that, as such, there was an absolute necessity laid upon every true believer to forsake her communion.

Such were the cautious steps Mr. Gilpin took before he declared himself a protestant. His more than ordinary candour and sincerity, through this whole affair, met with much applause, and gained him great esteem. Many years afterwards the earls of Bedford and Leicester, having heard there was something very uncommon in his manner of proceeding on this occasion, wanted to be more acquainted with the circumstances of it; and for that purpose applied to Mr. George Gilpin, Bernard's brother, who was on terms of great intimacy with those two noblemen, and then in London. Accordingly this gentleman, taking the opportunity of a visit to his friends in the north, persuaded his brother to give him in writing an exact account of the progress of his change from the Romish religion.

Mr. Gilpin's letter on this occasion is still extant. As it will give a truer idea of his ingenuity and caution in this affair, than any narrative can, and as it hath besides a noble strain of piety to recommend it, I shall here transcribe the greatest part of it. It was written indeed many years after the time now treated of, and touches upon several facts not yet taken notice of; but its reference to the present subject makes this the properest place for laying it before the reader.

“ You require me to write, in a long discourse, the manner of my conversion from superstition to the light of the Gospel; which, I think you know, was not in a few years. As time and health will permit, I will hide nothing from you, confessing my own shame, and yet hoping with the apostle, ‘ I have obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly.’

“ In king Edward’s time I was brought to dispute against some assertions of Peter Martyr; although I have ever been given to eschew, so far as I might, controversies and disputations. Being but a young student, and finding my groundwork not so sure as I supposed, I went first to the bishop of Durham\*, who told me that ‘ Innocent the third was much overseen, to make transubstantiation an article of faith.’ He found great fault with the pope for indulgencies, and other things.

“ After, I went to Dr. Redman, in whom I had great trust for the fame of his virtue and learning. He told me, ‘ The communion-book was very godly, and agreeable to the Gospel.’ These things made me to muse.

“ Afterwards one of the fellows of the Queen’s-college told me, he heard Dr. Chedsey say among his friends, ‘ The protestants must yield to us in granting the presence of Christ in the sacrament, and we must yield to them in the opinion of transubstantiation; so shall we accord.’

“ Dr. Weston made a long sermon in defence of the communion in both kinds.

“ Mr. Morgan told me, that Mr. Ware, a man most famous both for life and learning, had told him before his death, that ‘ The chief sacrifice of the church of God was the sacrifice of thanksgiving.’ This was his answer, when I desired to know what might be said for the sacrifice of the mass.

\* Cuthbert Tunstal.

“The best learned bishops likewise of this realm at that time withstood the supremacy of the pope, both with words and writing.

“Mr. Harding coming newly from Italy, in a long and notable sermon did so lively set forth, and paint in their colours, the friars, and unlearned bishops assembled at Trent in council, that he much diminished in me, and many others, the confidence we had in general councils.

“All these things, and many more, gave me occasion to search both the Scriptures and antient fathers: whereby I began to see many great abuses, and some enormities, used and maintained in popery; and to like well of sundry reformations on the other side.

“Afterwards, in three years’ space, I saw so much gross idolatry at Paris, Antwerp, and other places, that made me to mislike more and more the popish doctrines; especially because the learned men disallowed image-worship in their schools, and suffered it so grossly in their churches.

“As I could with small knowledge, I examined the mass: the greatest fault I then found was too much reverence and gross worshipping of the gaping people; because I believed not transubstantiation. Likewise my conscience was grieved at the receiving of the priest alone. Yet at length I said mass a few times as closely as I could.

“I reasoned with certain that were learned of my acquaintance, why there was no reformation of these gross enormities about images, reliques, pilgrimages, buying mass and trentals, with many other things, which in king Edward’s time the Catholics (so called) did not only grant to be far amiss, but also promised that the church should be reformed, if ever the authority came into their hands again. When I asked when this reformation was to begin, in hope whereof I was the more willing to return from Paris,

I was answered, ' We may not grant to the ignorant people, that any of these things hath been amiss : if we do, they will straight infer other things may be amiss as well as these, and still go further and further.'—This grieved me, and made me seek for quietness in God's word : no where else I could find any stay.

“ After this, in two or three sermons at Newcastle, I began to utter my conscience more plainly : when thirteen or fourteen articles were drawn up against me, and sent to the bishop. Here my adversaries of the clergy, whom I had sore offended by speaking against their pluralities, had that which they looked for. They caused the bishop to call me in their presence, and examine me touching the sacrament. The bishop shewed favour so far, I trust, as he durst ; urging me nothing with transubstantiation, but only with the real presence, which I granted, and so was delivered at that time. For the real presence, I was not then resolved ; but took it to be a mystery above my capacity : yet my conscience was somewhat wounded for granting before them in plain words the thing whereof I stood in doubt.

“ After queen Mary's death I began to utter my mind more plainly. Before (I must needs confess my weakness) ignorance, and fear of enemies, had somewhat restrained me.

“ Thus, in process of time, I grew to be stronger and stronger ; yet many grievous temptations and doubts have I had, which many nights have bereaved me of sleep.

“ My nature hath evermore fled controversy so much as I could. My delight and desire hath been to preach Christ, and our salvation by him, in simplicity and truth ; and to comfort myself with the sweet promises of the Gospel, and in prayer.

“ I have been always scrupulous, and troubled



either in subscribing, or swearing to any thing, beside the Scriptures, and articles of our belief, because the Scripture ought ever to have a pre-eminence above man's writings.—I remember, when I went for orders to the bishop of Oxford, his chaplain ministered an oath to allow all such ordinances as were set forth, or should be set forth in time to come: which oath when we considered better of it, what it was to swear to things to come, we knew not what, it troubled not only me, but nine or ten more with me, men of much better learning than I was. I, for my part, resolved after that to swear to no writing but with exception, as it agreed with the word of God.—What trouble I had when the oath was ministered by the bishops for the book of articles, agreed upon in 1562 and 1751, I have opened for quietness and discharge of my conscience in another writing.—And certainly, since I took this order to open my faults in writing\*, not pausing who knew them, so it might edify myself or others, I have found great ease and quietness of conscience; and am daily more edified, comforted, and confirmed, in reading the Scriptures. And this I praise God for, that when I was most troubled, and weakest of all, my faith in God's mercy was so strong, that if I should then have departed this life, I had, and have, a sure trust, that none of these doubts would have hindered my salvation. I hold fast one sentence of St. Paul, 'I have obtained mercy, in that I did it in ignorance:' and another of Job, 'If the Lord put me to death, yet will I trust in him.'—Yet have I prayed God's mercy many times for

\* In another letter he thus speaks, "I never had doubts in religion in all my life, nor ever dissembled in all my life, or committed any fault, which, so far as I thought it might edify, or do good to others, and so far as my remembrance served, I could not well find in my heart to confess before all the world."

all these offences, infirmities, and ignorances; and so I will do so still, so long as I have to live in this world."

## SECTION II.

We left Mr. Gilpin at Christ-church college in Oxford, now fully convinced of the errors of popery.

An academic life, affording him most leisure for study, was the life he was most inclined to. He had too just a sense of the duty of a clergyman to be unacquainted with the qualifications requisite for its discharge; and too mean an opinion of himself to think he was yet master of them. He thought more learning was necessary in that controversial age than he had yet acquired: and his chief argument with his friends, who were continually soliciting him to leave the university, was that he was not yet enough instructed in religion himself to be a teacher of it to others. It was an arduous task, he said, especially at that time; and protestantism could not suffer more, than by the rawness and inexperience of its teachers.

These thoughts continued him at Oxford till the thirty-fifth year of his age. About that time the vicarage of Norton, in the diocese of Durham, falling vacant, his friends, who had interest to obtain it for him, renewed their solicitations, and at length prevailed on him to accept it\*. Accordingly a presentation passed in his favour, which

\* "While I was thus busied, I was drawn by certain friends to accept a benefice, being very unwilling thereunto. If I offended God in taking such a charge before I was better learned, and better resolved in religion, I cry God mercy; and I doubt not but I have found mercy in his sight." Extract of a letter from Bernard Gilpin to his brother.

bears date, among king Edward's grants, November, 1552.

Before he went to reside, he was appointed to preach before the king, at Greenwich. Strype, in his annals, seems to intimate, that Mr. Gilpin was at that time famous for his preaching in the north, and that it was on this account he was called on to preach at court. But there is little authority for this. He does not seem to have been yet a preacher at all; at least, of any note. It is rather probable, the only reason of his being sent to on this occasion, was that he might give a public testimony of his being well inclined to the Reformation: for the heads of the protestant party were at this time very scrupulous in the disposal of livings. "It was then ordered," says Heylin, in his Church-history, "that none should be presented unto any benefice in the donation of the crown, till he had first preached before the king, and thereby passed his judgment and approbation."

The reigning vice of that age, as its historians testify, was avarice, or more properly rapine. At court all things were venal; employments, honours, favours of every kind. In the room of law and justice, gross bribery and wrong were common; in trade, grievous extortions and frauds. Every where and every way the poor were vexed. But in the country this rapacity was most observed, where the oppressions exercised were so intolerable, that the preceding year had seen great heats and murmurings among the people, and some counties even in arms.

Of these things the preachers most in earnest spoke with great freedom; particularly bishop Latimer, who was the Cato of that age. Among others Mr. Gilpin thought it became him to take notice of evils so much complained of: accordingly he made the avarice of the times his subject upon the present occasion: resolving with an honest free-

dom to censure corruption, in whatever rank of men he observed it.

As he thought nothing his interest, but what was also his duty, he was swayed neither by hope nor fear. He considered himself in some degree chargeable with those vices, which he knew were prevailing, and failed to rebuke.—A freedom of this nature the times however allowed: for how little soever there might be of the reality of virtue, there was certainly much of the profession of it: public deference at least was paid to it.

Mr. Gilpin's plainness therefore was very well taken, and recommended him to the notice of many persons of the first rank; particularly to Sir Francis Russel, and Sir Robert Dudley, afterwards the earls of Bedford and Leicester; who from that time professed a great regard for him: and, when in power, were always ready to patronize him.

These two noblemen were both great patrons of virtue and letters; but with very different views, as they were indeed very different men.

Bedford appeared at court with all the advantages of birth. His father, the first earl of that name, was one of the greatest men of his age, eminent for unspotted honesty, and superior talents in war and peace. His son pursued his steps, and though he wanted his father's great abilities, he was however a wise and an honest man, and acted afterwards a considerable part in settling the Reformation under Elizabeth; to whose court he was a very great ornament. He was a friend to merit from the real love he bore to virtue.

Leicester, however accomplished in many respects, was a man of ambiguous character. He was however a great master in the arts of dissimulation; and could act, what he always attempted, even the worst part plausibly. He courted good men for the credit of their acquaintance.

These noblemen were Mr. Gilpin's chief patrons—

voluntary patrons, whom no application on his part engaged. He received their offered friendship with humility and gratitude, never intending to put it to a trial. This backwardness proceeded chiefly from an utter aversion to all solicitation for church preferment. The lord Bedford's interest indeed he scrupled not to solicit occasionally for his friends: but he never once asked, though much courted to it, any favour of the earl of Leicester.

Mr. Gilpin is said likewise at this time to have been taken notice of by secretary Cecil, afterwards lord Burleigh, who obtained for him a general licence for preaching. In granting these licences great caution was then used: none but men of approved worth could apply for them with success. Upon looking over king Edward's grants, it does not appear there were more than two or three and twenty thus licenced during that king's reign. Among these were the bishops Jewel, Grindal, and Coverdale.

While Mr. Gilpin was at London, he frequently visited Cuthbert Tunstal, bishop of Durham, who was his uncle, and had always expressed a great regard for him. It is probable indeed, that his parents, in bringing him up to the church, might have a view to the bishop's favour: but Tunstal was at this time in no capacity to serve him.

During the reign of Henry the eighth, this prelate had lived in great credit at court; was esteemed a man of abilities, a good scholar, and an able statesman. His sovereign knew his worth, advanced him to the see of Durham, employed him much at home and abroad; and at his death left him, during the minority, one of the regents of the kingdom. But in the succeeding reign his interest lessened. He was not altogether satisfied with the changes daily made in religion: and though he was enough inclined to give up some of the grosser tenets of popery, yet in general he favoured it, and was always

in great esteem with the Romish party. This occasioned their making him privy to some treasonable designs; which, in his cautious way, he neither concurred in nor betrayed. The plot miscarried: the bishop was indeed suspected, but nothing appeared. Some time afterwards when the duke of Somerset's papers were seized, an unlucky letter was found, which fully detected his knowledge of the matter. He was called immediately before the council, tried by a special commission, found guilty of misprision of treason, deprived, and committed to the tower.

Mr. Gilpin, having now stayed as long in London as his business required, repaired to his parish; and immediately entered upon the duties of it. He failed not, as occasion required, to use the king's licence in other parts of the country; but his own parish he considered as the place where his chief care was due. Here he made it his principal endeavour to inculcate moral virtue; and to dissuade from those vices, which he observed most prevalent. He seldom handled controversial points; being afraid, lest, endeavouring to instruct, he might only mislead. For, however resolved he was against popery, he yet saw not the protestant cause in its full strength; and was still scarcely settled in some of his religious opinions. Hence by degrees a diffidence of himself arose, which gave him great uneasiness. He thought he had engaged too soon in his office—that he could not sufficiently discharge it—that he should not rest in giving his hearers only moral instructions—that, overspread as the country was with popish doctrines, he did ill to pretend to be a teacher of religion, if he were unable to oppose such errors.

These thoughts made every day a greater impression upon him. At length, quite unhappy, he gave bishop Tunstal an account of his situation. The bishop, who was the farthest of any man from a

bigot, and liked him not the worse for his freedom of inquiry, told him, As he was so uneasy, it was his advice, that he should think of nothing till he had fixed his religion: and that, in his opinion, he could not do better than put his parish into the hands of some person, in whom he could confide, and spend a year or two in Germany, France, and Holland; by which means he might have an opportunity of conversing with some of the most eminent professors on both sides of the question. He acquainted him likewise, that his going abroad at this time would do him also a considerable service: for, during his confinement, he had written two or three books, particularly one upon the Lord's Supper, which he had a desire to publish; and as this could not be done so conveniently at home, he would be glad to have it done under his inspection at Paris.

This letter gave Mr. Gilpin much satisfaction: it just proposed his own wish. A conference with some of the learned men abroad was what his heart had long been set on. Only he had one objection to the scheme; he was afraid it might prove too expensive.

As to that, the bishop wrote, his benefice would do something towards his maintenance; and deficiencies he would supply.

But this did not remove the difficulty. Mr. Gilpin's notions of the pastoral care were so strict, that he thought no excuse could justify non-residence for so considerable a time as he intended to be abroad. He could not therefore think of supporting himself with any part of the income of his living. However, abroad he was determined to go; and resolved, if he staid the shorter time, to rely only upon his frugal management of the little money he had; and to leave the rest to the bishop's generosity.

Having resigned his living therefore in favour of a person, with whose abilities, and inclinations to discharge the duties of it, he was well acquainted,

he set out for London, to receive his last orders from the bishop, and to embark.

The account of his resignation got to town before him; and gave the bishop, anxious for his nephew's thriving in the world, great concern. "Here are your friends," says he, "endeavouring to provide for you; and you are taking every method to frustrate their endeavours. But be warned: by these courses, depend upon it, you will bring yourself presently to a morsel of bread." Mr. Gilpin begged the bishop would attribute what he had done to a scrupulous conscience, which really would not permit him to act otherwise, "Conscience!" replied the bishop; "why you might have had a dispensation." "Will any dispensation," answered Mr. Gilpin, "restrain the tempter from endeavouring in my absence, to corrupt the people committed to my care? Alas! I fear it would be but an ill excuse for the harm done my flock, if I should say, when God shall call me to an account for my stewardship, that I was absent by dispensation." This reply put the bishop a little out of humour; but his disgust was soon over, and this instance of Mr. Gilpin's sincerity raised him still higher in his uncle's esteem. The bishop would frequently however chide him, as Mr. Gilpin afterwards would tell his friends, for these qualms of conscience; and would be often reminding him, that, if he did not look better to his interest, he would certainly die a beggar.

The bishop, putting into his hands the books he had written, gave him his last instructions, and parted with him in very good humour. So he took the first opportunity of embarking for Holland.

### SECTION III. *111*

Upon his landing, he went immediately to Mechlin, to visit his brother George, who was at that time pursuing his studies there.



This visit was probably on a religious account; for George, though a man of virtue and learning, seems to have been a zealous papist. What influence his brother Bernard had over him does not appear. We meet with him however soon afterwards a warm advocate for the Reformation; to forward which, he translated, from the Dutch into English, a very keen satire against popery, entitled, *The Beehive of the Roman Church*. Upon Elizabeth's accession, he applied himself to state affairs; for which indeed he was now preparing himself at Mechlin, where the civil law was much studied. The earl of Bedford brought him to court; where he was soon taken notice of by the queen; to whom he so well recommended himself by his dexterity in business, that she made great use of him in her negociations with the states of Holland, and kept him many years in a public character in that country, where he was in great esteem for his abilities and integrity. We often find his name in the accounts of those transactions. Molloy particularly, speaking of some affairs then in agitation, makes honourable mention of him. "The Hans-towns," says he, "procured, by an imperial edict, that the English merchants associated in Embden and other places, should be adjudged monopolists; which was done by Suderman, a great civilian. There was there at that time for the queen as nimble a man as Suderman, and he had the chancellor of Embden to second him; yet they could not stop the edict. But Gilpin played his cards so well, that he prevailed, the imperial ban should not be published till after the diet; and that in the mean time his imperial majesty should send an ambassador to England, to advertise the queen of the edict."

Mr. Gilpin having staid a few weeks with his brother at Mechlin, went afterwards to Louvain, where he resolved to settle for some time. He made frequent excursions to Antwerp, Ghent, Brussels,

and other places in the Low Countries; where he would spend a few weeks among those of any reputation, whether papists or protestants: but he made Louvain his place of residence, for which city he always expressed a more than common affection. And indeed it was a most agreeable and commodious retreat for a scholar; enjoying all the advantages of situation, and affording the best opportunities for study.

Louvain is one of the chief towns of Brabant. It had formerly been the centre of a very considerable woollen trade. More than four thousand looms were daily at work in it, each of which employed near forty people. But its trade declining, it grew more beautiful, as it became less populous. Elegant houses were built, and spacious walks laid out within the walls of the town; the river Dyle, which flowed through the midst of it, affording the inhabitants many opportunities of shewing their taste. Upon an eminence at one end stands the castle, a venerable old building, rising out of the midst of a vineyard. Its battlements are much frequented for the sake of the noble prospect they command over the country. The elegance of this situation made Louvain the seat of politeness. Hither the men of taste and leisure from all parts repaired; where instead of the noise and hurry of trade, so common in the towns of Flanders, they enjoyed a calm retreat, and the agreeable interchange of solitude and company. But what endeared Louvain most to a scholar, was the noble seminary established there by John, the fourth duke of Brabant, with a view to keep up the credit of one of his chief towns, upon the decay of the woollen manufacture. It consists of many colleges, in each of which philosophy was taught by two professors, who read two hours each morning. The scholars had the rest of the day to commit to writing what they heard.

At the time Mr. Gilpin was at Louvain, it was

one of the chief places for students in divinity. Some of the most eminent divines on both sides of the question resided there; and the most important topics of religion were discussed with great freedom.

Mr. Gilpin's first business here was to get himself introduced to those of any reputation for learning; to whom his own address and attainments were no mean recommendation, and supplied the place of a long acquaintance. He was present at all public readings and disputations: he committed every thing material to writing; all his opinions he re-examined; proposed his doubts in private to his friends; and in every respect made the best use of his time.

He now began to have juster notions of the doctrines of the reformed: he saw things in a clearer and a stronger light: and felt a satisfaction in the change he had made, to which he had hitherto been a stranger.

While he was thus pursuing his studies, he and all the protestants in those parts were suddenly alarmed with melancholy news from England—king Edward's death—the lady Jane's fall—and queen Mary's accession, whose bigotry was well known, and in whom the signs of a persecuting spirit already appeared.

This bad news came however attended with one agreeable circumstance; an account of bishop Tunstall's release from the Tower, and re-establishment in his bishoprick.

Soon afterwards Mr. Gilpin received a letter from his brother George, intreating him to come immediately to Mechlin; for he had an affair of consequence to communicate to him, which absolutely required an interview. When he came thither, he found his brother had received a letter from the bishop, informing him that he had a benefice of considerable value vacant in his diocese, which he wished he could persuade his brother Bernard to accept;

imagining he might by this time have gotten over his former scruples.

