

be like him, for we shall see him as he is : and every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

“Therefore we need not be so solicitous touching the nature of faith, what kind of faith it is that must save us : certainly if it be a true and real assent of the mind to these great truths of God, it must be operative, according to the nature of the things believed which are in order to working; and therefore if it have not that affect, it is not faith or assent : if it have it but weak and imperfectly, it is evident that the assent is weak and fluctuating : if it have that effect at sometimes but not at others, it is evident that the assent is suspended or intermitted, and not actually exercised at these intermissions. If a man were really and fully persuaded that if he took such a journey to-morrow, he should certainly break his leg, he would as certainly not go. Or if he were under a certain persuasion that if he took such a drink, he should certainly recover his lost health, it were as certain he would drink it : and if a man were actually and fully persuaded that if he used such a means he should attain everlasting happiness ; or if he should commit such a sin, he should certainly lose it, it were scarce morally possible that a reasonable man in his wits would omit the one, or commit the other.

“And to say, this is but an historical faith, and that the devils have as much, they believe and tremble, and they do as fully assent to Divine truth as any can do, yet it avails them not, concludes nothing ; the reason is evident, because the salvation to be attained, the faith which is the instrument to attain it, concerns them not, neither are they in a state to be advantaged by it ; but it is otherwise with man. If I should acquaint a stranger that if my son doth such a thing I will give my son five pounds, though the stranger believe it is really true as any thing in the world, yet it puts him not upon the action, because he is not concerned in the reward, so he is not concerned in the means ; but according to the belief that my son hath, it will or will not put him on the action. If he believe me not, he will not do it all ; if he believe it faintly and doubtingly, he will perform the action accordingly ; but if he believe it truly and fully, and set any value upon the reward, he will perform it cheerfully ; for he is concerned in the reward, and in the means to attain it.”

“Faith therefore is a firm assent to the sacred truths, whether the truths relate to things past, as that God made the world, that Christ the Messiah is come in the flesh, &c. &c. or to things present, as that Almighty God beholds all I do, and knows all I think, or that he is a reconciled Father unto me in Jesus Christ ; or things to come, which principally excite those two great movers of the soul, hope and fear, in relation to the future life of rewards and punishments.”