

meekness, but I was also humble of heart. My heart was not hardened against my persecutors, but melting like wax with a pious affection towards them, it pitied their blindness, and prayed for them—Father forgive them, for they know not what they do, &c.

My strength is dried up, &c., because I have submitted to be tied, and scourged, and struck on the face, and insulted, as if all power had left me, and did not call for legions of angels to defend me, as I might have done; and my tongue hath cleaved to my jaws, because I have suffered in silence, and without replying to the calumnies of my enemies or complaining of their injustice: and thou hast brought me down into the dust of death: by their continual tortures, which I have not resisted, and by thy permission, my God, without which they would have no power over me, I am brought down to death and to the dust of death, that is, my burial.

The foregoing verses may be also understood of the dreadful natural effects produced in Christ's body, by his excruciating torments, his violent thirst, loss of blood, &c.

The meek and patient dispositions above referred to, should be those of every christian, when through the permission of God he is persecuted and afflicted by others.

17. For many dogs have encompassed me; the council of the malignant hath besieged me.

18. They have dug my hands and feet; they have numbered all my bones.

Thus have I been brought down to the dust of death, by the false accusations and detractions of those who like dogs assailed my character and held me up as a seducer of the people, a hypocrite, an enemy to Cæsar, an aspirant to

the kingdom, and thereby induced Pilate to condemn me to the death of the cross, on which they have dug my hands and feet by fastening them thereto with rude nails, and numbered all my bones, because from the violent extension of my limbs upon this infamous gibbet, all my bones might be reckoned.

When we reflect that this prophecy was made upwards of a thousand years before the death of Christ, we cannot but admire the faithful pencil of the inspired writer, whose description, applicable to the Redeemer alone, so minutely corresponds with the gospel account.

19. And they have looked and stared upon me: they parted my garments amongst them, and upon my vesture they cast lots.

To the punishment of the cross he adds the ignominy of his nakedness. They have, says he, curiously inspected my entire body, because I have been despoiled of my garments, which the soldiers have divided amongst them. The accuracy of this prediction may be read in St John, xix. 23, 'Then the soldiers, when they had crucified him, took his garments, (and they made four parts, to every soldier a part,) and also his coat. Now the coat was without seam, woven from the top through out. They said then, one to another: Let us not cut it, but let us cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, saying, They have parted my garments among them, &c.

His faithful servants will experience, to a certain degree, what happened to Jesus Christ. They will be stripped of their temporal goods, despoiled of their garments, deprived by death of their parents, relatives and friends, in order that there may be no obstacle to their intimate union with God. In the affecting language of scripture we can say,