George knew he had a difficult province to manage; but determined to try his influence. He begged his brother, therefore, to consider, "That he could not stay so long abroad for want of money, as he might probably chuse—that he had already offended the bishop—and that a second refusal might occasion an entire breach with him—that if it did not, yet the bishop was now an old man—such benefices were not every day to be had—and after the bishop's death, he was not likely to meet with a friend, who would thus press him to accept a living." But nothing would do: Bernard continued unmoved, and gave one answer to all his brother's arguments, "That his conscience would not suffer him to comply." George answered, "He might have his living as well taken care of, as if himself were there: besides, says he, you have a bishop approving and advising the step I recommend; what would you desire more?" "If a bishop's judgment," said Bernard, "was to be the rule of my actions, I should comply, but as I am to stand or fall by my own, the case is different." In short, George was obliged to desist, and Bernard returned to Louvain, rather vexed that he had lost so much time on what appeared to him so trifling an occasion. He thought it however his duty to give the bishop his reasons for not accepting his kind offer, which he did in the following letter:

"Right honourable, and my singular good master, my duty remembered in most humble manner, pleaseth it your honour to be informed, that of late my brother wrote to me, that in any wise I must meet him at Mechlin; for he must debate with me urgent affairs, such as could not be dispatched by writing. When we met, I perceived it was nothing else but to see if he could persuade me to take a benefice, and to continue in study at the university: which if I had known to be the cause of his sending for

me, I should not have needed to interrupt my study to meet him; for I have so long debated that matter with learned men, especially with the holy prophets, and most ancient and godly writers since Christ's time, that I trust, so long as I have to live, never to burden my conscience with having a benefice, and lying from it. My brother said, that your lordship had written to him, that you would gladly bestow one on me; and that your lordship thought (and so did other of my friends, of which he was one) that I was much too scrupulous in that point. Whereunto I always say, If I be too scrupulous (as I cannot think that I am) the matter is such, that I had rather my conscience were therein a great deal too strait, than a little too large: for I am seriously persuaded, that I shall never offend God by refusing to have a benefice and lie from it, so long as I judge not evil of others; which I trust I shall not, but rather pray God daily, that all who have cures may discharge their office in his sight, as may tend most to his glory, and the profit of his church. He replied against me, that your lordship would give me no benefice, but what you would see discharged in my absence as well, or better than I could discharge it myself. Whereunto I answered, that I would be sorry, if I thought not there were many thousands in England more able to discharge a cure than I find myself; and therefore I desire, they may both take the cure and the profit also, that they may be able to feed the body and the soul both, as I think all pastors are bounden. As for me, I can never persuade myself to take the profit and let another take the pains: for if he should teach and preach as faithfully as ever St. Austin did, yet should I not think myself discharged. And if I should strain my conscience herein, and strive with it to remain here, or in any other university, with such a condition, the unquietness of my conscience would not suffer me to profit in study at all.

“ I am here, at this present, I thank God, very well placed for study among a company of learned men, joining to the friars minors; having free access at all times to a notable library among the friars, men both well learned and studious. I have entered acquaintance with divers of the best learned in the town; and for my part was never more desirous to learn in all my life than at this present, Wherefore I am bold, knowing your lordship’s singular good will towards me, to open my mind thus rudely and plainly under your goodness, most humbly beseeching you to suffer me to live without charge, that I may study quietly.

“ And whereas I know well your lordship is careful how I should live, if God should call your lordship, being now aged, I desire you let not that care trouble you: for, if I had no other shift, I could get a lectureship, I know, shortly, either in this university, or at least in some abbey hereby; where I should not lose my time: and this kind of life, if God be pleased, I desire before any benefice. And thus I pray Christ always to have your lordship in his blessed keeping.

“ By your lordship’s humble scholar  
“ and chaplain,

“ BERNARD GILPIN.

“ *Louvain, Nov. 22, 1554.*”

The bishop was not offended at this letter. The unaffected piety of it disarmed all resentment; and led him rather to admire a behaviour, in which the motives of conscience shewed themselves so superior to those of interest. “ Which of our modern gaping rooks,” exclaims the bishop of Chichester, “ could endeavour with more industry to obtain a benefice, than this man did to avoid one!”

Mr. Gilpin having got over this troublesome affair (for solicitations of this kind gave him of all things the most trouble) continued some time longer at

Louvain, daily improving in religious knowledge. His own opinions he kept to himself, industriously endeavouring to make himself acquainted with the opinions of others, and the arguments upon which they were grounded.

While he stayed in the Low Countries, he was greatly affected with the melancholy sight of crowds of his dejected countrymen arriving daily in those parts from the bloody scene then acting in England. These unhappy exiles however soon recovered their spirits, and, dispersing into various towns, cheerfully applied themselves, each as his profession led, to gain an honest livelihood. The meaner sort exercised their crafts; the learned taught schools, read lectures, and corrected presses; at Basil particularly, where the ingenious Operin was then carrying printing to great perfection. Their commendable endeavours to make themselves not quite a burden to those who entertained them were suitably rewarded. The several towns of Germany and Holland, finding their advantage in these strangers, shewed them all imaginable civility: many private persons likewise contributed to their aid: but, above all others, the generous duke of Wirtemburgh distinguished himself in their favour; whose bounty to the English at Strasburgh and Franckfort should never pass unremembered, where these things are mentioned. Nor was Mr. Gilpin a little pleased to find, that however unable he was personally to assist them, his large acquaintance in the country furnished him with the means of being useful to many of them by serviceable recommendations.

Mr. Gilpin had been now two years in Flanders; and had made himself perfect master of the controversy, as it was there handled. He left Louvain therefore, and took a journey to Paris.

When he got to Paris, the first thing he set about was printing the bishop of Durham's book. This prelate, as hath been observed, was a very moderate

man; no favourer of Protestantism, yet no friend to some of the grosser tenets of the Romish church; particularly to its extravagant doctrine of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper: and this book, which shewed the moderation of its author, gave much offence to all the more zealous Papists; and drew many severe reproaches on Mr. Gilpin, who was generally supposed to have corrupted the bishop's work. Of what was said his friends gave him notice, particularly Francis Wicliff; who desired, if the charge was unjust, that he would purge himself of it. Mr. Gilpin told him, that was easily done: and opening a desk, "See here, (says he,) a letter from my lord of Durham himself in which he thanks me for my care and fidelity in this business."

While Mr. Gilpin staid at Paris, he lodged with Vascosan, an eminent printer, to whom he had been recommended by his friends in the Netherlands. This learned man shewed him great regard, did him many friendly offices, and introduced him to the most considerable men in that city.

Here Popery became quite his aversion: he saw more of its superstition and craft than he had yet seen; the former among the people, the latter among the priests, who scrupled not to avow, how little truth was their concern. He would frequently ask, "Whether such and such bad consequences might not arise from such and such doctrines?" But he was always answered, "That was not to be regarded—the church could not subsist without them—and little inconveniences must be borne with."

At Paris he found his old acquaintance Mr. Neal; of New-college; who always favoured Popery, and was now become a bigot to it. Mr. Gilpin often expressed to him the concern he had on this account; and approved his friendship, by the earnest desire he shewed to make him see his errors: but Neal was not of a temper to be wrought on.

As an instance of popish sophistry and prejudice,



Mr. Gilpin would sometimes relate a conversation about image-worship, which he once had with this person at Paris. He was observing to him the great absurdity of the Romanists, in condemning idolatry, and yet countenancing such an use of images, as must necessarily draw the people into it. For his part, he said, he knew not how a Christian could allow himself in kneeling to an image; and asked Neal, whether, in his conscience, he did not think it the idolatry forbidden in the second commandment? Neal was for distinguishing between an idol and an image: the images of saints, he said were not idols; and therefore the reverence paid to them could not be idolatry. Mr. Gilpin observed, that in the second commandment there was no mention made of an idol: the prohibition was, "Bow not down to the likeness of any created thing." And what is it, said he, that makes an idol? The workman makes the resemblance of a human creature: the image thus made is no idol: it is worship that makes it one. Hence the apostle says, "an idol is nothing"—a mere creature of the imagination. The distinction therefore between *Latria* and *Doulia* is to no purpose: it is made void by the express words, "Thou shalt not bow down unto them." The very posture of adoration, he observed, was forbidden; and that at least the Romanists every where practised.—To all this Neal had only one general answer: "You may say what you please; but these things are established by the church, and cannot be altered."

This Neal was the man, who, being afterwards chaplain to bishop Bonner, distinguished himself by being the sole voucher of the very improbable and silly story of the nag's-head consecration.

Mr. Gilpin having spent three years abroad, was now fully satisfied in all his more considerable scruples. He wanted no farther conviction of the bad tendency of popery: he saw the necessity of some reformation; and began to think every day more favourably

of the present one. The doctrine of the corporal presence indeed he had not yet fully considered; but he looked upon it as a mystery, which it rather became him to acquiesce in, than examine. The principal end of his going abroad being thus answered, he was desirous of returning home.

The Marian persecution still raged. His friends therefore, with great earnestness, dissuaded him from his design. They represented the danger he would be in at this juncture in England—pressed him to wait for happier times—and suggested, that it was little less than madness to think of going to a place, from whence all, of his sentiments, were endeavouring to withdraw themselves.

But it is most probable, that his purpose to return at this time was in pursuance of the bishop of Durham's advice; who, finding the infirmities of age increase upon him, and believing his nephew totally unqualified to advance himself in life, might be desirous of providing for him before his death; and hoped that his power, in that remote part of the kingdom, would be a sufficient protection for him against his enemies. It is however certain, that he came into England during the heat of the persecution.

#### SECTION IV.

Upon his arrival in England, he went immediately to the bishop of Durham, who was then in his diocese. Here this humane prelate kept himself withdrawn during most of that violent reign, to avoid having any hand in measures which he abhorred.

When he left London, upon his release from the tower, he was straitly charged with the extirpation of heresy in his diocese: and was given to understand, that severity would be the only allowed test of his zeal.

These instructions he received in the spirit they were given; threatening, that heretics should nowhere find a warmer reception than at Durham: and it was thought indeed the protestants would hardly meet with much favour from him, as they had shewn him so little. But nothing was further from his intention than persecution; insomuch that his was almost the only diocese, where the poor protestants enjoyed any repose. When most of the other bishops sent in large accounts of their services to religion, very lame accounts came from Durham: they were filled with high encomiums of the orthodoxy of the diocese, interspersed here and there with the trial of an heretic; but either the depositions against him were not sufficiently proved; or there were great hopes of his recantation—no mention was made of any burnings. The following story of his lenity we have from Mr. Fox. A person had been accused to him of heresy, whom he had slightly examined, and dismissed. His chancellor thinking him too favourable, pressed for a further examination: the bishop answered, “We have hitherto lived peaceably among our neighbours: let us continue so, and not bring this man’s blood upon us.” A behaviour of this kind was but ill relished by the zealous council; and the bishop lay deservedly under the calumny of being not actuated by true Romish principles.

Such was the state of the diocese of Durham, when Mr. Gilpin came there. The bishop received him with great friendship; and, within a very little time, gave him the archdeaconry of Durham; to which the Rectory of Easington was annexed. It is probable, that if Mr. Gilpin came home by the bishop’s advice, this preferment was then vacant, or soon expected to be so.

Upon removing to his parish, he found it in great disorder. With a firm resolution therefore of doing what good he could in it, he set himself in earnest

to reprove vice publicly and privately; to encourage virtue; and to explain the nature of true religion, with a freedom by no means suited to those dangerous times.

Very material objections were then made to the clergy of those parts. The reformation, which advanced but slowly in England, had made least progress in the north. The ecclesiastics there wanted not a popish reign to authorize their superstition. But this was their best side. Their manners were scandalous: the pastoral care was totally neglected; and it is hard to say, whether vice or ignorance was more remarkable in them.

All over England indeed the church was very ill supplied with ministers. "As for the inferior clergy, (says Fuller,) the best that could be gotten, were placed in pastoral charges. Alas! tolerability was eminency in that age. A rush candle seemed a torch where no brighter light was ever seen before. Surely preaching now ran very low, if it be true what I read, that Mr. Tavernour, of Water-Eaton in Oxfordshire, high-sheriff of the county, came in pure charity, not ostentation, and gave the scholars a sermon in St. Mary's, with his gold chain about his neck, and his sword by his side."

Nor can we imagine, that the high-sheriff himself contributed much to advance the art of preaching, if we may judge of his oratory by a specimen of it still preserved. "Arriving, (says he), at the mount of St. Mary in the stony stage where I now stand, I have brought you some fine biscuits, baked in the oven of charity, and carefully conserved for the chickens of the church, the sparrows of the spirit, and the sweet swallows of salvation."

We may judge likewise of the state of learning at that time among the clergy, from the accounts still preserved of some archidiaconal visitations. "Latinè verba aliquot intelligit, non sententiam; Latinè utcumque intelligit; Latinè pauca intelligit;" were

the expressions generally made use of to characterise them in this particular.

How much, in the north especially, the pastoral care was neglected, we may judge from an account given us of the clergy of those parts, by a bishop of Durham, in a letter still preserved, to an archbishop of Canterbury.

“ It is lamentable, (says he), to see how negligently they say any service, and how seldom. Your cures are all, except Rochdale, as far out of order as any of the country. Whalley hath as ill a vicar as the worst. The bishop of Man liveth here at ease, and as merry as pope Joan. The bishop of Chester hath compounded with my lord of York for his visitation, and gathereth up the money by his servants : but never a word spoken of any visitation or reformation ; and that, he saith, he doth out of friendship, because he will not trouble the country, nor put them to charge in calling them together.”

This corruption among his brethren gave Mr. Gilpin great concern. “ The insatiable covetousness (to use his own words) joined with the pride, carnal liberty, and other vices, which reign at this time in all estates, but especially among us priests, who ought to be the salt of the earth, breaks me many a sleep.” He determined therefore to do all in his power to effect a reformation ; or, if that were impossible, to protest however against what he could not alter. He considered, that one of his offices obliged him to take the same care of the manners of the clergy, as the other did of those of the laity ; and as he never received an office without a design of doing his duty in it, he resolved to behave as an archdeacon ought.

Accordingly he took every opportunity of reprov- ing the enormities he remarked. The more ingenious of the inferior clergy he endeavoured to bring by gentler methods to their duty : the obstinate he would rebuke with all authority. And as he feared

no man in the cause of religion, no man's family or fortune could exempt him from his notice. At visitations particularly, and wherever his audience was chiefly clerical, he would express himself against every thing he observed amiss, with a zeal, which might have been thought affected in one of a less approved sincerity.

It was an opinion of his, that non-residence and pluralities were the principal sources of corruption among churchmen. We need not wonder therefore, if we find him inveighing against them with the greatest earnestness. It must be owned indeed, they were at that time shamefully in use. It was no uncommon thing for a clergyman in those days to hold three, and sometimes four livings together. Mr. Strype mentions one person who held five. His name was Blage; he was a batchelor in divinity; and held at one time, St. Dunstan's in the West, Whiston and Doncaster in Yorkshire, Rugby in Warwickshire, and Barnet in Middlesex. Such enormities went to the heart of the pious archdeacon; and were the constant subjects of his reproof. Sometimes he would shew how wrong they were in themselves, as absolutely contrary to the design of endowments, at other times how injurious to the rest of the order: "While three parts out of four of the clergy, in his manner of speaking, were picking what they could get off a common, the rest were growing wanton with stall-feeding." But his great argument against them was, the prejudice they did religion. "It was reasonable, (he said,) to think a parish would be better taken care of by the priest, who received the whole income; than by the curate, who received only a very small part; and would it might easily be imagined, too often proportion his pains to his allowance." Besides, he thought, one man's engrossing, what in all reason belonged to two, perhaps three or four, agreed very ill with the simple manners, and sequestered life of a minister

of Christ; and gave an example which tended more to the discredit of religion, than all the preaching in the world to its advancement.

With equal freedom he likewise censured their private vices: frequently drawing the character of a bad clergyman, and dwelling upon such irregularities as he knew gave most offence in the ecclesiastics of those parts.

The prudent bishop, observing the forwardness of his zeal, failed not to furnish him with cautions in abundance; often reminding him how prudently he ought to behave, where, with all his prudence, he should scarce avoid giving offence—and his enemies, he said, could never want a handle against him, while popery reigned with so much severity.

But such representations of danger had no effect upon him. The common maxims indeed of worldly prudence, he knew, were against him; but the examples he found in Scripture of holy men, who with equal freedom opposed vice, and in times as dangerous, wrought strongly with him. If his endeavours were at all serviceable to religion, if they only set some bounds to vice, he thought it criminal to check them through any motives of fear. It was his opinion, that when an employment was accepted, it should be accepted in all its parts: he thought nothing was a greater breach of trust, or more destructive of common good, than to consider public offices only as private emoluments.

It is however a little surprizing, that the bishop of Durham, who knew the world so well, should not foresee how much he must necessarily expose his nephew to the popish party, by placing him in such a station. He knew he could not temporize; and he must know, that without temporizing, he would soon be obnoxious to those in power; with whose persecuting principles he was well acquainted. Had he provided for him in a way, which had no connexion with the clergy, it is probable he might

have avoided those dangers in which we shall immediately find him. For his free reproofs soon roused the ecclesiastics of those parts against him, and put them upon every method in their power to remove so inconvenient an enquirer. It was presently the popular clamour, "That he was an enemy to the church—a scandalizer of the clergy—a preacher of damnable doctrines—and that religion must suffer from the heresies he was daily broaching, if they spared him any longer." "After I entered upon the parsonage of Easington, (says he, in a letter to his brother,) and began to preach, I soon procured me many mighty and grievous adversaries, for that I preached against pluralities and non-residence. Some said, all that preached that doctrine became heretics soon after.—Others found great fault, for that I preached repentance and salvation by Christ; and did not make whole sermons, as they did, about transubstantiation, purgatory, holy-water, images, prayers to saints, and such like."

Thus, in short, he had raised a flame, which nothing but his blood could quench. Many articles were drawn up against him, and he was accused in form before the bishop of Durham.

This prosecution was managed chiefly by one Dunstat, a priest in those parts, who had always distinguished himself as the archdeacon's enemy: and as it was imagined the bishop's very great regard for Mr. Gilpin might probably obstruct their designs, this person had been long employed by the party to work underhand, and prejudice the bishop against him.

Happy was it for him, that the prelate had as much discernment as humanity. He knew what men and times would bear; and easily found a method to protect his friend without endangering himself.

When the cause came before him, "He was sorry to hear, that a person he had so great a regard for should be accused of heresy—that indeed himself



had not been without some suspicion of his leaning a little that way—but he had still been in hopes there was nothing in his opinions of any dangerous consequence to religion.—He should however be fairly examined; and if he appeared to be guilty, he should find a very severe judge in the bishop of Durham.

By this management the bishop got the affair into his own hands: and taking care to press his accused friend in points only, in which he knew him able to bear examination, he brought him off innocent; telling the accusers, “He was afraid they had been too forward in their zeal for religion—and that heresy was such a crime, as no man ought to be charged with but on the strongest proof.”

The malice of his enemies could not however rest. His character at least was in their power; for they had great influence upon the populace, of which they failed not to make the worst use, by infusing into those, who were open to hasty impressions, such sentiments as they knew most likely to inflame them. Several of his papers, yet remaining, shew what candid interpreters they were of words and actions, which could possibly be wrested to any bad meaning: one letter particularly, in which with great mildness he endeavours to free himself from the slanders of some of his enemies, who had reported him to have affirmed, “It was as lawful to have two wives as two livings.” He remembered indeed he had once been asked, “Whether of the two was worse?” and that he had carelessly answered, “He thought them both bad:” but to extend this to his affirming, “They were both equally bad,” was perverting his meaning, he thought in a very disingenuous manner.

The great fatigue and constant opposition which Mr. Gilpin thus underwent, were, in the end, he found, too much for him.—He acquainted the bishop, therefore, “That he must resign either his archdeaconry, or his parish,—that he would with the greatest

readiness do his duty in which soever his lordship thought him best qualified for; but he was not able to do it in both."—"Have I not repeatedly told you," said the bishop, "that you will die a beggar? Depend upon it you will, if you suffer your conscience to raise such unreasonable scruples. The archdeaconry and the living cannot be separated: the income of the former is not a support without that of the latter. I found them united, and am determined to leave them so."

In consequence of the bishop's refusal to let him keep either of them single, he most probably resigned them both: for we find him about this time without any office in the church.—During his being thus unemployed, he lived with the bishop as one of his chaplains.

But even in this situation he found the malice of his enemies still pursuing him. The defeat they had received did not prevent their seeking every opportunity of attacking him again. He avoided them as much as possible; and they, on the other hand, contrived to meet him as frequently as they could; urging him continually upon some controverted point of religion, in contradiction often to the most obvious rules of decency and good manners.

The bishop of Chichester gives us the particulars of one of these disputes; which, he says, he had often heard his kinsman, Anthony Carleton, speak of, who lived at that time in the bishop of Durham's family.

