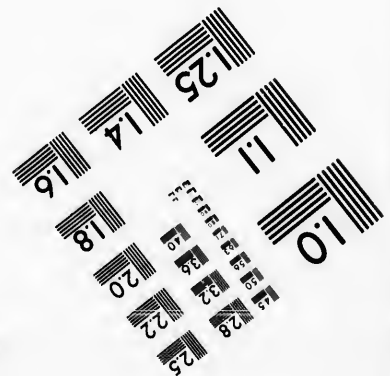
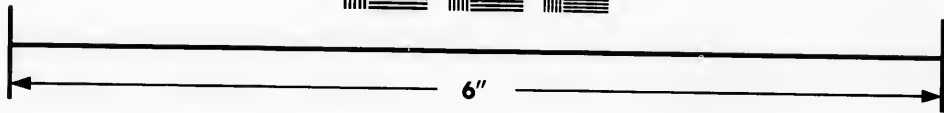
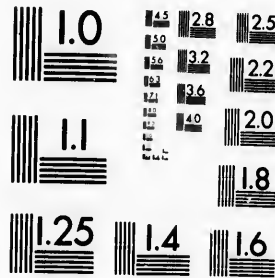


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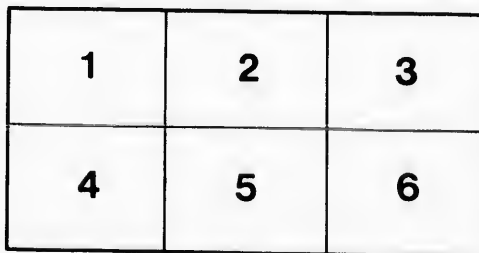
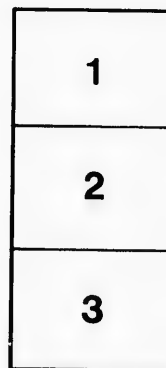
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A
S E R M O N,

Occasioned by the DEATH of
Mrs. MARGARET GREEN;

Confort of the late Honourable
BENJAMIN GREEN, Esq;

Delivered at HALIFAX,
In the Province of *Nova-Scotia*,
February 1st, 1778.

By John Seccombe,
of CHESTER, A. M.

The Saints are the excellent in the Earth. Ps. 16. 3.

A Woman that feareth the LORD she shall be praised.
Prov. 31. 30.

The Righteous hath Hope in his Death. Prov. 14. 32.
They shall be in everlasting Remembrance. Ps. 112. 6.

HALIFAX. Printed: By A. HENRY.

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I. Corinthians 15. 56. 57.

The sting of Death is Sin, and the Strength of Sin is the Law. But thanks be to God who giveth us the Victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

AS some among the Corinthians doubted, and others denied the Resurrection of the Body, the Apostle enlarges in this Chapter on the Certainty and Importance of that fundamental Doctrine of the Christian Religion. And proves it by divers Arguments.

At the 35th Verse he brings in the Philosophic Infidel proposing his Question, with Design, it may be, to ridicule this Doctrine. But some Men will yet say, how are the Dead raised up again? And with what kind of Body do they come? Some pretend 'tis impossible, and a thing incredible that God should raise the Dead. This was the cry of the antient Philosophers; and is taken by the Deists of our own Age. They tell us that 'tis not consistent with the known Rules of Philosophy for the Body to rise. But the Apostle answers the Scoffer with a Severity due to his Temper, Thou Fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die, and lie buried in the Earth. Which shows that the Dissolution and Corruption of the Body by Death is so far from being an Objection to its Resurrection, that it is necessary to it, even as the dying and putrifying of the Seed, or Grain of Wheat, is necessary

cessary to its quickning and rising up again; and that if God is able to quicken a Seed or Grain that is Rotten and entirely dead, and cause it to rise up in Verdure and with much Fruit, as he does every Year in Millions of Instances, why should it be thought incredible that God should quicken dead Bodies, when the One is as much an Instance of his Power as the other? He adds, Verse 42, where he begins to apply his Simile to his present Purpose; so is the Resurrection of the Dead, that is, That Case resembles this: As the Seed sown is not exactly the same which springs up; for a Grain of Wheat is not the same with a Stalk and Ear of Wheat, and yet it is partly the same; for every Seed has its *own* and *proper* Body given to it; thus it is in the Case of the Resurrection of the Dead, where there seems implied, that our present Body is a Sort of a *Seed* of the Resurrection Body. And also that it is in some Respect the same with the Body that is sown, even the Body which we now live in, and at death lay in the Grave; for thus, (in the Simile) God gives, says the Apostle, *to every Seed its own Body.*

Here is also implied that it shall undergo a considerable Change, and consequently, not be absolutely the same: It is so the same as yet to admit of a difference; that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that Body that shall be. It is sown bare Grain, but when it springs up it is variously changed; and thus it shall be with our Body: It shall be changed. It is sown in Corruption, it is raised in Incorruption—It is sown a natural Body, it is raised a spiritual Body. v. 42. 43. 44.

