

worshipped in a plain simple edifice with four plain walls, seeing "the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands?" To which we reply, undoubtedly He may. The Apostles worshipped in an upper room, because they were poor, and had no other place of worship. St. Paul knelt down on the sea shore, and prayed. Nay, we limit not the Most High to *four plain walls*: we say he may be worshipped without walls, under the open canopy of heaven, in the wild woods, on desert sands, on the melting snow, if it so please us; there is no place where God will not hear faithful humble worshippers. But why speak we of *plain walls, plain Churches*? Is not the meaning of such expressions that, though plain, they are to be perfectly comfortable to ourselves? And that if our own comfort be provided for, the rest may take care of itself? God can be worshipped, and acceptably worshipped, without a house of prayer, if we have none to offer; in a *plain house*, if we cannot provide a better; but let us be well assured, that God is not the more spiritually worshipped, when our meanness refuses to offer him the best of what we have, though the very best is unworthy of His majesty. For when the Most High directed men to build Him an house, he gave directions to build it in so costly a manner, that the most gorgeous of our edifices is perfect simplicity in comparison.\* There is one other

\* Let the state of the people of God when they were in the house of bondage, and their manner of serving God in a strange land, be compared with that which Canaan and Jerusalem did afford, and who seeth not that huge difference there was between them? In Egypt it may be they were right glad to take some corner of a poor cottage, and there to serve God upon their knees, peradventure covered in dust and straw sometimes. Neither were they therefore the less accepted of God, but he was with them in all their afflictions, and at the length by working of their admirable deliverance did testify, that they served him not in vain. Notwithstanding in the very desert they are no sooner possess of some little thing of their own, but a tabernacle is required at their hands. Being planted in the land of Canaan, and having David to be their king, when the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies, it grieved his religious mind to consider the growth of his own estate and dignity, the affairs of religion continuing still in their former manner: "Behold now I dwell in an house of cedar-trees, and the ark of God remaineth still within curtains." What he did purpose it was the pleasure of God that Solomon his son should perform, and perform it in manner suitable unto their present, not their ancient estate and condition. For which cause Solomon writeth unto the king of Tyrus, "The house which I build is great and wonderful, for great is our God above all gods." Whereby it clearly appeareth that the orders of the Church of God may be acceptable unto him, as well as being framed suitable to the greatness and dignity of later, as when they keep the reverend simplicity of ancient times.—*Hooker*, lib. iv., p. 536.