Some of the bishop's chaplains getting about him in their accustomed manner, one of them asked him his opinion of the writings of Luther: Mr. Gilpin answered, "He had never read them: that his method had always been to study the Scriptures, and the expositions of the fathers upon them; but for the writings of modern divines, he was not so well acquainted with them." One of the chaplains, in a sneering manner, commended that as a right way

of proceeding; and added, "That if all men were of Mr. Gilpin's opinion, and had the same veneration for antiquity, the peace of the church would no longer be disturbed with any of these novel teachers." "But suppose," said Mr. Gilpin, "these novel teachers have the sense of antiquity on their side; what shall we say then? Shall the antient doctrine be rejected, because of the novel teacher?" This not satisfying them, they began to urge him farther. "Pray," said one of them, "what are your thoughts about the real presence?" Mr. Gilpin answered, "That he really knew nothing of weight to object against it: but he thought it too mysterious a subject to bear a dispute." "But do you believe transubstantiation?" "I believe every thing contained in the word of God." "But do you believe as the church believes?" "Pray," said Mr. Gilpin, "is the catholic faith unchangeable?" "Undoubtedly it is." "But the church did not always hold transubstantiation as an article of faith." "When did it not hold it so?" "Before the time of Peter Lombard, who first introduced it: and even since his time it hath undergone an alteration. Pray tell me, is not the bread in the sacrament converted into both the body and blood of Christ?" "Undoubtedly it is." "But," said Mr. Gilpin, "Peter Lombard himself did not believe that: for in the eleventh chapter of his fourth book, I very well remember he saith expressly, 'There is no transubstantiation but of bread into flesh, and wine into blood.' And now, I beg you will tell me how you reconcile these things with the unchangeableness of the catholic faith?" The chaplains had nothing to answer: for the words of Lombard indeed plainly denied, that in the transubstantiated bread there was any blood. Mr. Gilpin, observing their confusion, went on: "It appears then that transubstantiation was never heard of in the church, before the time of Peter Lombard: a man might have been a good ca-

tholic without acknowledging that doctrine till then : afterwards, for a long time, the only meaning of it was, a conversion of the bread into flesh, and the wine into blood : and thus it remained, till Thomas Aquinas introduced his notion of concomitancy ; at which time this doctrine underwent another change : both flesh and blood were then, it seems, contained really and substantially in the bread alone.—Alas ! alas ! I am afraid these are the novel opinions that have got in amongst us : the catholic faith, we are both agreed, is unchangeable.” The bishop was sitting before the fire in the same chamber, where this conversation happened ; and leaning back in his chair, overheard it. When it was over he got up, and turning to his chaplains, said to them, with some emotion, “ Come, come, leave him, leave him, I find he has more learning than all of you put together.”

How long Mr. Gilpin remained unbeneficed, doth not appear. It could not however be very long, because the rectory of Houghton-le-spring fell vacant before Easington, and the archdeaconry, were disposed of ; and the bishop, in a jocular way, made him an offer of all the three. But that offer it was not likely he would listen to. He thanked the bishop however, and accepted Houghton.

This rectory was indeed of considerable value, but the duty of it was proportionably laborious. It was so extensive, that it contained no less than fourteen villages : and having been as much neglected in that dark age, as the cures in the north then ordinarily were, popery had produced its full growth of superstition. Scarce any traces, indeed, of true Christianity were left. Nay, what little religion remained, was even popery itself corrupted. All its idle ceremonies were carried higher in the north, than in any other part of the kingdom ; and were more considered as the essentials of religion. How entirely this barbarous people were excluded from all means of better information, appears from hence,

that in that part of the kingdom, through the designed neglect of the bishops and justices of the peace, king Edward's proclamations for a change of worship, had not even been heard of at the time of that prince's death.

Such was the condition of the parish of Houghton, when it was committed to Mr. Gilpin's care. He was grieved to see ignorance and vice so lamentably prevail: but he did not despair. He implored the assistance of God; and his sincere endeavours met with it. The people crowded about him, and heard him with attention, perceiving him a teacher of a different kind from those, to whom they had hitherto been accustomed.

Upon his taking possession of Houghton, it was some mortification to him, that he could not immediately reside. His parsonage-house was gone entirely to decay; and some time was required to make it habitable. Part of it was fitted up as soon as possible for his reception: but he continued improving and enlarging it, till it became suitable to his hospitable temper, a proper habitation for a man who never intended to keep what he had to himself. "His house," says the bishop of Chichester, "was like a bishop's palace; superior indeed to most bishops' houses, with respect both to the largeness of the building, and the elegance of the situation."

Soon after this late instance of the bishop's favour to him, another opportunity offered, by which this generous patron hoped still farther to improve his fortune. A stall in the cathedral of Durham was vacant, which he urged Mr. Gilpin in the most friendly manner to accept; telling him, "There lay not the same objection to this as to the archdeaconry—that it was quite a sinecure—and that he could have no reasonable pretence for refusing it." But Mr. Gilpin resolving not to accept it, told the bishop, "That by his bounty he had already more wealth, than, he was afraid, he could give a good account

of. He begged therefore, he might not have an additional charge; but that his lordship would rather bestow this preferment on one by whom it was more wanted." The bishop knew by long experience it was in vain to press him to what he did not approve; so there was no more said of the prebend.

Though he lived now retired, and gave no offence to the clergy, their malice still pursued him. They observed with indignation the strong opposition between his life and theirs. His care and labour were a standing satire upon their negligence and sloth; and it was the language of their hearts, "By so living thou reproachest us." In a word, they were determined, if possible, to remove so disagreeable a contrast.

But they had not the easiest part to manage. The country favoured him; the bishop was his friend; and no good man his enemy. However, what malice could do was not wanting: every engine was set at work; and base emissaries employed in all parts to seek out matter for an accusation of him. Of all this Mr. Gilpin was sensible, and behaved as cautiously as he thought consistent with his duty; indeed more cautiously than he could afterwards approve: for, in his future life, he would often tax his behaviour at this time with weakness and cowardice\*.

But had his caution been greater against such vigilant enemies, it had probably been still ineffectual. The eyes of numbers were constantly upon him, and scarce an action of his life escaped them. Of this malicious industry we have the following instance.

A woman in a dangerous labour, imploring God's assistance, was rebuked by those around her for not rather praying to the Virgin Mary. Alarmed by her danger, and greatly desirous of knowing whether God or the Virgin was more likely to assist her, she

\* See page 140.

begged. "The great preacher lately come from abroad, might be sent for: she was sure he would come, and could tell her what she should do." Mr. Gilpin told her, "He durst not persuade her to call upon the Virgin Mary; but in praying to God, she might be sure she did right—that there were many express commands in Scripture for it—and that God would certainly hear them who prayed earnestly to him." Mr. Gilpin was afterwards surprized to find that even this private transaction had not escaped the vigilance of his enemies.

By so unwearied an industry such a number of articles were in a short time got together, as, it was thought, could not fail to crush him. He was formally accused therefore, and brought once more before the bishop of Durham. How the bishop behaved at this time we are not particularly informed. But no man knew better how to act upon an emergency. It is probable he would vary his management; but it is certain Mr. Gilpin was acquitted.

The malice of his enemies succeeded however in part; for the bishop's favour to him from this time visibly declined. The bishop was a prudent man; and when he found that his kinsman's piety (carried, as he thought, in many instances, to excess) began to involve himself in inconveniences and suspicions: it is not unlikely that he might judge his friendship had led him too far from his own prudential maxims of behaviour, and that he might resolve to endanger his quiet no longer for the sake of a man whose obstinacy was insuperable\*.

\* About Easter I was accused again before the bishop, in many articles, both from York and Durham: but these could take no farther hold against me, than only to make the bishop to blot me out of his testament; and to make the vulgar people speak evil of me. For losing the disposal of the bishop's goods, I thought I was well unburthened; and for the people's favour, to the end I might

This was not less than Mr. Gilpin expected. He acknowledged his great obligations to the bishop; was sorry to see him disgusted; and would have given up any thing to have satisfied him, except his conscience.

His enemies, in the mean time, were not thus silenced. Though they had been defeated a second time, they were still determined to proceed. But as they had found the bishop of Durham could not be wrought on as they wished, they resolved to carry their accusation elsewhere. Thirty-two articles were accordingly drawn up against him; and laid before Bonner of London. Here they went the right way to work. Bonner at once took fire; extolled their laudable concern for religion, and promised that the heretic should be at a stake in a fortnight.

Mr. Gilpin's friends in London trembled for his safety, and instantly dispatched a message—that he had not a moment to lose.

The messenger did not surprise him. He had long been preparing himself to suffer for the truth, and he now determined not to decline it. It was in some sort, he thought, denying his faith, to be backward in giving the best testimony to it: and as it was the principal business of his life to promote religion, if he could better effect this by his death, it was his wish to die.

He received the account, therefore, with great composure: and calling up William Airay, a favourite domestic, who had long served him as his steward; and laying his hand upon his shoulder, "At length," says he, "they have prevailed against me—I am accused to the bishop of London, from whom there will be no escaping—God forgive their malice, and

more edify in preaching (otherwise I did not covet it) I trusted time, through God's goodness, would bring it again. Extract of a letter from Bernard Gilpin to his brother.



grant me strength to undergo the trial." He then ordered his servant to provide a long garment for him, in which he might go decently to the stake; and desired it might be made ready with all expedition; "For I know not," says he, "how soon I may have occasion for it."

As soon as this garment was provided, it is said, he used to put it on every day till the bishop's messengers apprehended him.

His friends in the mean time failed not to interpose; earnestly beseeching him, while he had yet an opportunity, to provide for his safety. But he begged them not to press him longer on that subject: should he even attempt it, he said, he believed it would hardly be in his power to escape; for he questioned not but all his motions were very narrowly observed.— Besides, he would ask, how they could imagine he would prefer the miserable life of an exile, before the joyful death of a martyr? "Be assured," says he, "I should never have thrown myself voluntarily into the hands of my enemies; but I am fully determined to persevere in doing my duty, and shall take no measures to avoid them."

In a few days the messengers apprehended him, and put an end to these solicitations.

In his way to London, it is said, he broke his leg, which put a stop for some time to his journey. The persons, in whose custody he was, took occasion thence, maliciously to retort upon him an observation he would frequently make, "That nothing happens to us but what is intended for our good;" asking him, "Whether he thought his broken leg was so intended?" He answered meekly, "He made no question but it was." And indeed so it proved in the strictest sense: for before he was able to travel, queen Mary died, and he was set at liberty.

Whatever truth there may be in this relation, which depends only on a tradition of the family; thus

much is certain: the account of the queen's death met him upon the road, and put a stop to any farther prosecution.

## SECTION V.

Mr. Gilpin thus providentially rescued from his enemies, returned to Houghton through crouds of people, expressing the utmost joy, and blessing God for his deliverance.

Elizabeth's accession freed him now from all restraint, and allowed him the liberty he had long wished for, of speaking his mind plainly to his parishioners: though nobody but himself thought the reserve he had hitherto used at all faulty.

It was now his friend the bishop of Durham's turn to suffer. He and some other bishops refusing the oath of supremacy, were deprived and committed to the tower. But this severity soon relaxed: to the bishop of Durham especially, the government shewed as much lenity as was thought consistent with the reformation then carrying on. He was recommended to the care of the archbishop of Canterbury; with whom he spent in great tranquillity the short remainder of a very long life.

This prelate had seen as great a variety of fortune as most men; he had lived in difficult and in easy times; he had known both protestants and papists in power; and yet from all parties, and in all revolutions of government, he had found favour. The truth is, he was well versed in the art of temporizing, and possessed a large share of that complying philosophy, which taking offence at nothing, can adapt itself to all things. When Henry the eighth began to innovate, the bishop of Durham had no scruples. When his son went farther, still the bishop was quiet, and owed indeed his confinement at the close of that reign to his desire of continuing

so. Again, when queen Mary reversed what they had done, with this too the bishop was satisfied, and forgot all his former professions. Thus much however may justly be said of him, that upon all occasions, and where no secular ends were in view, he shewed himself a man of great moderation: and whether in his heart he was more papist or protestant, to arbitrary proceedings however in either persuasion he was wholly averse. Thus he thought things were carried too far on one side in king Edward's time, and too far on the other in queen Mary's: with both reigns he was dissatisfied, though he was too great a lover of his ease to oppose them. But as his days shortened, his conscience grew more tender, and what he had done for king Henry and king Edward, he refused to do again for queen Elizabeth. Though the bishop of Salisbury is of opinion, he was not withheld by any scruples, but such as a sense of decency raised, from complying with that princess; he was very old, and thought it looked better to undergo the same fate with his brethren, than to be still changing\*. And this is the rather probable, because many historians say, the late reign had given him a great disgust to popery; and that he would often own to archbishop Parker, he began to think every day more favourably of the reformers.—In private life his manners were very commendable. He had an absolute command over himself; a temper which no accident could discompose; great humanity, and great good nature. In learning, few of his contemporaries were equal to him; none more ready to patronize it. Of the offices of friendship, he was a strict observer; and was not only a favourer, but a zealous encourager of good men. In a word, where he was not immediately under the influence of court-maxims, he gave the example of a true Christian bishop.

\* See Burnet's History of the Reformation.

Mr. Gilpin, though deprived of the assistance of this great prelate, soon experienced however, that worth like his could never be left friendless. His merit raised him friends wherever he was known; and though his piety was such, that he never proposed reputation as the ead of his actions; yet perhaps few of his profession stood at this time higher in the public esteem. "He was respected," says the bishop of Chichester, "not only by the more eminent churchmen, but by those of the first rank in the nation."

When the popish bishops were deprived, and many sees became vacant, Mr. Gilpin's friends at court, particularly the earl of Bedford, thought it a good opportunity to use their interest in his favour. He was recommended accordingly to the queen, as a proper person for one of the void bishoprics: on which, as he was a north-countryman, she nominated him to that of Carlisle; and the earl took immediate care that a congé d'elire, with her majesty's recommendation of him, should be sent down to the dean and chapter of that see.

Mr. Gilpin, who knew nothing of what was going forward in his favour, was greatly surprised at this unexpected honour; yet could not by any means persuade himself to accept it. He sent a messenger therefore with a letter to the earl, expressing his great obligations to her majesty and his lordship for their favourable sentiments of him—but begged they would excuse his accepting their intended kindness—they had really thought of placing him in a station which he did not merit—he must therefore remove from himself a burden to which he, who was best acquainted with his own weakness, knew himself unequal—in the mean time he would not fail to do his utmost for the service of religion in an inferior employment.

The earl, upon the receipt of this letter, went immediately to Dr. Sandys, bishop of Worcester,

who was then in London. As this prelate was intimately acquainted with Mr. Gilpin, and, as the bishop of Chichester says, nearly related to him, the earl supposed he could not be without his influence over him; and therefore earnestly desired he would endeavour to persuade his friend to think less meanly of himself. The bishop readily undertook the office, and wrote the following letter to Mr. Gilpin\*.

“ My much respected kinsman, regarding not so much your private interest, as the interest of religion, I did what I could, that the bishopric of Carlisle, might be secured to you: and the just character I gave of you to the queen has, I doubt not, had some weight with her majesty in her promotion of you to that see; which not to mention the honour of it, will enable you to be of the utmost service to the church of Christ.—I am not ignorant how much rather you chuse a private station: but if you consider the condition of the church at this time, you cannot, I think, with a good conscience, refuse this burden; especially as it is in a part of the kingdom, where no man is thought fitter than yourself to be of service to religion. Wherefore I charge you before God, and as you will answer to him, that laying all excuses aside, you refuse not to assist your country, and do what service you can to the church of God.—In the mean time, I can inform you, that by the queen’s favour you will have the bishopric just in the condition in which Dr. Oglethorpe left it; nothing shall be taken from it, as hath been from some others. Wherefore exhorting and beseeching you to be obedient to God’s call herein, and not to neglect the duty of your function, I commend both you and this whole business to the divine providence. Your kinsman and brother,  
“ EDWIN WORCESTER.”

*London, April 4, 1560.*

\* The original is lost, but the bishop of Chichester has preserved a latin translation of it, from which this is taken.

This letter, notwithstanding the pressing manner in which it is written, was without effect. Mr. Gilpin returned his thanks; but as for the bishopric, he was determined, and he thought for very good reasons, not to accept it. Nor could all the persuasions of his friends alter this resolution. Had he, they asked him, any scruple of conscience about it?—In one sense he had: “The case,” says he, “is truly this: if any other bishopric, besides Carlisle, had been offered to me, I possibly might have accepted it: but in that diocese I have so many friends and acquaintance, of whom I have not the best opinion, that I must either connive at many irregularities, or draw upon myself so much hatred, that I should be less able to do good there than any one else.”

Mr. Gilpin thus persisting in his refusal, the bishopric was at length given to Dr. Best, a man by no means undeserving of it.

This prelate soon found he had entered upon a very disagreeable and vexatious office. His cathedral was filled with an illiterate set of men, who had been formerly monks: “For,” as Camden tells us, “the greater part of the popish priests thought it would turn to better account to renounce the pope’s authority, and swear allegiance to the queen, were it for no other end than the exclusion of protestants out of their churches, and the relief of such of their own party, who had been displaced. This they judged a piece of discretion highly meritorious, and hoped the pope would be so good as dispense with their oath on such an occasion.” The diocese of Carlisle was much in this situation; and indeed the people there were as strongly inclined to the superstitions of popery as the priests. This disposition of the country, whetted by the prelate’s rigid opposition, who was not a man the most happily qualified to manage unruly tempers, began to shew itself in very violent effects. The whole diocese was soon

in a flame; and the bishop, after two years' residence, was obliged to repair to London, and make a formal complaint to his superiors.

This vexation which the popish party was likely to give to any one placed in the see of Carlisle, is imagined, by the archbishop Grindal's life, to be a principal reason why Mr. Gilpin refused it. But this would have been as good a reason for his refusing the rectory of Houghton, or any other employment in the church: for popery prevailed universally over the country; and he could be placed no where in the north without experiencing a toilsome opposition to the bigotry and prejudices of it. But his own ease and convenience were never motives of the least weight with him, when any service to mankind could be balanced against them.

The accounts given us by bishop Nicholson and Dr. Heylin of Mr. Gilpin's behaviour on this occasion are still more disingenuous: they both ascribe it chiefly to lucrative motives. The \* former intimates, that the good man knew what he was about, when he refused to part with the rectory of Houghton for the bishopric of Carlisle: the † latter supposes that all his scruples would have vanished, might he have had the old temporalities undiminished. Both these writers seem to have been very little acquainted with Mr. Gilpin's character, in which disinterestedness bore so principal a part: it will hereafter appear, that he considered his income in no other light than that of a fund to be managed for the common good. The bishop's insinuation therefore is contradicted by every action of Mr. Gilpin's life; and as for Dr. Heylin's, it is most notoriously false; for the bishopric was offered to him with the old temporalities undiminished ‡.

There were not wanting some who attributed his

\* In his historical library. † In his church history.

‡ See the bishop of Worcester's letter, p. 177.

refusal of the bishopric to unfavourable sentiments of episcopacy. But neither for this was there any good foundation. He was indeed far from being a bigot to that or any other form of church government, esteeming a good life, which might be led under any of them, the best evidence of a Christian. Yet he seems to have thought most favourably of the episcopal form; as will appear afterwards, when notice is taken of the endeavours of the dissenters to draw him to their party.

The year after his refusal of the bishopric of Carlisle, an offer of another kind was made him.

The provostship of Queen's-college in Oxford becoming vacant soon after Elizabeth's accession and the fellows who were strongly attached to popery, being about to chuse a person inclined the same way, the queen, with their visitor the archbishop of York, interposed, and insisted on their electing Dr. Francis. The fellows were much out of humour at this proceeding; and the affair made some noise in the university, where the popish party was very strong. At length however the queen's recommendation took effect. But though the fellows had thus chosen the person recommended to them, yet their behaviour was so undutiful towards him, that he was soon weary of his office; and in less than a year began to think of resigning it. Mr. Gilpin was the person he turned his thoughts on for a successor; apprehending that such a change would not be displeasing to the fellows, and very agreeable to the queen. He made him an offer therefore of resigning in his favour: but not succeeding the first time, he wrote again; begging at least that he would recommend to him some proper person, and assuring him with what readiness he would acquiesce in his choice. His second letter is still preserved.

“After my hearty commendations: meaning to leave the place which I occupy in the Queen's-college at Oxford, and being desirous to prefer some honest,



learned, godly, and eligible person to that office, I thought good yet once again to offer the provostship thereof unto you: which if it please you to accept, I shall be glad upon the sight of your letters, written to that end, to move the fellows, whom I know do mean you marvellously well. But, and if you propose not to encumber yourself with so small a portion in unquietness (so may I justly call it) I shall wait your advice upon whom I may confer the same, whom you think mete and eligible thereunto: and I shall be ready to follow your advice upon the receiving of your letters, wherewith I pray you speedily to certify me.

“By yours to command,

“THOMAS FRANCIS.”

*Oxford, December 17, 1561.*

How Mr. Gilpin answered this letter doth not appear; nor whether he recommended a successor to the dissatisfied provost: this only is certain, that he refused the offer himself.

Thus having had in his option almost every kind of preferment which an ecclesiastic is capable of holding, he sat down with one living, which gratified the utmost of his desires—for he found it afforded him as many opportunities of doing good, as he was able to make use of.

