

oil of 70 appointed by the Law-giver Moses, as co-adjutors with himself, in the administration of the government of the Jewish people.—“Moses chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens; and they judged the people at all seasons.” Exodus xviii. 25, 26.—(3) “Hell-fire.” This expression strictly signifies in the language in which St. Matthew wrote “the fire in the valley of Hinnom.”—Close by Jerusalem, towards the South, was a deep ravine, wherein was Jophet—a place once notorious for the worship of Moloch, the Phœnician Idol, before which human beings were burnt alive.—This valley was a naturally-formed sewer to Jerusalem; in it fires were kept burning to consume the city refuse, which otherwise, from the absence of a powerful stream of water to carry it off, would tend to create pestilence. From the horrible and disgusting associations connected with this valley of Hinnom, its name was taken to denote the extreme penalty with which those will suffer who reach the fatal irremediable extreme in their disobedience to the Divine Laws. And such is the signification of the expression in this 22nd verse.—The gradation of offence which render a man, and especially a member of the Church, obnoxious to these penalties is (1) anger against another—secret anger in the heart:—(2) the utterance of minor opprobrious expressions against another, as, for example, “Rascals!”—“contemptible!” “Worthless!” “Weak fool!” etc., to the disparagement of any man, who let his labours be ever so insignificant—if he has done what he could—is honoured of God as having fulfilled His will,—and therefore is not to be dishonoured by men without sin:—(3) the effort to attach to a brotherman the stigma of “Fool!” in the peculiar Scripture-sense of the term—i. e. “Reprobate,” “Impious,” “Infidel,” “Rebel against God,” etc

Ver. 24. *Leave there thy gift before the altar.*] Our Lord's words were intended for the members of the Church founded by him, during all time. There was therefore to be in their assemblies for worship something

analogous to the altars in the Mosaic Temple-worship.—Hence has arisen the custom of sometimes calling the Lord's Table in a Christian Temple an Altar.—Among the Jews, an altar was sometimes called the Lord's Table.—“If I be a master where is my fear, saith the Lord of hosts unto you, O priests, that despise my name. And ye say, “Wherein have we despised thy name?—Ye offered polluted bread upon mine altar: and ye say wherein have we polluted thee? In that ye say, The Table of the Lord is contemptible.” Malachi i. 6, 7.

Ver. 25. *Agree with thine adversary.*] St. Paul also calls upon the members of the Church to settle disputes among themselves,—and not to appeal to the public Courts. “Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?” 1 Cor. vi. 1.—“Adversary” here properly means “creditor.”—For the administration of Justice—in small places there were courts of three,—in larger, courts of twenty-three,—and at Jerusalem, the Sanhedrim, which was the ultimate appeal.—By the expression “Judge” in this place, the Sanhedrim is supposed to be referred to. “Officer” denotes the person who executes the sentence of the court.—Besides the inculcation of the truth, that the members of the Christian Body ought to settle their disputes amicably, there is here, evidently from the connection of the words, implied the doctrine that reconciliation with brethren whom we have offended, and restitution to those whom we have wronged, ought to be earnestly desired and aimed at, while there is time for so doing.—Though the admonition will ever hold good, that Christians should desire to arrange difficulties with each other, without appeal to public Law,—yet it is not implied that it is sinful for members of the Church to settle disputes in Courts of Law now, because the theory of English Courts is, that they are Christian Tribunals.—St. Paul referred to Heathen Tribunals;—and he asked “Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you?”—you, i. e., the members of the Church? 1 Cor. vi. 5.—According to the ancient constitution of England, as it was a few years ago, the