Soon after Elizabeth's accession, a general visitation was held. An assembly of divines, among whom were Parker, Grindal, and Sandys, having finished a body of injunctions and articles, commissions were issued out, empowering proper persons to enforce them; the oath of supremacy was to be tendered to the clergy, and a subscription imposed. When the visitors came to Durham, Mr. Gilpin was sent to, and requested to preach before the clergy there, against the pope's supremacy. To this he had no objection: but he did not like the thoughts of subscribing, having some doubts with regard to one or

more of the articles. His curate having not these scruples, he hoped that his subscription might satisfy the visitors. But he was mistaken; for the next day, when the clergy were assembled to subscribe, as an instance of respect, Mr. Gilpin was first called upon. The emergency allowed him no time for reflection. He just considered with himself, that upon the whole, these alterations in religion were certainly right—that he doubted only in a few immaterial points—and that if he should refuse, it might keep others back. He then took up the pen, and, with some hesitation, at length subscribed. Afterwards retiring, he sent a letter to the visitors, acquainting them in what sense he subscribed the articles; which they accepted very favourably.

The great ignorance which at this time prevailed over the nation, afforded a melancholy prospect to all who had the interest of religion at heart. To it was owing that gross superstition which kept reformation every where so long at a stand; a superstition which was like to continue; for all the channels, through which knowledge could flow, were choaked up. There were few schools in the nation; and these as ill supplied as they were endowed. The universities were in the hands of bigots, collecting their strength to defend absurdities to the utter neglect of all good learning. At Cambridge indeed some advances in useful literature were made; Sir John Cheke, Roger Ascham\*, and a few others,

\* Sir John Cheke was fellow of St. John's, and afterwards tutor to Edward the Sixth. In queen Mary's time he fled into Germany; but by a trick was brought home, and recanted to save his life; "A great example (says Lloyd in his state worthies) of parts and ingenuity, of frailty and infirmity, of repentance and piety." Roger Ascham was fellow of the same college; and professor of oratory in the university; afterwards tutor and secretary to queen Elizabeth. He was a man of great learning, honesty, and discretion.

having boldly struck out a new path through that wilderness of false science, which involved them: but they were yet lazily followed.

The very bad consequences which could not but be feared from this extreme ignorance, turned the endeavours of all well-wishers to the progress of true religion upon the most probable methods to remove it. The queen herself was greatly interested in this matter, and earnestly recommended it to the care of her council; who began to vie with each other in their endeavours to root out false science, as they had already done false religion.

No good work ever went forward, which Mr. Gilpin did not promote, as far as he was able. In this he joined to the utmost of his abilities—as was commonly indeed thought, beyond them. His manner of living was the most affluent, and generous: his hospitality made daily a large demand upon him; and his bounty and charities a much larger. His acquaintance therefore could not but wonder to find him, amidst such great expences, entertaining the design of building and endowing a grammar-school: a design however which his exact economy enabled him to accomplish.

The effects of his endowment were very quickly seen. His school was no sooner opened than it began to flourish, and afford the agreeable prospect of a succeeding generation rising above the ignorance and errors of their forefathers.

That such might be its effects, no care on his part was wanting. He not only placed able masters in his school, whom he procured from Oxford, but himself likewise constantly inspected it. And that encouragement might quicken the application of his boys, he took particular notice of the most forward: he would call them his own scholars, and would send for them into his study, and there instruct them himself.—Often when he met a poor boy upon the road, he would make trial of his capacity by a few ques-

tions; and if he found it such as pleased him, he would provide for his education.

Nor did his care end here. From school he sent several to the universities, where he maintained them at his own expence. To others, who were in circumstances to do something for themselves, he would give the farther assistance they needed; and thus induced many parents to allow their children a liberal education, who were otherwise unequal, or perhaps disinclined, to it. While the church was in possession of its immense wealth, the universities were always full: but when this was taken away, it soon appeared that the muses, unportioned, had very few charms. In king Edward's reign, bishop Latimer calculated, that even in that short space of time since the alienation of the church-lands, the two universities were diminished by above ten thousand persons; a number almost incredible.

Nor did Mr. Gilpin think it enough to afford the means only of an academical education to these young people, but endeavoured with the utmost care to make it as beneficial to them as he could. He still considered himself as their proper guardian; and seemed to think himself bound to the public for their being made useful members of it, as far as it lay in his power to make them so. With this view he held a punctual correspondence with their tutors; and made the youths themselves likewise frequently write to him, and give him an account of their studies. Several of their letters, chiefly preserved by having something of Mr. Gilpin's written upon their backs, still remain, and shew in how great veneration he was held among them\*. So solicitous indeed was

\* An extract from one of these letters is worth preserving. It contains a curious account of that remarkable sickness in Oxford, which succeeded the black assize, as it was afterwards called. The original is in latin.

“The terrible distemper among us, of which you have

he about them, knowing the many temptations to which their age and situation exposed them, that once every other year, he generally made a journey to the universities, to inspect their behaviour.

Nor was this uncommon care unrewarded. Few of his scholars miscarried: "Many of them," says the bishop of Chichester, "became great ornaments to the church; and very exemplary instances of piety."

Among those of any note, who were educated by him, I find these three particularly mentioned; Henry Ayray, George Carleton, and Hugh Broughton.

undoubtedly heard, hath made it indeed a dreadful time to us. During the first six days there died ninety-five; seventy of whom were scholars. This is not conjecture, but appears from the mayor's list. The infection does not confine itself to the town, but begins to spread in the country; where, if our accounts are true, it hath carried off numbers of people: amongst them poor Mr. Roberts. Those who are seized with it, are in the utmost torment: their bowels are burnt up: they call earnestly for drink: they cannot bear the touch of clothes: they intreat the standers by to throw cold water upon them: sometimes they are quite mad; rise upon their keepers; run naked out of houses; and often endeavour to put an end to their lives.—The physicians are confounded, declaring they have met with nothing similar either in their reading or practice. Yet many of them give this distemper a name, though they have done nothing to shew they are at all acquainted with its nature. The greater part of them, I am told, have now left the town, either out of fear for themselves, or conscious that they can do no good.—This dreadful distemper is now generally attributed to some jail infection, brought into court at the assizes: for it is remarkable, that the first infected were those only who had been there.—Few women or old men have died.—God be thanked, the rage of this pestilence is now much abated. It is still among us in some degree, but its effects appear every day weaker."

Henry Ayray became afterwards provost of Queen's-college in Oxford; where he was in great esteem for his abilities, and exemplary life.

George Carleton was a man of worth and learning, and very deservedly promoted to the see of Chichester. It might have been added, that he was much caressed and employed by James I. but the favours of that undistinguished monarch reflected no great honour upon the objects of them. To this good prelate the world is chiefly indebted for these memorials of Mr. Gilpin's life.

Hugh Broughton, was indeed famous in his time, and as a man of letters esteemed by many, but in every other light despicable. He was a remarkable instance of the danger of learning without common sense. During the younger part of his life he confined himself to a college library, where his trifling genius engaged him chiefly in rabbinical learning, in which he made a notable progress. Thus accomplished, he came abroad, with an opinion of himself equalled only by his sovereign contempt for others. As he wanted that modest diffidence which is the natural guard of a person unacquainted with the world, he soon involved himself in difficulties. London was the scene where he first exposed himself. Here for some time he paid a servile court to the vulgar, in the capacity of a popular preacher: but afterwards giving a freer scope to his vanity, he set up a conventicle; where assuming the air of an original, he treated the opinions of the times, and all who maintained them, with an insufferable insolence and scurrility. Disappointed of his expected preferment, and thoroughly mortified that his merit had been so long disregarded, he withdrew into Germany. Thither he carried his old temper, attacking Jews in synagogues, and papists in mass-houses. But he was soon glad to return into England; where having lived out all his credit, and become the

jest even of the stage\*, he died—a standing monument of the folly of applying learning to the purposes of vanity, rather than the moral ends of life †.

\* See the *Alchymist* of Ben Jonson; act 2. sc. 3. and act 4. sc. 5.—*The Fox*; act 2. sc. 2.

† The following elegy upon Mr. Broughton's death, written in the year 1612, I met with accidentally. The reader will not be displeas'd with it, as it is a very beautiful composition, and serves likewise to illustrate Mr. Broughton's character; for though meant as an encomium, it is rather a satire upon him for employing himself in matters of mere curiosity, in the most trifling studies, which belonged to his profession.

A comely dame in sorrow's garments drest,  
Where chrystal-sliding Thames doth gently creep,  
With her soft palm did beat her ivory breast,  
And rent her yellow locks; her rosy cheek  
She in a flood of briny tears did steep:  
Rachel she seem'd, old Israel's beauteous wife,  
Mourning her sons, whose silver cord of life  
Was cut by murd'rous Herod's fell and bloody knife.

Between her lily hands the virgin held  
Two testaments; the one defaced with rust,  
Vanquish't with time, and overgrown with eld,  
All stained with careless spots, all soiled with dust;  
It seem'd the same the which Jehovah earst  
With his celestial finger did engrave,  
And on the top of smoaking Sinai gave  
To him, whom Pharoah's daughter found in watery cave.

The other seem'd fresh, and fairly clad  
In velvet cover, filleted with gold;  
White bullions and crimson ties it had:  
Its pumic'd leaves were seemly to behold:  
That spotless Lamb, which trait'rous Judas sold,  
With sacred stain, fresh issuing from his side,  
Them gilt, when in Jerusalem he dyed,  
For to redeem his dearest love, his beauteous bride.

But to return : while Mr. Gilpin was engaged in settling his school, he was for some time interrupted

Theology, for so men called the maid,  
Upon these volumes cast her melting eyes :  
“ And who shall now,” quoth she, “ since Broughton’  
dead,

Find out the treasure, which within you lies,  
Shadowed in high and heavenly mysteries ?  
Ah ! who shall now,” quoth she, “ to others tell  
How earth’s great ancestor, old Adam fell,  
Banished from flowery Eden, where he once did dwell ?

“ What meant that monstrous man, whom Babel’s king  
Did in a troubled slumber once behold,  
Like huge Goliath, slain by David’s sling,  
Whose dreadful head, and curled locks were gold,  
With breasts and mighty arms of silver mould ;  
Whose swelling belly and large sides were brass,  
Whose legs were iron, feet of mingled mass,  
Of which one part was clay, the other iron was !

“ What meant the lion, plumed in eagle’s wings :  
What meant the bear, that in his horrid jaw  
Three ribs of some devoured carcass brings :  
What meant the leopard, which Belshazzar saw,  
With dreadful mouth and with a murdering paw ;  
And what that all-devouring horned beast  
With iron teeth, and with his horrid crest,  
All this, and much besides, by Broughton was exprest.

“ ’Twas he that branched Messiah’s sacred stem  
In curious knots, and traced his earthly race  
From princely Adam to the noble Sem,  
So down to him that held Coniah’s place,  
And from his son to Mary full of grace,  
A heavenly maid, a blessed virgin wife,  
Who highly favoured, gave the precious life,  
The ransom of a world from sin and Satan’s strife.

“ ’Twas he that graved the names of Jacob’s sons  
In that mysterious plate on Aaron’s breast :



by a rebellion which broke out in the north. The popish party, which had given so much disturbance

Reuben in sardius, which as water runs ;  
 In topaz Simeon, baser than the rest ;  
 In emerald Levi, for his doctrine best :  
 Judah in carbuncle, like heaven's bright eye  
 And Issachar in saphire's azure die ;  
 In ruby Zabulon, which near the sea doth lie ;

“ Dan in the flowery hyacinth is cut ;  
 In agate Napthali ; and warlike Gad  
 In bloody amethyst : Ashur is put  
 In crysolite : the beryl Joseph had ;  
 Young Benjamin, old Jacob's sweetest lad,  
 The onyx : each within his several stone  
 Our great Bezaleol carved, who now is gone  
 To praise the Lamb, and him who sits upon the throne.

“ Ye sacred Muses, that on Siloah sing,  
 And in celestial dew do dip your quill,  
 The which your Phœbus, mighty Elohim,  
 In silver-streaming channels doth distill  
 From top of Hermon, and of Sion hill,  
 As you your great Creator's praise rehearse,  
 Ah ! lend one broken sigh, one broken verse,  
 One doleful-tuned hymn to deck his sable hearse.

“ And you, poor Jews, the issue of old Sem,  
 Who did in honey flowing Canaan dwell,  
 And swayed the sceptre of Jerusalem,  
 Until some snaky fury, sent from hell,  
 Did you enrage with spite and malice fell  
 To put your Lord to death—ah ! now repent  
 For murdering that Lord—ah ! now lament  
 His death, who would have brought you into Japhet's tent.

“ Ye learned clerks, that covet Adam's tongue,  
 Long time preserv'd in Heber's holy line,  
 After th' emprise of that heav'n-scaling throng,  
 Which sought above the dew-steep'd clouds to climb

to Elizabeth's reign, made at this time a fresh effort. Two factious spirits, the earls of Westmoreland, and Northumberland, inflamed by the seditious whispers of a Romish emissary, were drawn from their allegiance. The watchful ministry soon suspected them; and the queen, with her usual foresight, appointed a short day for their appearance at court, obliged them, yet unprepared, to take arms.

(Such hateful pride was found in earthly slime)  
Do you lament this wondrous learned man,  
Who, tuneful as the silver-pinion'd swan,  
Canaan's rich language in perfection sang.

“ He knew the Greek, plenteous in words and sense,  
The Chaldee wise, the Arabic profound,  
The Latin pleasing with its eloquence,  
The braving Spanish with its lofty sound,  
The Tuscan grave with many a laurel crown'd,  
The lisping French that fits a lady vain,  
The German, like the people, rough and plain,  
The English full and rich, his native country's strain.

“ Ah! Scottish Ishmaels, do not offer wrong  
Unto his quiet urn; do not defame  
The silver sound of that harmonious tongue:  
Peace, dirty mouths, be quieted by shame,  
Nor vent your gall upon a dead man's name.  
O wake, ye west-winds; come, ye south, and blow;  
With your myrth-breathing mouths sweet odours throw  
Into the scented air round Broughton's tomb below.”

This said, the virgin vanished away,  
Meanwhile heaven put its darkest mantle on;  
The moon obscured withheld her silver ray;  
No twinkling star with cheerful lustre shone,  
But sable night lowered from her ebon throne.  
—Yet sorrow cease; tho' he's no longer ours,  
Still, still he lives in yon celestial bowers,  
And reigns triumphant with a choir of heavenly powers.

Mr. Gilpin had observed the fire gathering before the flame burst out; and knowing what zealots would soon approach him, he thought it prudent to withdraw. Having given proper advice therefore to his masters and scholas, he took the opportunity to make a journey to Oxford.

The rebels in the mean time published their manifesto, and appeared in arms; displaying in their banners a chalice, and the five wounds of Christ, and enthusiastically brandishing a cross before them. In this order they marched to Bernard-castle, which surrendered to them. They next surprized Durham; where they burned all the bibles they could find, and had mass said publicly in the cathedral. The country around felt their rage. Many of them ravaged as far as Houghton. Here they found much booty: the harvest was just over; the barns were full; the grounds well stocked with fatted cattle. Every thing became their prey; and what was designed to spread a winter's gladness through a country, was in a moment wasted by these ravagers.

But themselves soon felt the consternation they occasioned. The approach of the earl of Sussex with a numerous army was now confirmed. Every rumour brought him nearer. Their fears proportionally increased, they mutinied, threw down their arms, and dispersed. The country being generally loyal, many were taken, and imprisoned at Durham and Newcastle; where Sir George Bowes was commissioned to try them.

Here Mr. Gilpin had an opportunity of shewing his humanity. Sir George had received personal ill treatment from them; and the clamours of a plundered country demanded the utmost legal severity: and indeed the utmost legal severity was exercised, to the great indignation of all, who were not wholly bent on revenge. This induced Mr. Gilpin to interpose. He represented to the marshal the true state of the country, "That, in general, the people were well

affected ; but being extremely ignorant, many of them had been seduced by idle stories, which the rebels had propagated, making them believe they took up arms for the queen's service." Persuaded by what he said, or paying a deference to his character, the marshal grew more mild ; and shewed instances of mercy, not expected from him.

About this time Mr. Gilpin lost one of the most intimate friends he ever had, Dr. Pilkington, bishop of Durham ; a man much admired for his learning, but more esteemed for the integrity of his life. He was bred at Cambridge, where he was many years master of St. John's college. Here he was first taken notice of for a freedom of speech which drew upon him queen Mary's resentment. But he had the good fortune to escape the inquisition of those times. In the succeeding reign he recommended himself by an exposition of the book of Haggai, or rather by an ingenious application of it to the reformation in religion then designing. He was afterwards introduced to the queen ; and being found a man of true moderation, the reformed temper then looked for, and of abilities not unequal to the charge, he was promoted to the see of Durham. Having taken upon him this trust, he made it the endeavour of his life to fulfil it. He withdrew himself immediately from all state avocations, and court dependencies, in which indeed he had never been much involved, and applied himself wholly to the duties of his function ; promoting religion rather by his own example, than by the use of proper discipline, in which he was thought too remiss.—At Durham he became acquainted with Mr. Gilpin. Their minds, intent on the same pursuits, easily blended. It was a pure friendship, in which interest had no share ; for the one had nothing to ask, the other had nothing to receive. When business did not require their being separate, they were generally together ; sometimes at Bishop-Awkland, and as often at Houghton. At

these meetings they consulted many pious designs. Induced by Mr. Gilpin's example, the bishop founded a school at the place of his nativity in Lancashire; the statutes of which he brought to his friend to revise and correct.

## SECTION VI.

Mr. Gilpin's blameless life, his reputation in the world, his piety, his learning, and that uncommon regard for truth, which he had always discovered, made it the desire of persons of all religious persuasions to get him of their party, and have their cause credited by his authority.

The dissenters made early proposals to him. The reformation had scarce obtained a legal settlement under Elizabeth, when that party appeared. Its origin was this.

The English protestants, whom the Marian persecution had driven from home, flying in great bodies into Germany and Switzerland, settled at Frankfort, Strasburgh, Arrow, Zuric, and Geneva. Of all these places Frankfort afforded them the kindest reception. Here, by the favour of the magistracy, they obtained the joint use of a church with the distressed protestants of France, to whom likewise Frankfort at that time afforded protection. These were chiefly Calvinists. Religious prejudices between both parties were however here laid aside. Their circumstances as fellow-exiles in a foreign land, and fellow-sufferers in a common cause, inspired them with mutual tenderness: in one great opposition all others subsided; and protestant and papist became the only distinction. In a word, the English thinking their own church now dissolved, having no material objections, and being the less body, for the sake of peace and convenience, receded from their liturgy, and conformed to the French.

Some authors indeed mention this as an imposed condition. Be it however as it will, the coalition was no sooner known, than it gave the highest offence to many of the English settled in other parts. "It was scandalous," they exclaimed, "to shew so little regard to an establishment which was formed with so much wisdom, was so well calculated for all the ends of religion, and for which their poor brethren in England were at that time laying down their lives." The truth of the case was, the argument had been before moved; and this was only the re-kindling of that flame which John a Lasco had formerly raised\*. An opposition so very unseasonable produced, as such oppositions generally do, the worst effects. Besides the scandal it every where gave, it engaged the Frankfort English in a formal defence of their proceedings; and their passions being excited, they began at length to maintain on principle, what they at first espoused only for convenience. Accordingly, when they came home, they revived the dispute with bitterness enough; and became then as unreasonable in molesting, as they had before been unreasonably molested. Subtle men will never be wanting, who have their sinister ends to serve by party-quarrels. And thus some ambitious spirits among the dissenters, wanting to make themselves considerable, blew up the flame with great vehemence: "It was as good," they exclaimed, "not to begin a reformation, as not to go through with it—the church of England was not half reformed—its doctrines indeed were tolerable, but its ceremonies and government were popish and unchristian

\* John a Lasco was a native of Poland; from whence being driven on the account of his religion, he retired into England; where, by the favour of Edward the Sixth, he was allowed to open a church for the use of those of his own persuasion. But he made only a bad use of this indulgence; interfering very impertinently in the ecclesiastical controversies then on foot.

—it was in vain to boast of having thrown off the Romish yoke abroad, while the nation groaned under a lordly hierarchy at home—and for themselves, as they had been sufferers in the cause of religion, they thought it was but right they should be consulted about the settlement of it.” This imprudent language was a melancholy presage to all who had real Christianity at heart. It was answered, “That things were now legally settled—that whatever could give just offence to the scrupulous had been, it was thought, removed—that if they could not conform, a quiet non-conformity would be tolerated—and that the many inconveniences attending even that change, which was absolutely necessary, made it very disagreeable to think of another, which was not so.” The lord Burleigh endeavoured to convince them how impossible it was in things of this nature to give universal satisfaction, by shewing them that even among themselves they could not agree upon the terms of an accommodation. And Sir Francis Walsingham proposed to them from the queen, that a few things in the Established Church, to which they most objected, should be abolished. But they answered loftily, in the language of Moses, “That not an hoof should be left behind.” This irreconcilable temper gave great offence not only to the churchmen, but to the more serious of their own persuasion. The government from this time slighting them, they appealed to the people; and by the popular artifice of decrying authority, they soon became considerable.—Such were the beginnings of those dissensions which our prudent forefathers entailed on their posterity!

The dissenters having thus formed their party among the people, endeavoured to strengthen it by soliciting every where the most creditable persons in favour of it. Very early applications were made to Mr. Gilpin. His refusal of the bishopric of Carlisle had given them favourable sentiments of him, and

great hopes that in his heart he had no dislike to their cause. But they soon found their mistake. He was wholly dissatisfied with their proceedings. Religious disputes were in his opinion of such dangerous consequence, that he always thought when true Christianity, under any form of church government, was once established in a country, that form ought not to be altered, unless blameable in some very material points. "The reformation," he said, "was just: essentials were there concerned. But at present he saw no ground for dissatisfaction. The church of England, he thought, gave no reasonable offence. Some things there might be in it, which had been perhaps as well avoided\*: but to

\* It is probable he here means particularly the use of vestments, which gave a good deal of offence at that time.—Bishop Burnet, speaking of some letters he saw at Zurich between Bullinger and some of the reformed bishops, has the following paragraph, which it will not be improper to quote at length, as it gives us a good idea of those times.

"Most of these letters contain only the general news, but some were more important, and relate to the disputes then on foot concerning the habits of the clergy, which gave the first beginnings to our unhappy divisions; and by the letters, of which I read the originals, it appears that the bishops preserved their ancient habits rather in compliance with the queen's inclinations, than out of any liking they had to them; so far were they from liking them, that they plainly expressed their dislike of them. Jewel, in a letter bearing date the 8th of February, 1566, wishes that the vestments, together with all the other remains of popery, might be thrown both out of their churches, and out of the minds of the people, and laments the queen's fixedness to them: so that she would suffer no change to be made.—And in January the same year, Sandys writes to the same purpose. 'Contenditur de vestibus papisticis utendis vel non utendis, dabit Deus his quoque finem.' Disputes are now on foot concerning the popish vestments, whether they should be used or not,



disturb the peace of a nation for such trifles," he thought, "was quite unchristian."—And indeed what appeared to him chiefly blameable in the dis-

but God will put an end to these things.—Horn, bishop of Winchester went further: for in a letter dated July 16, 1565, he writes of the act concerning the habits with great regret; and expresses some hopes that it might be repealed next session of parliament, if the popish party did not hinder it; and he seems to stand in doubt whether he should conform himself to it or not, upon which he desires Bullinger's advice. And in many letters writ on that subject, it is asserted, that both Cranmer and Ridley intended to procure an act for abolishing the habits, and that they only defended their lawfulness, but not their fitness, and therefore they blamed private persons that refused to obey the laws.—Grindal in a letter dated the 27th of August, 1566, writes, that all the bishops, who had been beyond the sea, had at their return dealt with the queen to let the matter of the habits fall: but she was so prepossessed, that though they had all endeavoured to divert her from prosecuting that matter, she continued still inflexible. This had made them resolve to submit to the laws, and to wait for a fit opportunity to reverse them. He laments the ill effects of the opposition that some had made to them, which had extremely irritated the queen's spirit, so that she was now much more heated in those matters than formerly; he also thanks Bullinger for the letter he had writ, justifying the lawful use of the habits, which, he says, had done great service.—Cox, bishop of Ely, in one of his letters, laments the aversion that they found in the parliament to all the propositions that were made for the reformation of abuses.—Jewel, in a letter dated the 22d of May, 1559, writes that the queen refused to be called head of the church, and adds, that that title could not justly be given to any mortal, it being due only to Christ; and that such titles had been so much abused by Antichrist, that they ought not to be any longer continued.—On all these passages I will make no reflections here: for I set them down only to shew what was the sense of our chief churchmen at that time concerning

senters, was, that heat of temper, with which they propagated their opinions, and treated those who differed from them. Neither episcopal nor presbyterian government, nor caps, nor surplices, nor any external things, were matters with him half so interesting, as peace and charity among Christians: and this was his constant topic in all his occasional conversations with that party.

Such however was the opinion they entertained of him, that notwithstanding these casual intimations of his dislike to them, they still persisted in their endeavours to gain him to their side. The chief of them failed not to set before him what they had to say of most weight against the established discipline; and a person of esteemed abilities among them came on purpose from Cambridge to discourse with him on the best form of ecclesiastical government. But this agent did his cause little credit. With no great learning he had an insupportable vanity; and seemed to take it for granted, that himself and Calvin were the two greatest men in the world. His discourse had nothing of argument in it; an indecent invective against episcopacy was the sum of it. He was so full of himself, that Mr. Gilpin thought it to no purpose to reason with him, and therefore avoided whatever could lead them into a dispute.

Some time after Mr. Gilpin heard, that his late visitant had reported him to have affirmed, speaking about the primitive times, that "the virtues of the moderns were not equal even to the infirmities of the fathers." He said indeed he remembered some such thing coming from him; but not in the pointed manner in which it was represented. His adversary had been decrying the fathers greatly, declaring

those matters, which have since engaged us in such warm and angry disputes; and this may be no inconsiderable instruction to one that intends to write the history of that time."—Dr. Burnet's Travels, let. 1.

there were men in this age much their superiors, plainly intimating whom he principally intended. Such arrogance, Mr. Gilpin said, he was desirous to mortify; and meant it of such moderns as him, when he asserted that their virtues were not equal to the infirmities of the fathers.

The success the dissenters had met with in their private applications, encouraged them to try what farther might be had by a public attack on the national church. Their great champion was Dr. Cartwright, who wrote with much bitterness against it. His book was immediately dispersed over the nation, received by the party with loud acclamations, and every where considered as unanswerable.

Soon after it was published, it was zealously put into Mr. Gilpin's hands. The gentleman who sent it, one Dr. Birch, a warm friend to the principles advanced in it, desired he would read it carefully and communicate to him his remarks. But very impatient for them, he sent a messenger, before Mr. Gilpin had read the book half through. He returned it however, with the following lines, which shew his opinion of church-government in general.

“*Multa quidem legi, sed plura legenda reliqui;  
Posthac, cum dabitur copia, cuncta legam.  
Optant ut Careat maculis ecclesia cunctis;  
Præsens vita negat; vita futura dabit.*”

Though Mr. Gilpin was thus greatly dissatisfied with the disorderly zeal which the more violent of the dissenters expressed, attended, as he observed it was, with such fatal consequences, he confined however, his dislike to their errors; to their persons he bore not the least ill-will. Nay, one of the most intimate friends he ever had was Mr. Léver, a minister of their persuasion, and a sufferer in their cause.

This gentleman had been head of a college in Cambridge, and afterwards prebendary of Durham, and

master of Sherborn hospital. He was a man of good parts, considerable learning, and very exemplary piety; and had been esteemed in king Edward's time an eminent and bold preacher. During the succeeding confusion he settled at Arrow in Switzerland, where he was teacher to a congregation of English exiles. Here he became a favourer of Calvin's opinions; and at his return home was considered as one of the principal of the dissenting party. The very great indiscretions already mentioned, of a few violent men, soon made that whole party obnoxious to the government; to which nothing perhaps contributed more than the seditious application of that doctrine to Elizabeth, which had been formerly propagated against female government by Knox and Goodman in the reign of her sister. This was touching that jealous queen in a very sensible part; and induced her, perhaps too rigorously, though she was really ill used, to press uniformity.—Among others Mr. Lever suffered: he was convened before the archbishop of York, and deprived of his ecclesiastical preferment. Many of the cooler churchmen thought him hardly dealt with, as he was really a moderate man, and not forward in opposing the received opinions.

Mr. Gilpin was among those who pitied his treatment; nor did he scruple to express his usual regard for him, though it was not a thing the most agreeable to his superiors. But he had too much honour to sacrifice friendship to popular prejudice; and thought, that they, who agreed in essentials, should not be estranged from each other for their different sentiments on points of less importance.

As Mr. Gilpin was thus solicited on one hand by the dissenters, so was he on the other by the papists. It had long been a mortification to all the well-meaning of that persuasion, that so good a man had left their communion; and no methods were left untried to bring him back. But his change had been a work

of too much caution to be repented of: so that all their endeavours proved, as it was easy to suppose they would, ineffectual.

A letter of his, written upon an occasion of this kind, may here not improperly be inserted, to shew how well satisfied he was at this time with having left the church of Rome; and how unlikely it was that he should ever again become a member of it. I wish I could give this letter in its original simplicity. The manuscript indeed is still extant; but it is so mutilated, that it is impossible to transcribe a fair copy. The bishop of Chichester however hath given a Latin translation of it, from which I shall take as much as is worth preserving. It was written in answer to a long letter from one Mr. Gelthorpe, a relation of Mr. Gilpin's, who being a warm papist himself, was very uneasy that his kinsman and friend should be a protestant; concluding his letter thus:

“————— Now, I beseech you, remember what God hath called you to; and beware of passionate doings. I know you have suffered under great slanders and evil reports; yet you may, by God's grace, bridle all affections, and be an upright man. The report of you is great at London, and in all other places; so that in my opinion you shall in these days, even shortly, either do much good, leaning to the truth; or else (which I pray God turn away from us!) you shall do as much evil to the church as ever Arius did.”

To this letter the following was Mr. Gilpin's answer.

“I received your letter when I had very little time to answer it, as the bearer can inform you. I did not care however to send him back without some return, though in the latter part of your letter you say enough to tempt me to do so. For what encouragement have I to write, when you tell me, you are predetermined not to be persuaded! It could not but damp the prophet's zeal, when he cried out,

‘Hear the word of the Lord; to be answered by a stubborn people, ‘We will not hear.’—But let us leave events to God, who can soften the heart of man, and give sense to the deaf adder, which shutteth her ears.

“You look back, you say, upon past ages. But how far? If you would carry your view as high as Christ, and his apostles; nay, only as high as the primitive times, and examine them without prejudice; you could not but see a strange alteration of things, and acknowledge that a thousand errors and absurdities have crept into the church, while men slept.

“It grieves me to hear you talk of your concern for the suppression of abbies and monasteries; numbers even of your own communion have confessed, that it was impossible for them to stand longer. They were grown into such monstrous sanctuaries of vice, that their cry, no doubt, like that of Sodom, ascended into the ears of God. Besides, consider what pests they were to all good learning and religion; how they preyed upon all the rectories in the kingdom; amassing to themselves, for the support of their vices, that wealth, which was meant by pious founders for the maintenance of industrious clergymen.

“He that cometh to God, you say, must believe. Without doubt: but I would have you consider, that religious faith can have no foundation but the word of God. He, whose creed is founded upon bulls, indulgences, and such trumpery, can have no true faith. All these things will vanish, where the word of God hath efficacy.

“You say, you cannot see any thing in the Romish church contrary to the Gospel: I should think, if you looked narrowly into it, you might see the Gospel entirely rejected; and in its room, legends, traditions, and a thousand other absurdities introduced.—But this is an extensive subject, and I have

little leisure. Some other time probably I may write more largely upon these points. May God in the mean time open your eyes to see 'the abomination of the city upon seven hills.' Rev. xvii. Consult St. Jerome upon this passage.

"You use the phrase, 'If you should now begin to drink of another cup; whereas you never drank of any cup at all. How can you defend, I would gladly know, this single corruption; or reconcile it with that express command of Christ, 'Drink ye all of this;' I am sure, if you can defend it, it was more than any of your learned doctors at Louvain could do, as I myself can witness.

"As to our being called heretics, and avoided by you, we are extremely indifferent: we appeal from your uncharitable censures to Almighty God; and say with St. Paul, 'we little esteem to be judged of you, it is the Lord who judgeth us.'

"But you say it is dangerous to hear us. So said the persecutors of St. Stephen, and stopped their ears. So likewise Amaziah behaved to the prophet Amos. David likewise speaks of such men, comparing them 'to the deaf adder, which stoppeth her ears.' And we have instances of the same kind of bigotry in the writings of the evangelists; where we often read of men, whose minds the god of this world hath blinded.

"As for the terrible threatenings of your bishop, we are under no apprehension from them. They are calculated only for the nursery. Erasmus properly calls them *bruta fulmina*. If the pope and his cardinals, who curse us with so much bitterness, were like Peter and Paul; if they discovered that fervent charity, that extensive benevolence, and noble zeal in their master's cause, which distinguished those apostles, then were there some reason to dread their censures: but alas! they have changed the humility of Peter into the pride of Lucifer; the labours and

poverty of Apostles into the sloth and luxury of eastern monarchs.

“I am far from thinking there is no difference between consubstantiality and transubstantiation. The former undoubtedly hath many texts of Scripture for its support; the latter certainly none: nay, it hath so confounded many of its most zealous assertors, Scotus, Occam, Biel, and others, that it is plain how perplexed they are to get over the many difficulties that arise from it. Indeed Scotus thought, as bishop Tunstal would ingenuously confess, that the church had better make use of some less laboured exposition of those words in Scripture. And the good bishop himself likewise, though he would have men speak reverently of the sacrament, as the primitive church did, yet always said that transubstantiation might well have been let alone. As to what Mr. Chedsey said, ‘That the catholics would do well to give way in the article of transubstantiation,’ I cannot say I heard him speak the words myself, but I had them from a person who did.

“I am far from agreeing with you, that the lives of so many vicious popes should be passed over in silence. If the vices of churchmen should thus be concealed, I know not how you will defend Christ for rebuking the pharisees, who were the holy fathers of those times: or the prophet Isaiah, who is for having good and evil distinguished; and denounces a curse upon those, ‘who call him holy that is not holy:’ or St. Bernard likewise, who scruples not to call some wicked priests in his time the ministers of Antichrist. Such examples may excuse us.

“Five sacraments, you say, are rejected by us. You mistake: we use them still as the Scripture authorizes. Nay, even to the name of sacrament we have no objection; only suffer us to give our own explanation of it. I find washing of feet, and many other things of the same kind, are called sacraments



by some old writers ; but the fathers, and some of the best of the schoolmen are of opinion, that only baptism and the Lord's Supper can properly be called sacraments.

“I am surprised to hear you establish on a few easy passages in St. Paul, the several ridiculous ceremonies of the mass ; surely you cannot be ignorant, that most of them were invented long afterwards by the bishops of Rome—How much you observe St. Paul upon other occasions, is evident from your strange abuse of the institution of bread and wine. There it signifies nothing what the apostle says : tradition is the better authority :

“You tell me you can prove the use of prayers for the dead from Scripture. I know you mean the book of Maccabees. But our church follows the opinion of the fathers in saying, that these books are profitable for manners, but not to be used in establishing doctrines.

“St. Austin, you say, doubts whether there be not a purgatory. And so because he doubts it, the church of Rome establisheth it as an article of faith. Now I think if she had reasoned right from the saint's doubts, she should at least have left it indifferent. Faith, you know St. James says, ought not to waver. The bishop of Rochester, who was a diligent searcher into antiquity, says, that among the antients there is little or no mention made of purgatory. For myself, I am apt to think, it was first introduced by that grand popish traffick of indulgences.

“As to what you say about the invocation of saints, St. Austin, you know, himself exhorteth his readers not to ground their faith upon his writings, but on the Scriptures. And indeed, I think, there is nothing in the whole word of God more plainly declared to us than this, that God alone must be the object of our adoration. ‘How shall they call on him,’ saith St. Paul, ‘in whom they have not believed?’ If we believe in one God only, why should

we pray to any more? The popish distinction between invocation and advocacy, is poor sophistry. As we are told, we must pray only to one God, so we read likewise of only one advocate with the father, Jesus Christ the righteous.—You say you believe in the communion of saints; and infer, that no communion with them can subsist, unless we pray to them: but our church understands quite another thing by the communion of saints: for the word saint is a common Scripture epithet for a good Christian; nor doth it once signify, in either testament, as far as I can remember, a departed soul: nay, sometimes the words are very express, as in the sixteenth psalm, ‘To the saints which be on earth.’ If any man ever had a communion with the saints in heaven, surely David had it: but he never speaks of any communion with which he was acquainted, but with the saints on earth.—And thus likewise St. John speaks, ‘What we have seen and known, that declare we unto you, that you may have fellowship, or communion with us, and that our communion may be with God, and with his son Jesus Christ.’ 1 John i. 3. All the members of the church of Christ have communion among themselves: which communion consists chiefly in mutual prayers and preaching. Secondly, the church of Christ hath communion with the father and the son, or with the father through the son. That such communion as this exists, we have good authority; but none at all for a belief in a communion with departed souls: these, as I observed before, are never in Scripture called saints; but generally described by some such periphrasis as ‘The congregation of the first born in heaven;’ or, ‘the spirits of just men made perfect.’ In the next world probably with these likewise we may have communion; but they who expect it in this, must either bring Scripture for what they say, or come under our Saviour’s censure, ‘In vain do ye worship me, teaching for doctrines the traditions of men.’

Matt. xv. 9.—Indeed, by the custom of late ages departed souls are called saints; but I hope I need not inform you that the Holy Scripture is a more proper directory, than the custom of any age—But it is needless to dispute upon this point, because even the most zealous defenders of it acknowledge it to be a thing indifferent, whether we pray immediately to God, or through the mediation of saints. And if it be a thing indifferent, sure a wise man knows what to do.

“As for what you say about images, and fasting, (the proper use of which latter God forbid that I should say any thing against) together with your arguments in favour of reliques, and exorcisms, I could without any sort of difficulty reply to them: but at this time you really must excuse me: it is not an apology of course when I assure you, that I am now extremely busy. You will the more easily believe me, when I tell you I am at present without a curate; and that I am likewise a good deal out of order, and hardly able to undergo the necessary fatigues of my office.

“As to your not choosing to come to Houghton on a Sunday for fear of offending my people, to say the truth, except you will come to church, which I think you might do very well, I should not much desire to see you on that day; for country people are strangely given to copy a bad example; and will unlearn more in a day, than they have been learning for a month.—You must excuse my freedom: you know my heart; and how gladly I would have it to say, ‘Of those whom thou gavest me have I lost none.’ But on any other day, or if you will come on Sunday night, and stay a week with me, I shall be glad to see you. We may then talk over these things with more freedom: and though, as I observed before, the latter part of your letter gives me no great encouragement, yet I will endeavour to have a better hope of you, than you have of your-

self. St. Paul, in the early part of his life, was fully persuaded that he should die a pharisee, and an enemy to the cross of Christ: but there was a reserve of mercy in store for him; and through God's grace, his heart became so changed, that he suffered persecution himself for that name, which it had been before his ambition to persecute.

“ May the great God of heaven make you an object of the same mercy, and by the spirit of knowledge lead your mind into all truth.

“ I am, &c.

“ BERNARD GILPIN.”

## SECTION VII.

The public generally sees us in disguise: the case is, we ordinarily pay a greater deference to the world's opinion than to our own consciences. Hence a man's real merit is very improperly estimated from the more exposed part of his behaviour.

The passages of Mr. Gilpin's life already collected, are chiefly of a public nature; if we may thus call any action of a life so private. To place his merit therefore in its truest light, it will be necessary to accompany him in his retirement; and view his ordinary behaviour, from which all restraint was taken off.

When he first took upon him the care of a parish, he set himself to consider how he might best perform the charge intrusted to him. The pastoral care he saw, was much neglected: the greater part of the clergy, he could not but observe, were scandalously negligent of it; and even they, who seemed desirous of being accounted serious in the discharge of their ministry, too often, he thought, considered it in a light widely different from its true one. Some, he observed, made it consist in asserting the rights

of the church, and the dignity of their function: others, in a strenuous opposition to the prevailing sectaries, and a zealous attachment to the established church-government; a third sort, in examining the speculative points, and mystical parts of religion: few of them in the mean time considering, either in what the true dignity of the ministerial character consisted; or the only end for which church-government was at all established; or the practical influence, which can alone make speculative points worth our attention.—All this he observed with concern, resolving to pursue a different path, and to follow the laudable example of those few, who made the pastoral care to consist in a strenuous endeavour to amend the lives of those they were concerned with, and to promote their truest happiness both here and hereafter.

The strange disorder of that part of the country where his lot fell, hath already been observed. The extreme of ignorance, and of course of superstition, was its characteristic. The great care of Parker, archbishop of Canterbury, his frequent and strict visitations, his severe inquiries into the ministry of the clergy, and manners of the laity, had made a very visible alteration in the southern parts of England; but in the north, reformation went on but sluggishly. The indolent archbishop of York slept over his province. In what great disorder the good bishop Grindal found it, upon his translation thither, in the year 1570, appears from his episcopal injunctions, among which it is ordered, that no pedlar should be admitted to sell his wares in the church porch in time of service—that parish clerks should be able to read—that no lords of misrule, or summer lords and ladies, or any disguised persons, morrice-dancers, or others, should come irreverently into the church, or play any unseemly parts with scoffs, jests, wanton gestures, or ribald talk, in the time of divine service.—From

these things we may conceive the state of the parish of Houghton, when Mr. Gilpin came there.

He set out with making it his endeavour to gain the affection of his parishioners. Many of his papers shew how material a point he considered this. To succeed in it however he used no servile compliances: he would have his means good, as well as his end. His behaviour was free without familiarity; and insinuating without art: he condescended to the weak, bore with the passionate, complied with the scrupulous; and in a truly apostolic manner, "became all things to all men." By these means he gained mightily upon his neighbours, and convinced them how heartily he was their friend.

To his humanity and courtesy he added an unwearied application to the duties of his function. He was not satisfied with the advice he gave in public, but used to instruct in private; and brought his parishioners to come to him with their doubts and difficulties. He had an engaging manner towards those, whom he thought well-disposed: nay his very reproof was so conducted, that it seldom gave offence; the becoming gentleness with which it was urged made it always appear the effect of friendship. Thus laying himself out in admonishing the vicious, and encouraging the well-intentioned, in a few years he made a greater change in his neighbourhood, than could well have been imagined—a remarkable instance, what reformation a single man may effect, when he hath it earnestly at heart.

But his hopes were not so much in the present, as in the succeeding generation. It was an easier task, he found, to prevent vice than to correct it: to form good habits in the young, than to amend bad habits in the old. He laid out much of his time therefore in an endeavour to improve the minds of the younger part of his parish. Nor did he only take notice of those within his school, but in general extended his

care through the whole place: suffering none to grow up in an ignorance of their duty: but pressing it as the wisest part to mix religion with their labour; and amidst the cares of this life to have a constant eye upon the next.

Nor did he omit whatever besides might be of service to his parishioners.

He was very assiduous in preventing law suits among them. His hall was often thronged with people who came to him with their differences. He was not indeed much acquainted with law, but he could decide equitably, and that satisfied: nor could his sovereign's commission have given more weight than his own character gave him.

He had a just concern for all under affliction; and was a much readier visitant at the house of mourning, than at that of feasting: and his large fund of reading and experience always furnished something that was properly affecting. Hence he was considered as a good angel by all in distress.—When the infirmities of age came upon him, and he grew less able to endure exercise, it was his custom to write letters of consolation to such as were in affliction\*.

\* The following letter of this kind the reader may perhaps think worth his perusal.

“After my most due commendations, I beseech you, gentle Mrs. Carr, diligently to call to mind how mercifully God hath dealt with you in many respects. He hath given you a gentleman of worship to be your husband; one that I know loveth you dearly, as a Christian man should love his wife. And by him God hath blessed you with a goodly family of children, which both you and your husband must take to be the favourable and free gift of God.—But, good Mrs. Carr, you must understand that both that gift of God, and all others, and we ourselves are in his hands: he takes what he will, whom he will, and when he will; and whomsoever he taketh, in youth, or in age, we must fully persuade ourselves, that he ordereth all things for the best. We may not murmur,

He used to interpose likewise in all acts of oppression; and his authority was such, that it generally put a stop to them.

or think much at any of his doings: but must learn to speak from our hearts the petition of the Lord's Prayer, 'Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.' It is unto this holy obedience that St. Peter calleth all Christians, saying 'Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God.'—This godly submission did cause the holy patriarch Job, when it pleased God to take from him not only one, but all his children, seven brethren and sisters, upon one day, never to grieve himself with what God had done, but meekly to say, 'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.'—And here I would have you, good Mrs. Carr, to consider, how small cause you have to mourn, or fall into a deep sorrow, in comparison of the holy patriarch. God hath taken from you only one young daughter, and hath left you a goodly-family of children, which, I trust, with good education, will prove a blessed comfort to you.—This example of Job, and other examples in holy Scripture, being written (as the apostle saith) for our admonition, I must needs declare you to be worthy of great blame, if you continue any space in such great sorrow and heaviness, as I hear you take for your young daughter. St. Peter saith, that Christ Jesus suffered for us most cruel torments, and last of all a most cruel death, 'to leave us an example, that all who believe in him should follow his blessed steps:' that is, to bear his cross, to be armed with all patience, whensoever we lose any thing that we love in this world. And the same apostle saith, 'Seeing Christ hath suffered for us in his body, all you that are Christians must be armed with the same thought.'—Furthermore the Scripture saith, that unto us it is given not only to believe in Christ, but also to suffer for his sake. And St. Paul, in the viiith to the Romans, hath a most comfortable sentence to all that will learn to suffer with him; and a most fearful sentence to all those that refuse to suffer with him, and to bear his cross; 'The spirit,' saith he, 'beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of



A person against whom the country at that time exclaimed very much, was one Mr. Barns, a near relation, if not a brother of Dr. Barns, bishop of Durham, who raised him through some inferior posts to the chancellorship of his diocese. Between this

God; and if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and fellow-heirs with Christ; (it followeth) 'if so be that we suffer together with him, that we may also be glorified with him.' And St. Paul, in the first chapter of the second to the Corinthians, saith to all the faithful, "As ye are companions of those things, which Christ hath suffered, so shall ye be companions of his consolations."—All these things considered, I doubt not, good Mrs. Carr, but that you will arm yourself with patience, and bear Christ's cross, learning to suffer for his sake, and that, were it a greater loss than you have, God be praised, as yet sustained.—Let your faith overcome your sorrow. St. Paul writing to the Thessalonians concerning the dead (who, he saith, have but fallen asleep) forbiddeth them not to mourn, but utterly forbiddeth them to mourn like gentiles, and infidels, who have no hope in Christ. And the wise man, (Ecclus. xxii.) doth exhort us to mourn over the dead, so it be but for a little space: 'Weep,' saith he, 'for the dead, but only for a little time, because they are gone to their rest.' So you see there is an unreasonable mourning of them that want faith; and there is also a temperate and lawful mourning of them that have a stedfast belief in Christ, and his promises, 'which (St. John saith) overcometh all the temptations (that is, the troubles) of the world.' I trust verily, good Mrs. Carr, that your mourning being temperate will shew itself to be a faithful, not a faithless mourning; which latter I pray Almighty God to keep from you—But I fear to be tedious. I trust one day I shall be able to come unto you myself. In the mean space, and evermore, I shall pray that the God of all consolation may comfort you in all your troubles.

"Your loving friend in Christ

"BERNARD GILPIN."

*Houghton, May 31, 1583.*

man and Mr. Gilpin, there was a perpetual opposition for many years; the latter endeavouring to counteract the former, and to be the redressor of those injuries, of which he was the author. Several traces of these contests still remain among Mr. Gilpin's papers; from which it appears what a constant check upon his designs Mr. Barns found him; though he was always treated in a mild and affectionate manner. "It will be but a very few years," Mr. Gilpin tells him, (concluding a letter written in favour of three orphans, whom Mr. Barns had defrauded of their patrimony) "before you and I must give up our great accounts. I pray God give us both the grace to have them in a constant readiness. And may you take what I have written in as friendly a manner as it is meant. My daily prayers are made for you to Almighty God, whom I beseech evermore to preserve you."

Thus he lived in his parish, careful only to discharge his duty: no fatigue or difficulty could excuse him to himself for the omission of any part of it: the religious improvement of his people was his principal endeavour, and the success of this endeavour his principal happiness.

Notwithstanding however, all this painful industry, and the large scope it had in so extended a parish, he thought the sphere of his labours yet too confined. It grieved him to see every where in the parishes around him so much ignorance and superstition; occasioned by the very great neglect of the pastoral care in those parts. How ill supplied the northern churches at this time were, hath already been observed; and will still appear in a stronger light, if we compare the state of these churches with that of those in the southern parts of the island, which were universally allowed to have been less neglected. Of one diocese, that of Ely, where the clergy do not appear to have been uncommonly remiss, we have a curious account still preserved: it contained one

hundred and fifty-six parishes; of which forty-seven had no ministers at all, fifty-seven were in the hands of careless non-residents, and only the remaining fifty-two were regularly served.

The very bad consequences arising from this shameful remissness among the clergy, induced Mr. Gilpin to supply, as far as he could, what was wanting in others. Every year therefore he used regularly to visit the most neglected parishes in Northumberland, Yorkshire, Cheshire, Westmoreland, and Cumberland: and that his own parish, in the mean time might not suffer, he had a constant assistant. In each place he stayed two or three days, and his method was, to call the people about him, and lay before them, in as plain a way as possible, the danger of leading wicked and careless lives—explaining to them the nature of true religion—instructing them in the duties they owed to God, their neighbour and themselves—and shewing them how greatly a religious conduct would contribute to their present as well as future happiness.

When a preacher, though the merest rhapsodist, seems to speak from his heart, what he says will be listened to. The appearance of his being truly in earnest, will dispose men at least to give him a fair hearing. Hence Mr. Gilpin, who had all the warmth of an enthusiast, though under the direction of a very calm judgment, never wanted an audience even in the wildest parts; where he roused many to a sense of religion, who had contracted the most inveterate habits of inattention.

One thing he practised, which shewed the best disposed heart. Wherever he came, he used to visit the jails and places of confinement, (few in the kingdom having at that time any appointed minister;) and by his labours, and affectionate manner of behaving, he is said to have reformed many very abandoned persons in those places. He would employ his interest likewise for such criminals, whose cases

he thought attended with any hard circumstances, and often procured pardons for them.

There is a tract of country upon the border of Northumberland, called Reads-dale and Tine-dale; of all barbarous places in the north, at that time the most barbarous. The following description of this wild country we have from Mr. Camden:

“At Walwick, North Tyne crosses the Roman wall. It rises in the mountains on the borders of England and Scotland; and first running eastward, waters Tine-dale, which hath thence its name, and afterwards embracing the river Read, which falling from the steep hill of Readsquire, where the lord-wardens of the eastern marches used to determine the disputes of the borderers, gives its name to a valley, too thinly inhabited, by reason of the frequent robberies committed there. Both these dales breed notable bogtrotters, and have such boggy-topped mountains, as are not to be crossed by ordinary horsemen. We wonder too see so many heaps of stones in them, which the neighbourhood believe to be thrown together in memory of some persons there slain. There are also in both of them many ruins of old forts. The Umfranvils held Reads-dale, as doomsday-book informs us, in fee and knights’ service for guarding the dale from robberies. All over these wastes you see, as it were, the ancient Nomades, a martial people, who from April to August lie in little tents, which they call sheals or shealings, here and there dispersed among their flocks.”

Before the union, this country was generally called the debateable land, as subject by turns to England and Scotland, and the common theatre where the two nations were continually acting a variety of bloody scenes. It was inhabited, as Mr. Camden hath just informed us, by a kind of desperate banditti, rendered fierce and active by constant alarms. They lived by theft; used to plunder on both sides of the barrier, and what they plundered on one, they

exposed to sale on the other ; by that evasion escaping justice. Such adepts were they in the art of thieving, that they could twist a cow's horn, or mark a horse, so as its owners could not know it ; and so subtle, that no vigilance could guard against them. For these arts they were long afterwards famous. A person telling king James a surprising story of a cow that had been driven from the north of Scotland into the south of England, and escaping from the herd, had found her way home ; " The most surprising part of the story," the king replied, " you lay least stress on, that she passed unstolen through the debateable land."

In this dreadful country, where no man would even travel that could help it, Mr. Gilpin never failed to spend some part of every year. He generally chose the holydays of Christmas for his journey, because he found the people at that season most disengaged, and most easily assembled. He had set places for preaching, which were as regularly attended, as the assize-towns of a circuit. If he came where there was a church, he made use of it: if not, of barns, or any other large building ; where great crouds of people were sure to attend him, some for his instructions, and others for his charity.

This was a very difficult and laborious employment. The badness of the weather and the badness of the roads through a mountainous country, and at that season covered with snow, exposed him often to great hardships. Sometimes he was overtaken by the night, (the country being in many places desolate for several miles together,) and, as the bishop of Chichester relates, obliged to lodge in the cold: at such times he would make his servant ride about with his horses, whilst himself on foot used as much exercise as his age and the fatigues of the preceding day would permit.—All this he cheerfully underwent ; esteeming such sufferings well compen-

sated by the advantages which he hoped might accrue from them to his uninstructed fellow-creatures.

Our Saxon ancestors had a great aversion to the tedious forms of law. They chose rather to determine their disputes in a more concise manner, pleading generally with their swords. "Let every dispute be decided by the sword," was a Saxon law. A piece of ground was described, and covered with mats: here the plaintiff and defendant tried their cause. If either of them was driven from this boundary, he was obliged to redeem his life by three marks. He whose blood first stained the ground, lost his suit\*.

This custom still prevailed on the borders, where Saxon barbarism held its latest possession. These wild Northumbrians indeed went beyond the ferocity of their ancestors. They were not content with a duel: each contending party used to muster what adherents he could, and commence a kind of petty war †. So that a private grudge would often occasion much bloodshed.

It happened that a quarrel of this kind was on foot, when Mr. Gilpin was at Rothbury. During the two or three first days of his preaching, the contending parties observed some decorum, and never appeared at church together. At length however

\* See Spelman, Nicholson, and other inquirers into the antiquities of those times.

† The people of this country have had one very barbarous custom among them. If any two be displeased, they expect no law, but bang it out bravely, one and his kindred against the other and his. They will subject themselves to no justice, but in an inhuman and barbarous manner, fight and kill one another. They run together in clans, as they term it, or names. This fighting they call their deadly feides. Of late, since the union of both kingdoms, this heathenish custom is repressed, and good laws made against such barbarous and unchristian misdemeanours. Survey of Newcastle, Harleyan miscellany, vol. 3.

they met. One party had been early at church, and just as Mr. Gilpin had began his sermon, the other entered. They stood not long silent. Inflamed at the sight of each other, they began to clash their weapons, for they were all armed with javelins and swords, and mutually approached. Awed however by the sacredness of the place, the tumult in some degree ceased. Mr. Gilpin proceeded. when again the combatants began to brandish their weapons, and draw towards each other. As a fray seemed near, Mr. Gilpin stepped from the pulpit, went between them, and addressing the leaders, put an end to the quarrel for the present; but could not effect an entire reconciliation. They promised however, that till the sermon was over, they would make no more disturbance. He then went again into the pulpit, and spent the rest of the time in endeavouring to make them ashamed of what they had done. His behaviour and discourse affected them so much, that at his farther entreaty, they promised to forbear all acts of hostility, while he continued in the country. And so much respected was he among them, that whoever was in fear of his enemy, or, in the usual phrase, of his deadly foe, used to resort where Mr. Gilpin was, esteeming his presence the best protection.

One sunday morning coming to a church in those parts before the people were assembled, he observed a glove hanging up, and was informed by the sexton, that it was meant as a challenge to any one that should take it down. Mr. Gilpin ordered the sexton to reach it to him; but upon his utterly refusing to touch it, he took it down himself, and put in his breast. When the people were assembled, he went into the pulpit; and before he concluded his sermon, took occasion to rebuke them severely for these inhuman challenges. "I hear," saith he, "that one among you hath hanged up a glove, even in this sacred place, threatening to fight any one who taketh it down; see, I have taken it down:" and pulling

out the glove, he held it up to the congregation; and then shewed them how unsuitable such savage practices were to the profession of Christianity; using such persuasives to mutual love, as he thought would most affect them.

The disinterested pains he thus took among these barbarous people, and the good offices he was always ready to do them, drew from them the sincerest expressions of gratitude. Indeed he was little less than adored, and might have brought the whole country almost to what he pleased.—How greatly his name was revered among them one instance will shew.

By the carelessness of his servant, his horses were one day stolen. The news was quickly propagated, and every one expressed the highest indignation at the fact. The thief was rejoicing over his prize, when by the report of the country he found whose horses he had taken. Terrified at what he had done, he instantly came trembling back, confessed the fact, returned the horses, and declared he believed the devil would have seized him directly, had he carried them off, knowing them to have been Mr. Gilpin's.

Thus I have brought together what particulars remain of this excellent man's behaviour as a minister of the Gospel. They discover so very good a heart, so strong a sense of duty, and so strict a regard to it in every instance, as would have been admired even in primitive times: the corruptions now prevailing may perhaps make their truth questionable; but they are all either taken from his life written by the bishop of Chichester, or from papers of undoubted authority\*.—His own testimony to

\* These papers were lent to the author by the late worthy rector of Houghton, Dr. Stonhewer; and are still probably preserved in the parsonage house.



what hath been said shall be subjoined in the following extract.

“I am at present,” says he, (apologizing to a friend) “much charged with business, or rather overcharged. I am at first greatly burdened about seeing the lands made sure to the school; which are not so yet, and are in great danger to be lost, if God should call me afore they are assured. Moreover I have assigned to preach twelve sermons at other parishes, beside my own; and likewise am earnestly looked for at a number of parishes in Northumberland, more than I can visit. Beside I am continually encumbered with many guests and acquaintance, whom I may not well refuse. And often I am called upon by many of my parishioners, to set them at one, when they cannot agree. And every day I am sore charged and troubled with many servants and workfolks, which is no small trouble to me; for the buildings and reparations in this wide house will never have an end.”

I shall conclude this section with an instance of that resolution, and spirit, which on each proper occasion he failed not to exert; and by which he always maintained that independence and real dignity which became his station.

He received a message one day from Dr. Barns, bishop of Durham, appointing him to preach a visitation sermon the sunday following. It happened he was then preparing for his journey into Reads-dale and Tine-dale; and acquainted the bishop with the necessity of his keeping that appointment, begging his lordship would at that time excuse him. His servant informed him that the bishop had received his message, but returned no answer. Concluding him therefore satisfied, he set out on his journey: but to his great surprize, when he came home, he found himself suspended; some persons, through enmity to him, having put the bishop upon this hasty step. A few days after he received an order to meet

the bishop at Chester, a town in the diocese of Durham, where the bishops of that see formerly resided. Here many of the clergy were assembled, and Mr. Gilpin was ordered by the bishop to preach that day before them. He made his apology; he had come wholly unprepared—besides he was suspended, and thereby excluded from the pulpit. The bishop answered, he took off his suspension. But Mr. Gilpin still begged to be excused—he had brought no sermon with him, and hoped none would be required from him. But the bishop would take no excuse; telling him, that as he had been a preacher so long, he must be able to say enough to the purpose without any previous meditation. Mr. Gilpin persisting in his refusal, the bishop at length grew warm, and required him upon his canonical obedience to go immediately into the pulpit. After a little delay therefore, he went up; and though he observed several taking notes of what he said, he proceeded without the least hesitation.

The ecclesiastical court of Durham was at this time very scandalously governed. That Mr. Barns presided over it, who hath already been mentioned; and who made it indeed little better than an office for granting indulgences. The bishop was a well-meaning, weak man; irresolute, and wholly in the hands of others. Every thing was managed by his relation the chancellor; whose venality, and the irregularities occasioned by it, were most notorious.

The opportunity now afforded him, Mr. Gilpin thought no unfavourable one to open the bishop's eyes; and induce him to exert himself where there was so great reason for it. Private information had often been given him without any success: Mr. Gilpin was now resolved therefore to venture upon a public application to him. Accordingly, before he concluded his sermon, he turned towards the bishop, to whom he thus addressed himself.

“My discourse, now, reverend father, must be

directed to you. God hath exalted you to be the bishop of this diocese, and requireth an account of your government thereof. A reformation of all those matters which are amiss in this church, is expected at your hands. And now, lest perhaps, while it is apparent, that so many enormities are committed every where, your lordship should make answer, that you had no notice of them given you, and that these things never came to your knowledge," for this it seems was the bishop's common apology to all complainants, " behold I bring these things to your knowledge this day. Say not then that these crimes have been committed by the fault of others, without your knowledge: for whatever either yourself shall do in person, or suffer through your connivance to be done by others, is wholly your own. Therefore in the presence of God, his angels, and men, I pronounce you to be the author of all these evils: yea, and in that strict day of the general account, I will be a witness to testify against you, that all these things have come to your knowledge by my means: and all these men shall bear witness thereof, who have heard me speak unto you this day."

This freedom alarmed every one. As Mr. Gilpin went out of the church, his friends gathered round him, kindly reproaching him for what he had done. — "The bishop hath now got that advantage over him which he had long sought after—and if he had injured him before without provocation, what would he do now, so greatly exasperated?" Mr. Gilpin walked on, gently keeping them off with his hand, and assuring them, that if his discourse should do the service he intended by it, he was regardless what the consequence might be to himself.

During that day nothing else was talked of. Every one commended what had been said, but was apprehensive for the speaker. Those about the bishop waited in silent expectation, when his resentment would break out.

After dinner, Mr. Gilpin went up to the bishop, to pay his compliments to him, before he went home. "Sir," said the bishop, 'I propose to wait upon you home myself.'—This he accordingly did: and as soon as Mr. Gilpin had carried him into a parlour, the bishop turned suddenly round, and seizing him eagerly by the hand, "Father Gilpin," says he to him, "I acknowledge you are fitter to be the Bishop of Durham than I am to be parson of this church of yours.—I ask forgiveness for past injuries—Forgive me, father.—I know you have enemies; but while I live bishop of Durham, be secure, none of them shall cause you any farther trouble."

### SECTION VIII.

Though Mr. Gilpin was chiefly solicitous about the morals of those committed to his care, he omitted not however to promote, as far as he could, their temporal happiness. What wealth he had, was entirely laid out in charity and hospitality.

The value of his living was about four hundred pounds a year: an income which, however considerable at that time, was yet in appearance very unproportionate to the generous things he did; indeed he could not have done them, unless his frugality had been equal to his generosity.

In building a school, and purchasing lands for the maintenance of a master and usher, he expended above five hundred pounds. As there was so great a resort of young people to this school, that in a little time the town was not able to accommodate them, he put himself to the inconvenience of fitting up a part of his own house for that purpose, where he seldom had fewer than twenty or thirty children. Some of these were the sons of persons of distinction, whom he boarded at easy rates: but the greater part were poor children, who could not so easily get them-

selves boarded in the town; and whom he not only educated, but clothed and maintained: he was at the expence likewise of boarding in the town many other poor children. He used to bring several every year from the different parts where he preached, particularly Reads-dale and Tine-dale; which places he was at great pains in civilizing, and contributed not a little towards rooting out that barbarism, which every year prevailed less among them.

For the maintenance of poor scholars at the universities, he yearly set apart sixty pounds. This sum he always laid out, often more. His common allowance to each scholar was about ten pounds a year: which for a sober youth was at that time a very sufficient maintenance: so that he never maintained fewer than six. By his will it appears, that at his death he had nine upon his list; whom he took care to provide for during their stay at the university.

Every Thursday throughout the year, a very large quantity of meat was dressed wholly for the poor; and every day, they had what quantity of broth they wanted. Twenty-four of the poorest were his constant pensioners. Four times in the year, a dinner was provided for them, when they received from his steward a certain quantity of corn, and a sum of money: and at Christmas, they had always an ox divided among them.

Wherever he heard of any in distress, whether of his own parish, or any other, he was sure to relieve them. In his walks abroad, he would frequently bring home with him poor people, and send them away clothed as well as fed.

He took great pains to inform himself of the circumstances of his neighbours, that the modesty of the sufferer might not prevent his relief.

But the money best laid out was, in his opinion, that which encouraged industry. It was one of his greatest pleasures to make up the losses of his labo-

rious neighbours, and prevent their sinking under them. If a poor man had lost a beast, he would send him another in its room: or if any farmer had had a bad year, he would make him an abatement in his tithes. Thus, as far as he was able, he took the misfortunes of his parish upon himself; and like a true shepherd exposed himself for his flock.

But of all kinds of industrious poor, he was most forward to assist those who had large families; such never failed to meet with his bounty, when they wanted to settle their children in the world.

In the distant parishes where he preached, as well as in his own neighbourhood, his generosity and benevolence were continually shewing themselves; particularly in the desolate parts of Northumberland: "When he began his journey," says an old manuscript life of him, "he would have ten pounds in his purse; and at his coming home he would be twenty nobles in debt, which he would always pay within a fortnight after."—In the jails he visited, he was not only careful to give the prisoners proper instructions, but used to purchase for them likewise what necessaries they wanted.

Even upon the public road he never let slip an opportunity of doing good. Often has he been known to take off his cloak, and give it to an half naked traveller: and when he has had scarce money enough in his pocket to provide himself a dinner, yet would he give away part of that little, or the whole, if he found any who seemed to stand in need of it. Of this benevolent temper the following instance is preserved. One day returning home, he saw in a field several people crouding together; and judging that something more than ordinary had happened, he rode up to them, and found that one of the horses in a team had suddenly dropped down, which they were endeavouring to raise; but in vain: for the horse was dead. The owner of it seeming much dejected with his misfortune, and declaring

how grievous a loss it was to him, Mr. Gilpin bade him not be disheartened; "I'll let you have," says he, "honest man, that horse of mine," and pointed to his servant's—"Ah! master," replied the countryman, "my pocket will not reach such a beast as that."—"Come, come," said Mr. Gilpin, "take him, take him; and when I demand my money, then thou shalt pay me."

His hospitable manner of living was the admiration of the whole country. He spent in his family every fortnight, forty bushels of corn, twenty bushels of malt, and a whole ox; besides a proportional quantity of other kinds of provision.

Strangers and travellers found a chearful reception. All were welcome that came; and even their beasts had so much care taken of them, that it was humorously said, "If a horse was turned loose in any part of the country, it would immediately make its way to the rector of Houghton's."

Every Sunday from Michaelmas till Easter, was a sort of a public day with him. During this season, he expected to see all his parishioners and their families. For their reception, he had three tables well covered: the first was for gentlemen, the second for husbandmen and farmers, and the third for day-labourers.—This piece of hospitality he never omitted, even when losses, or a scarcity of provision, made its continuance rather difficult to him. He thought it his duty, and that was a deciding motive. "If you should, as you threaten, (says he in a letter to his old enemy chancellor Barns) give out a sequestration of my benefice, you shall do me a greater favour than you are aware of. For at this time I am run in no small debt. I want likewise provision of victuals. Where I have had, against Michaelmas, six or seven fat oxen, and five or six fat cows, I have now neither cow nor ox, but must seek all from the shambles. A sequestration given out, I may with honesty break up house for a space

which will save me twenty or thirty pounds in my purse. But I trust you will think better of this matter."

"These times, (says he, in another letter) make me so tired of house-keeping, that I would I were discharged from it, if it could be with a clear conscience."

Even when he was absent, no alteration was made in his family-expences: the poor were fed as usual, and his neighbours entertained.

He was always glad of the company of men of worth and letters, who used much to frequent his house. This sociable temper led him into a very large acquaintance; which, as he could not select his company, became very inconvenient to him when he grew old.

I shall close this account of his manner of living with a story, which does no little honour to his house-keeping.

Some affairs in Scotland obliging queen Elizabeth to send thither her treasurer, the lord Burleigh, he resolved to take the opportunity of his return to pay a visit to Mr. Gilpin. Hurried as he was, he could not resist the desire of seeing a man, whose name was every where so respectfully mentioned. His free discourse from the pulpit to king Edward's court, had early recommended him to this noble person; since which time, the great distance between them had wholly interrupted their acquaintance. The treasurer's return was so sudden, that he had not time to give any notice of his intended visit. But the economy of so plentiful a house as Mr. Gilpin's was not easily disconcerted. He received his noble guest with so much true politeness, and treated him and his whole retinue in so affluent and generous a manner, that the treasurer would often afterwards say, "He could hardly have expected more at Lambeth." While lord Burleigh stayed at Houghton, he took great pains by



his own, and the observation of his domestics, to acquaint himself with the order and regularity with which every thing in that house was managed. It contained a very large family; and was besides continually crouded with persons of all kinds, gentlemen, scholars, workmen, farmers, and poor people: yet there was never any confusion; every one was immediately carried into proper apartments, and entertained, directed, or relieved, as his particular business required. It could not but please this wise lord, who was so well acquainted with the effects of order and regularity in the highest sphere, to observe them in this humble one. Here too he saw true simplicity of manners, and every social virtue regulated by exact prudence. The statesman began to unbend, and he could not without an envious eye, compare the unquiet scenes of vice and vanity in which he was engaged, with the calmness of this amiable retreat. At length with reluctance he took his leave; and with all the warmth of affection embracing his much respected friend, he told him, "He had heard great things in his commendation, but he had now seen what far exceeded all that he had heard. If, (added he) Mr. Gilpin, I can ever be of any service to you at court, or elsewhere, use me with all freedom as one you may depend on." When he had mounted Rainton-hill, which rises about a mile from Houghton, and commands the vale, he turned his horse to take one more view of the place: and having kept his eye fixed upon it for some time, his reverie broke out into this exclamation: "There is the enjoyment of life indeed!—who can blame that man for not accepting a bishopric!—what doth he want to make him greater, or happier, or more useful to mankind!"

## SECTION IX.

The last business in which Mr. Gilpin engaged, was the settlement of his school. It answered his expectations so well by the good it did in the country, that when he grew old, it became his chief concern. His infirmities obliged him now to relax a little from those very great fatigues he had undergone abroad, and to draw his engagements nearer home. His school, situated near his house, afforded him, when most infirm, an employment; and he thought he could hardly die in peace till he had settled it to his mind. What he had principally at heart, was to compose a set of good statutes, to provide it a better endowment, and to fix all by a charter.

As to the statutes, he was daily employed in correcting, adding to, and altering, those he had drawn up; advising with his friends, and doing all in his power to prevent any future abuse of his charity.

With regard to a better endowment, it was not indeed in his own power to do any thing more. His exhibitions, his other charities, and his generous manner of living, made yearly such large demands upon him, which increased as he grew old, that it became then impossible for him to lay up any thing. He would gladly have contracted his hospitality, which he thought his least useful expence; but when he considered, that he might probably by that means lose much of the esteem of the people, he could not prevail with himself to do it. Thus unable to do any thing more from his own purse, he turned his eyes upon his friends.

There was a gentleman in his neighbourhood, John Heath, Esquire, of Kepeir, with whom Mr.

Gilpin had lived for many years in great intimacy. He was a man of uncommon worth, was master of a plentiful fortune, and had an inclination to put it to the best uses. He was besides a man of letters, and an encourager of learning. To this gentleman Mr. Gilpin applied in favour of his school: Mr. Heath came with great readiness into the scheme proposed to him, and doubled the original endowment. Mr. Gilpin prevailed upon some others likewise to contribute their assistance, so that the revenues of the school became at length answerable to his wishes.

Having thus obtained a sufficient endowment, he began next to think of a charter. For this he applied to his friend the earl of Bedford; from whom are preserved the two following letters on that subject.

“ To my very loving friend Mr. Bernard Gilpin.

“ After my hearty commendations; I have received your letter of the 11th of last month; and besides the good news of your health, am glad also to hear of your well-doing in those parts, which want such men as you to call the rude sort to the knowledge and continuance of their duties towards God, and their prince; whereof there is great lack.—Concerning your suit moved at Windsor, the troubles that have since happened have been so many and so great, that no convenient time hath served to prosecute the same; and the bill given in, I doubt, is lost. So that for more surety, it were good you sent up another copy: and I will do my best endeavours to bring it to pass. I will likewise do what I can to get some of those county forfeitures to be granted by her majesty, for the furtherance of your good purpose—Here is no news to write to you: as for things in the north, you have them there: and albeit it hath been said, that a peace is concluded in France, yet it is not so.—And

so wishing your health and well to do, I do hereby thank you for your gentle letter, and so commit you to God.

“ Your assured friend,

“ F. BEDFORD.”

“ *London, May 3, 1570.*”

“ After my very hearty commendations: hoping in God you are in good health, who as he hath well begun in you, so may he keep and continue you a good member in his church.—I have moved the queen’s majesty for your school; and afterwards the bill was delivered to Mr. Secretary Walsingham, a very good and godly gentleman, who procured the same to be signed, as I think you have before this heard by your brother. Assuredly you did very well and honestly therein, and have deserved great commendations: a thing most necessary in those parts is this of all other, for the well-bringing up of youth, and training them in learning and goodness.—In any thing that I may stand you in stead, I pray you be bold to use me, whom you may assure yourself to remain ready to do you any good that I can.—So for this time I commend you to God.

“ Your assured friend,

“ F. BEDFORD.”

“ *Russel-place, March 26, 1571.*”

One of Mr. Gilpin’s last good actions, was his endeavour to convert a young jesuit. A friend of his, Mr. Genison of Newcastle, had taken into his house a brother’s son, who having been some time in Italy, and there inveigled by the jesuits, who were then growing into repute, had been taken into their order. His time of discipline being over, he was sent into England, whither he brought with him the zeal of a novice. His uncle, a man of plain

good sense, being greatly afflicted that his nephew was not only become a papist, but a jesuit, said what he could to recover him from his errors. But the young man had his distinctions too ready to be influenced by his uncle's arguments. The old gentleman therefore not knowing what to do with himself, at length thought of Mr. Gilpin. To him he wrote, and earnestly intreated him, if he had any friendship for him, to try what impression he could make upon his nephew. Mr. Gilpin had little hopes of success from what he had heard of the young man's character; and still less when he saw him. He was naturally very full of himself, and this turn his education had increased. Instead of examining attentively what was said, and giving pertinent answers, he was still running from the point, advancing his own tenets, and defending them by strained interpretations of Scripture, and the grossest misapplication of it. The truth was, he wanted to signalize himself by making some eminent convert; and his vanity led him to expect, that he might bring over Mr. Gilpin. This was indeed his chief purpose in coming to Houghton. When he failed in this, he did what he could to corrupt the servants, and such of the scholars and country people as came in his way. He became at length so very disagreeable, that Mr. Gilpin was obliged to desire his uncle to send for him again. His letter upon the occasion discovers so much honesty of heart, and so beautiful a simplicity of manners, that it deserves very well to be inserted.

“ I trust, sir, you remember that when you first spake to me about your brother's son, your promise was, that I should have a licence from the bishop, for my warrant. But that is not done. Wherefore you must either get one yourself, or suffer me. For our curate and churchwardens are sworn to present, if any be in the parish, which utterly refuse to come to church. I only desired him that he

would come into the quire in the sermon-time, but half an hour; which he utterly refused, and willed me to speak no more of it. He is indeed fixed in his errors; and I have perceived by his talk, that his coming here was not to learn, but to teach: for thinking to find me half a papist, he trusted to win me over entirely. But whereas, I trust in God, I have put him clearly from that hope; yet I stand in great danger, that he shall do much hurt in my house, or in the parish; for he cometh furnished with all the learning of the hot college of jesuits. They have found out, I perceive, certain expositions of the Old Testament, never heard of before, to prove the invocation of saints from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He will not grant that any thing hath been wrong in the church of Rome; the most abominable errors of indulgences, pardons, false miracles, and false reliques, pilgrimages, and such like, he can find them all in the Gospel; and will have them all to be good and holy.—For my part, I have determined myself otherwise: age and want of memory compel me to take my leave of this wretched world; and at this time of life not to study answers to such trumpery, and new inventions; seeing I was never any disputer in all my life. I trust there be learned men enough in the universities, who will sufficiently answer all that ever they can bring that is worth answering.—Wherefore, good Mr. Genison, seeing your cousin is fixed in his errors, as he plainly confesseth, help to ease me of this burthen, that I may with quietness apply to my vocation. I am sent for to preach in divers places, but I cannot go from home, so long as he is here. People in these evil days are given to learn more superstition in a week, than true religion in seven years.—But if notwithstanding you are desirous to have him tarry two or three weeks longer, I must needs have licence from the bishop: whether you will get the same, or I must,

I refer to your good pleasure.—And so I pray God to preserve you evermore. Your loving friend to his power.

BERNARD GILPIN."

Notwithstanding what is said in this letter, it seems probable, that Mr. Gilpin's arguments at length made some impression upon the young man: for he entered afterwards into a serious dispute in writing with him; which he would scarce have engaged in, unless the jesuit had shewn greater willingness to discover truth, than what had yet appeared.

"As sickness, sores, and other troubles," says Mr. Gilpin to him in a letter, "would suffer me, I have answered your objections out of St. Austin: and the chief of them, I trust, are answered to the contentation of such as are willing to stay their conscience upon God and his word, and not upon man's vain inventions, wherein they shall find no rest of conscience, nor quietness of mind.—When leisure will serve to finish the residue, I will send them unto you. In the mean time I pray God to illuminate your eyes with his heavenly light, and to guide your feet into the way of peace."

In the latter part of his life, Mr. Gilpin went through his duty with great difficulty. His health was much impaired. The extreme fatigue he had undergone during so many years, had now quite broke his constitution. Thus he complains in a letter to a friend: "To sustain all these travels and troubles, I have a very weak body, subject to many diseases: by the monitions whereof, I am daily warned to remember death. My greatest grief of all is, that my memory is quite decayed: my sight faileth; my hearing faileth; with other ailments, more than I can well express."

While he was thus struggling with an advanced age, and impaired constitution, he met with an accident which entirely destroyed his health. As he was

crossing the market place at Durham, an ox ran at him, and pushed him down with such violence, that it was imagined the bruises he received would have occasioned his death. He lay long confined; and though he again got abroad, he never recovered even the little strength he had before, and continued lame as long as he lived. But accidents of this kind were no very formidable trials to a mind so well tempered as his. It was a persuasion he had long entertained, that misfortunes are intended by providence to remind us of our neglected duty: and thus he always used them, making self-examination the constant attendant upon whatever calamities beset him. To this it was owing that he was never dejected by misfortunes; but received them rather with thankfulness than repining.

But sickness was not the only distress which the declining years of this excellent man had to struggle with. As age and infirmity began to lessen that weight and influence he once had, the malice and opposition of his enemies of course prevailed more.

Of what frivolous pretences they availed themselves, and with what temper he bore their malice, the following letters will shew better than any narrative.

“I am very sorry, Mr. Wren, to hear that you should fall into such unlawful contention with any one; and that, to maintain an evil cause, you should make an untrue report of me. I am very glad however, that the two other false reports, if it be as you say, were not raised by you: one, that I should make the marriage of ministers unlawful; the other, that I should make their children bastards. Whereas certainly it is known, that long ago I was accused before bishop Tunstal for speaking in favour of priests' marriage: since which time I have never altered my mind; but in my sermons in this country, Northumberland, Westmoreland, Cumberland Yorkshire, and Lancashire, I have, as opportunity served,



spoken in defence of priests' marriage. And allowing their marriage. I trust no man will believe that I should make their children bastards.

"You say I am called hypocrite; I know I am so of divers. How they will answer God's law therein, I leave to their own conscience. But verily for my own part I can thank them; for when I hear it, I trust in God, I gain not a little thereby in studying clearly to subdue that vice; which I have strived against ever since I studied the Holy Scriptures. And I suppose very few or no preachers in England have preached oftener against that vice than I; and that, as I trust, with a clear conscience.

"But to make an end at this time (because this bearer can shew you what small time I have, being sore overcharged with manifold studies and businesses) it is time, good Mr. Wren, both for you and me (age and sundry diseases, messengers of death, giving us warning) more deeply to ripe our own consciences, and more diligently to search our own faults, and to leave off from curious hearkening and espying of other men's: especially when it breedeth contention, and can in no wise edify, I pray you read St. James, the latter part of the third chapter, and there learn from whence cometh contentious wisdom. And this, I beseech you, remember, that it is not long since God did most mercifully visit you with great sickness. At that time I doubt not but you lamented sore your duty forgotten in your life past; and for the time to come, if God would restore you to your health, I trust you promised a godly repentance, and reformation of life. Good Mr. Wren, if you have somewhat forgotten that godly mind, pray to God to bring it again; and being had, keep it. Pray in faith, and St. James saith, God will hear you; whom I beseech evermore to have you in his blessed keeping.

"Your loving friend to his power,

"BERNARD GILPIN."

“After my most hearty and due commendations ; having heard that Sir William Mitchell, one of your brother’s executors, reported evil of me in sundry places, bruiting abroad, that I withhold from him great sums of money ; and I know nothing wherefore, but for sixteen books which I had of your brother, being to return either the price or the books again ; I heartily beseech you, seeing that you are joined executor likewise, that you will let me know by this bearer, William Ayray, if you can find any thing in any writings or accounts of your brother, that can be lawfully demanded of me ; and, God willing, it shall be paid or I be much older. If, as I believe, I be debtor for nothing else, saving the sixteen books, whereof I know no price, I have given this bearer, my servant, such instructions, that he will either satisfy you, or I will make return of the books.—I pray Almighty God to have you ever in his blessed keeping. Your loving friend to his power.

BERNARD GILPIN.”

But of all his enemies, the most active were Hugh Broughton, and chancellor Barns.

Broughton acted the basest and most ungrateful part. Mr. Gilpin had educated and maintained him both at school and at the university, and had always shewn him every civility in his power. Yet this man was afterwards vile enough to endeavour to supplant the very patron who raised him. He had craftily insinuated himself into the bishop of Durham’s favour, and thought he stood fair for the first vacant preferment ; and as Houghton was then the best thing in the bishop’s gift, he had fixed his eye upon it. Mr. Gilpin was old and infirm, and in all probability, could enjoy it but a very few years, yet Broughton had not patience to let him spend the remainder of his age in peace. He knew the bishop was easily imposed on, and found means to prejudice

him against Mr. Gilpin. To this was owing, as appeared afterwards, the affair of the suspension already mentioned, and some other instances of the bishop's displeasure. But in the end, poor Broughton had the mortification to see his indirect measures unravelled. The bishop saw his error, was reconciled to Mr. Gilpin, and continued ever afterwards his steady friend: and Broughton finding himself neglected, left Durham to seek his fortune elsewhere.

Chancellor Barns was indeed a more generous, as he was a more open enemy. Besides, what he did, was in some measure in his own defence; for it must be owned Mr. Gilpin was very troublesome to him in all his designs\*, and generally made the first attack. After the affair at Chester however, the chancellor laid aside all decency; and from that time, nothing in his power that was disobliging was omitted. But his malice had no other effect, than to give Mr. Gilpin an opportunity of proving how well he had learned the Christian lessons of meekness: though at the same time how becomingly he could exert a decent spirit, when it was needful; and shew, by tempering charity with his displeasure, that he could be angry and yet not sin. To this happy temper the following letters bear testimony.

“Right worshipful, after my due commendations; these are to certify you, that my curate paying for me at the last visitation forty-six shillings, paid more than he ought to have done by about a noble. As for the money I speak not: I pray God that it may do my lord much good. But I should be very sorry, that through my default it should remain an everlasting burthen to my successors. Wherefore I beseech you let it not be made a precedent; and for my time, if I live till the next visitation, which I look not for, I will not refuse to pay it no more than I do now, so that care be taken my successors pay no more after me than that which is due, which

\* See Section VII.

I take to be fourpence for every pound in the queen's majesty's books.—But you say I must needs pay it, and my successors also, because it is found in a certain rate book of bishop Pilkington. As for that I am able to say, and I trust I can bring witness, that bishop Pilkington at his first visitation, clearly forgave me all the sum, in consideration, as I was told, of my travel in Northumberland; and after that, at his other two visitations, I made no let, but suffered his officers just to take what they would. But my trust is, that your worship will not burthen my successors for this my simplicity or folly, term it which you will.—Seeing then that I have so much reason, they do me wrong who say I wrangled at the last visitation: for God is my witness, I love not differences of any kind.—I pray God to have you in his blessed keeping.

“Yours to his power,

“BERNARD GILPIN.”

“I marvel, Mr. Barns, that you should use me in this manner, I seeking and studying to use you well in all things.—About two or three years ago, at my lord's visitation, when you took of others a groat in the pound (as you can take no more) you made me pay above my due; for the which, if I had sought remedy by the statute against extortion, I trust the statute would have stood for me.—After that, the subsidy being gathered, my servant, by oversight, not examining carefully the book, paid a certain sum that was not due, I think it was about twenty shillings; but sure I could never get it restored to this day.—Now you seek unjustly to charge my living for my curate; which seeing it hath never been demanded before, some will think you seek it for your own purse. I pay unto the queen's majesty (God save her grace) as duly, and with as good a will as any subject, twenty-three pounds, twelve shillings, by the year. But if you still continue resolved to

charge me with this six pounds, I promise you, before I pay it, I will spend five marks in defence of my right.—But I trust after good advertisement you will let this new suit drop. I pray God Almighty to keep you evermore.

“Your loving friend to his power,

“BERNARD GILPIN.”

This load of calumny, ingratitude, and ill-usage, may justly be supposed heavy upon him, already sinking under a weight of years: yet he bore it with great fortitude; strengthening himself with such consolations, as a good Christian hath in reserve for all extremities.

His resignation was not long exercised. About the beginning of February, in the year 1583, he found himself so very weak, that he was sensible his end must be drawing near. He told his friends his apprehensions; and spoke of his death with that happy composure which always attends the conclusion of a good life. He was soon after confined to his chamber. His senses continued perfect to the last. Of the manner of his taking leave of the world, we have this account.

A few days before his death, he ordered himself to be raised in his bed; and sending for several poor people, who had been his pensioners, he told them, he found he was going out of the world—he hoped they would be his witnesses at the great day that he had endeavoured to do his duty among them—and he prayed God to remember them after he was gone—he would not have them weep for him: if ever he had told them any thing good, he would have them remember that in his stead.—Above all things, he exhorted them to fear God, and keep his commandments; telling them, if they would do this, they could never be left comfortless.

He next ordered his scholars to be called in: to

these likewise he made a short speech, reminding them, that this was their time, if they had any desire to qualify themselves for being of use in the world—that learning was well worth their attention, but virtue was much more so.

He next exhorted his servants; and then sent for several persons, who had not heretofore profited by his advice, as he had wished; and upon whom he imagined his dying words might have a better effect. His speech began to falter before he finished his exhortations. The remaining hours of his life, he spent in prayer, and broken conversation with some select friends, mentioning often the consolations of Christianity—and declaring that nothing else could bring a man peace at the last. He died on the fourth of March, 1583, in the 66th year of his age.

I shall conclude this account of him with a few observations upon his character; and some incidents, which could not properly be introduced in any part of the narration.

His person was tall and slender, in the ornament of which he was at no pains. He had a particular aversion to the fopperies of dress.—In his diet he was very temperate, rather abstemious.

His parts were very good. His imagination, memory, and judgment, were lively, retentive and solid.

His acquirements were as considerable. By an unwearied application he had amassed a great store of knowledge; and was ignorant of no part of learning at that time in esteem: in languages, history, and divinity he particularly excelled. He read poetry with a good taste; himself, as the bishop of Chichester relates, no mean poet. But he laid out little time in the pursuit of any study foreign to his profession.

His temper was naturally warm; and in his youth we meet with instances of his giving way to passion;

but he soon got more command of himself, and at length entirely corrected that infirmity.

His disposition was serious, yet among his particular friends he was commonly cheerful, sometimes facetious. His general behaviour was very affable. His severity had no object but himself; to others he was humble candid and indulgent. Never did virtue sit with greater ease on any one, had less of moroseness, or could mix more agreeably with whatever was innocent in common life.

He had a most extraordinary skill in the art of managing a fortune. He considered himself merely as a steward for other people; and took care therefore that his own desires never exceeded what calm reason could justify. Extravagance with him was another word for injustice. Amidst all his business he found leisure to look into his affairs; well knowing that frugality is the support of charity.

His intimacies were few. Yet where he professed a particular friendship, he was a religious observer of its offices. Of this the following relation is an instance. Through his application the dean and chapter of Durham had bestowed a living upon one of his friends. Soon after Mr. Gilpin was nominated a referee in a dispute between them and the archbishop of York: but for some particular reasons he excused himself\*. This irritated the dean and chapter so much, that out of mere pique at him they

\* The chapter of Durham was in great disorder, and in many instances much complained of. Sandys, archbishop of York, undertook to visit them: but Wittingham, the dean withstood him; having prevailed upon the lord president of the north to second him. The archbishop complained to the council; upon which a commission was issued out by the lord keeper, empowering certain persons to examine the case; among whom Mr. Gilpin was named. His reason for not acting was, most probably, because he thought the dean and chapter in the wrong.

took away two thirds from the allowance they had assigned to his friend. He did what he could to pacify them; but his utmost endeavours proving fruitless, he insisted upon his friend's accepting from him a yearly satisfaction for his loss\*.

At another time a friend desired he would request the bishop of Durham to lend him a sum of money; he made the application; but not succeeding, he wrote thus to his friend: "My lord hath lent to so very many, (which I believe is true) that you must

\* "To Dr. Wilson.

"Right worshipful, whereas I hear your worship named of many to the Deanery of Durham, these are most humbly to beseech you (if it shall please God so to bless that house) that you will help, as I trust God you may, to redress, among sundry enormities, one which hath happened a year ago or more.—The dean and chapter of Durham are parsons of a parish in Northumberland, called Ellingham. The living was better than thirty pounds a year. Our school-master of Houghton, a scholar of Oxford, made labour for it. At his suit, and mine together, it was granted; as we judged, with all such commodities as the last incumbent, and others before had had. But soon after, the dean and chapter took away from the vicar as good as twenty pounds a year; so that the poor man, having wife and children, might have begged, if I and other friends had not holpen him: God knoweth it hath been a costly matter to me. But my trust now is, that your worship, knowing the matter, will be willing to help it, and may help it; for the present possessor, Mr. Selby, hath nothing to shew but a promise from Mr. Whittingham, whereunto the chapter would never consent. Mr. Ralph Lever can inform you of all the matter. If your worship can help it, surely you cannot do a better deed. Would to God all violent workers of injuries were resisted! If God should send you into this country, I trust to be better known to your worship. I pray God preserve you evermore. By your's to his power.

BERNARD GILPIN."

Houghton,  
July 11, 1579.



pardon him for not sending you the money. I pray you trouble him no more; and I trust by little and little I can make up the sum myself."

He was the most candid interpreter of the words and actions of others: where he plainly saw failings, he would make every possible allowance for them. He used to express a particular indignation at slander; often saying, it deserved the gallows more than theft. For himself, he was remarkably guarded when he spoke of others: he considered common fame as the falsest medium, and a man's reputation as his most valuable property.

His sincerity was such as became his other virtues. He had the strictest regard to truth, of which his whole life was only one instance. All little arts and sinister practices, those ingredients of worldly prudence, he disdained. His perseverance in so commendable a part, in whatever difficulties it might at first involve him, in the end raised his character above malice and envy, and gave him that weight and influence in every thing he undertook, which nothing but an approved integrity can give.

Whatever his other virtues were, their lustre was greatly increased by his humility. To conquer religious pride is one of the best effects of religion; an effect which his religion, in the most amiable manner produced.

But the most distinguished parts of the character of this amiable man were his conscientious discharge of the duties of a clergyman, his extensive benevolence, and his exalted piety.

As to the discharge of his function, no man could be more strongly influenced by what he thought the duties of it. The motives of convenience, or present interest had no kind of weight with him. As the income was no part of his concern, he only considered the office; which he thought such a charge as a man would rather dread than solicit: but when providence called him to it (for what was not pro-

cured by any endeavours of his own, he could not but ascribe to providence) he accepted it, though with reluctance. He then shewed, that if a sense of the importance of his office made him distrust his abilities, it made him more diligent in exerting them.—When he undertook the care of a parish, it immediately engrossed his whole attention. The pleasures of life he totally relinquished; in a great degree even his favourite pursuits of learning. This was the more commendable in him, as he had always a strong inclination for retirement, and was often violently tempted to shut himself up in some university at home or abroad, and live there sequestered from the world. But his conscience corrected his inclination; as he thought the life of a mere recluse by no means agreeable to the active principles of Christianity. Nay, the very repose to which his age laid claim, he would not indulge; but, as long as he had strength sufficient, persevered in the laborious practice of such methods of instruction, as he imagined would most benefit those under his care.—Of popular applause he was regardless, so far as mere reputation was concerned: but as the favour of the multitude was one step towards gaining their attention, in that light he valued it. He reprov'd vice, wherever he observed it, with the utmost freedom. As he was contented in his station, and superior to all dependence, he avoided the danger of being tempted to an unbecoming compliance: and whether he reprov'd in public or in private, his unblameable life, and the seriousness with which he spoke, gave an irresistible weight to what he said. He studied the low capacities of the people among whom he lived, and knew how to adapt his arguments to their apprehensions. Hence the effects that his preaching had upon them are said to have been often very surprising. In particular it is related, that as he was once recommending honesty in a part of the country notoriously addicted to

thieving, a man struck with the warmth and earnestness with which he spoke, stood up in the midst of a large congregation, and freely confessed his dishonesty, and how heartily he repented of it.

With regard to his benevolence, no man certainly had ever more disinterested views, or made the common good more the study of his life; which was indeed the best comment upon the great Christian principle of universal charity. He called nothing his own; there was nothing he could not readily part with for the service of others. In his charitable distributions he had no measure but the bounds of his income, of which the least portion was always laid out on himself. Nor did he give as if he was granting a favour, but as if he was paying a debt: all obsequious service the generosity of his heart disdained. He was the more particularly careful to give away in his lifetime whatever he could save for the poor, as he had often seen and regretted the abuse of posthumous charities. "It is my design at my departure, (says he, writing to a friend) to leave no more behind me, but to bury me, and pay my debts." What little he did leave\*, (which was little)

\* The following are a few extracts from his will, which perhaps may not be unacceptable to the reader.

"First, I bequeath and commend my soul unto the hands of Almighty God, my creator; not trusting in mine own merits, which am of myself a most wretched sinner, but only in the mercy of God, and in the merits of Jesus Christ my Redeemer and my Saviour.—My body I commit to be buried in the parish-church or church-yard, wheresoever it shall please God to call me to his mercy.—For the disposition of my goods, first, I will that all my debts be truly paid with all speed; which I shall gather, and set after this my last will.—My debts once discharged, of what remaineth I give and bequeath\*\*\* (here follow legacies to the poor of nine parishes)—Likewise I give to the poor of Houghton parish the great new ark for corn, to provide them groats in winter; and if none will

beside his stock, and household furniture, and the arrears of his tythes, he left wholly to the poor, de-

make that provision, let it be sold, and the price dealt among them.—Likewise, I give to the Queen's college, in Oxford, all such books as shall have written upon the first leaf, Bernardus Gilpin Reginensi collegio, D.D. and all such books as shall have written upon the first leaf Johannes Newton Reginensi collegio, D. D. and likewise all the books that Mr. Hugh Broughton hath of mine, viz. Eusebius, Greek, in two volumes; and Josephus, Greek, in one volume, and certain other books; I trust he will withhold none of them.—Also I give to Keipier school in Houghton, all such books as shall have the name of it in the first leaf.—Also I give to my successor, and to his successors after him, first, the great new brewing lead in the brewhouse, with the guile-fat, and mash-fat; likewise in the kiln a large new steep-lead, which receives a chaldron of corn at once; likewise in the larder-house one great salting-tub, which will hold four oxen or more: likewise in the great chamber over the parlour one long table, and a shorter, standing upon joined frames; likewise in the parlour one long table upon a joined frame, with the form; likewise in the hall three tables standing fast, with their forms to them: likewise \* \* \* [here follow a great many other pieces of furniture, materials for building, unwrought timber, lime, slate, &c.] In consideration of all these, and of my exceeding great charges in building and reparations since my first coming to this parsonage, which I think with a safe conscience I may well say amounteth to 300 pounds, if I say no more. I trust my successor will not demand any thing for dilapidations: and if he should, I doubt nothing but that the bishop of Durham will persuade him to be content with reason, and to do all things with charity: and if charity may bear rule, I doubt not but all dilapidations will fall.—And here I most earnestly desire my successor not only to let all dilapidations fall, upon these considerations, and also in favour of the poor, upon whom chiefly my goods are bestowed in this testament: but also that he will be a continual defender and maintainer of Keipier-

ducting a few slight tokens of remembrance that he bequeathed to his friends.

school in Houghton, both in seeing the statutes well kept, and the children brought up in virtue and learning; which if he do, I doubt not but God shall prosper him the better in all things he taketh in hand.—Moreover I give to the poor of Houghton, twenty pounds and nine of my oxen: the other nine I bequeath to my three executors:—likewise I give to the right reverend Richard, lord bishop of Durham, for a simple token of remembrance, three silver spoons with acorns; the history of Paulus Jovius; and the works of Calvin;—also I give unto John Heath, esquire, for a like remembrance, other two silver spoons with acorns of the same weight; and also the history of John Sleden in Latin—to Mrs. Heath I give my English chronicle of Fabian: also I give to Richard Bellasis, esquire, for a like remembrance, other two silver spoons with acorns of the same fashion; and also my history called *Novus Orbis*.—And I most humbly beseech these three men of honour and worship, that for God's cause they will take so much pains as to become supervisors of this my last will and testament, which being a work of Christian charity, I trust verily they will not refuse. And above all other things I most humbly beseech them to take into their tuition and governance all the lands and revenues belonging to Keipier school, and all deeds, evidences, gifts, and other writings, which are to shew for the same. All the right and title to these lands I give up wholly into their power, for the good maintenance of the said school.—And for as much as these lands are not so surely established as I could wish, I give unto Keipier school twenty pounds, which I desire the bishop of Durham to take into his hands, and to bestow as he shall see fit, upon men learned in the laws.—All the rest of my goods and chattels, I will that they be divided into two equal parts, and the one of them to be given to the poor of Houghton, the other to scholars and students in Oxford, whose names are Ric. Wharton, Ste. Coperthwait, Geo. Carleton, Ralph Ironside, Ewan Eyray, Will. Cayrns, Hen. Ayray, Fr. Reisely, and Tho. Collisen.

Such instances of benevolence gained him the title of the father of the poor; and made his memory revered long afterwards in the country where he lived\*.

But no part of his character was more conspicuous than his piety. It hath been largely shewn with what temper, sincerity, and earnestness, he examined the controverted points of religion, and settled his own opinions. He thought religion his principal concern; and of course made the attain-

These I will be relieved as mine executors shall see needful, a year, two, or three, as the sum will arise.—And for my three executors, for as much as I have been beneficial to them in my life time, so far as a good conscience would permit me, and sometime further (but God I trust hath forgiven me) I will, and I doubt not but they will agree to the same, that they be content with the nine oxen. And if any gains do arise from the sale of my goods, as I think I have prized them under the worth, I will they shall have that amongst them; only I earnestly request and desire them to be good to my poor neighbours of the parish, being desirous to buy such things as they stand most in need of."

\* A monument in the chancel of Houghton-church is a remarkable instance of this.—It is erected to the memory of Mr. Davenport, a worthy rector of that parish; whom his encomiast thus celebrates:—

"If the soul's transmigration were believ'd,  
You'd say, good Gilpin's soul he had received,  
And with as liberal hand did give or more,  
His daily charity unto the poor:  
For which with him, we doubt not, he's possess'd  
Of righteous men's reward, eternal rest."

Whatever becomes of the notion of the soul's transmigration, one would imagine however that Mr. Gilpin's example at least had its influence upon the rectors of Houghton; for perhaps few parishes in England can boast such a succession of worthy pastors, as that parish can, since Mr. Gilpin's death.

ment of it his principal study: he knew no other end of religion but an holy life; and therefore in all his enquiries about it, he considered himself as looking after truths which were to influence his future conduct, and make him a better man. Accordingly, when his religious persuasion was once settled, he made the doctrines he embraced the invariable rule of his life: all his moral virtues became Christian; were formed upon such motives, and respected such ends as Christianity recommended. It was his daily care to conform himself to the will of God; upon whose providence he absolutely depended in all conditions of life; resigned, easy, and cheerful under whatsoever misfortunes he might meet with. He had some peculiar, though, it may be, just notions with regard to a particular providence. He thought all misfortunes, which our own indiscretions did not immediately draw upon us, were sent directly from God, to bring us to a sense of our misbehaviour, and quicken us in a virtuous course; accordingly at such times he used with more than ordinary attention to examine his past conduct, and endeavour to find out in what point of duty he had been defective.

To the opinions of others, however different from his own, he was most indulgent. He thought moderation one of the most genuine effects of true piety. It hath already appeared from his intercourse with the dissenters, how great an enemy he was to all intolerant principles; how wrong he thought it on one hand to oppose an established church, and on the other to molest a quiet separatist.

His life was wholly guided by a conscience the most religiously scrupulous. I cannot forbear inserting an instance of its extreme sensibility, though it may be thought perhaps rather to carry a degree of weakness with it. He had behaved in some particular, with regard to his parish, in a manner which gave him great concern. His conscience was so

much alarmed at what he had done, that nothing he was able to allege to himself in his excuse was able to make him easy. At length he determined to lay open the whole case to the bishop of Durham, his diocesan, and to surrender up his living, or submit to any censure, which the bishop might think his fault deserved. Without thus bringing himself to justice, he said, he never could have recovered his peace of mind\*.

\* His letter upon this occasion to the bishop is not extant, nor doth it appear what the fault was: the following letter relates to it.

“ Grace and peace in Jesus Christ: if any man be vexed in body or mind, you know it is a very grievous thing to have no comforter; which hath constrained me to disclose unto you (not doubting but to have both your comfort and help, and to have it kept most secret) that thing, which, besides to you, I never opened to any living creature. In this inclosed letter I have opened my grief and weakness of conscience unto my lord; beseeching you, if opportunity will serve, to deliver it. Howbeit, if either he should be pained with sickness, or you would first by writing that I should have your advice, or you see any other cause why to stay the delivery, I refer all to your wisdom. But if you have opportunity to my lord, I hope by you to know speedily some part of his pleasure. I trust, my case weighed, he will rather think me to be pitied, than had in hatred. How tender a thing conscience is, I have found by too good experience. I have found moreover, that as it is easily wounded, so it is with difficulty healed. And for my own part, I speak from my heart, I would rather be often wounded in my body, than once in my mind. Which things considered, I trust you will bear with my weakness. But you may object, I have continued weak very long; which fault certainly I find with myself: but for this I accuse my own slowness both in study and prayer; which by God’s grace, as far as my weak body will serve, hereafter shall be amended: for certainly those two are the chief instruments, whereby I have sure trust that God of his goodness will make me strong.”



Such was the life and character of this excellent man. A conduct so agreeable to the strictest rule of religion, gained him among his contemporaries the title of the Northern Apostle. And indeed the parallel was striking; his quitting corrupt doctrine in the utmost reverence of which he had been educated; the persecutions he met with for the sake of his integrity; the danger he often ran of martyrdom; his contempt of the world; his unwearied application to the business of his calling; the extensive field, in which his labours were employed; and the boldness and freedom with which he reproved the guilty, whatever their fortunes or stations were, might justly characterize him a truly apostolic person.

Viewed with such a life, how mean and contemptible do the idle amusements of the world appear. How trifling that uninterrupted succession of serious folly which engages so great a part of mankind while each real concern of life is crowded into so small a compass. How much more nobly doth the person act, who can separate appearances from realities; and maintain with firmness each word and resolution that he forms; persevering steadily in this excellent man, in the conscientious discharge of the duties of that station, whatever that station is, in which providence hath placed him!

*He*



THE END.