Now what identifies, or goes to constitute the *same Body* we can't pretend to be certain, since the Scripture has not told us; therefore with Respect thereto, we can have no determinate Faith. But as every Seed has its own Body, so will every
Soul

Soul have its own Body, tho' greatly different as to its Qualities. It is abundantly sufficient, that *God giveth it a Body, as pleaseth him.* †

The Apostle having thus proved the Doctrine of the Resurrection, saith, Then shall be brought to pass the Saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in Victory: that is, is overcome for ever so as never to have any Strength or Power over our Bodies any more. So that Christians may sing triumphantly in the Words of the Prophet Hosea, O Death where is thy Sting! O Grave where is now thy Victory?

The Sting of Death is Sin, and the Strength of Sin is the Law. But thanks be to God who giveth us the Victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

From the Words of my Text I shall note these three Things; and then improve the Subject.

- 1st. That God hath given to the Saints Victory over Death.
- 2d. This Victory is through the Death and Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- 3d. This

† The modern Philosophers are of Opinion, since the microscopical Discoveries, that as Plants and Herbs derive themselves from Seeds, so Animals proceed from proper Animalcula: and they suppose the humane Body particularly one of the Animalcula, grown and increased by the Expansion of its numerous minute Vessels. The Solids that were folded up in so small a Compass are swelled to the Size they afterwards arrive at, by the Addition made to the Quantity of Fluids that pervade and fill them. These solid or vascular Parts are the *Stamina Vitæ*, and always the same; all the Change is in the Fluids, which are indeed in a perpetual Flux, some constantly perspiring or passing off by the secretory Glands; but the main Principles, the Vessels of the Body are unchangeable in their Substance thro' all the Periods of humane Life, and the Bodies of Men are so distinct that one can't become a Part of another, nor suffer any confusion; which being granted, the main difficulty that attends the Doctrine of the Resurrection, vanishes.

3d. This Victory of the Saints affords them some Joy and Consolation in this Life, and in the Morning of the Resurrection will fill them with Joy, Thanksgiving and Triumph.

1st. God hath given to the Saints Victory over Death.

The Apostle tells us, Verse 26. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is Death. And 'tis an *Enemy* being the Fruit, Effect, and Wages of Sin; the Penalty and Curse of the Law; as 'tis contrary to human Nature, and destructive of the Work of God's Hands; it is indeed, through the Blood, Righteousness and Sacrifice of Christ become the Friend of his People; yet *in itself* is formidable to Nature and disagreeable to it.

But that which makes Death avenging Punishment is dying under the guilt of Sin. The Sting of Death is Sin: it is the Cause of Death; it is what has given Rise and Being to it, and entered into the World by it. 'Tis Sin that gives Death all its Bitterness, Agonies and Miseries. And the Strength of Sin is the Law. The evil nature, and all the dreadful Aggravations of Sin, and sad Consequences upon it are discovered and made known by the Law, and may be called the Strength of Sin. 'Tis the Law which binds Sin upon a Man's Conscience, accuses him of it, pronounces him guilty, curses, condemns and adjudges him to Death eternal for it. Thus the Law gives Sin its Strength, and Death its Warrant to arrest and execute us.

But God hath given his People the Victory over Sin, Death and the Law. Thanks be to God who giveth us Victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore

2d. This Victory of the Saints over Sin, Death and the Law is through the Death and Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

He has got the Victory over Sin; he has put it away by the
Sacrifice

Sacrifice of himself; he has finished and made an End of it; for though it reigns over his People before Conversion, and dwells in them after it, yet in consequence of his Attonement for it, it loses its governing Power thro' the Spirit and Grace of God in Regeneration; and entirely its damning Power over them in the Resurrection Morning, when their vile Bodies shall be changed and fashioned like unto Christ's glorious Body. Sin will then have no *Being* in them. Again, Christ has obtained a Victory over the Law: He stopped its mouth, and answered all its Demands; he has been made under, and subject to it; he has obeyed its Precepts, and bore its Penalty, and has delivered *his* from the curse and Condemnation of it, so that they have nothing to fear from it, it is dead to them and they to that; and he has abolished it as a *penal Evil* to his Saints; and tho' they die, they shall not always remain under the Power of Death, they shall live again, and with him for ever.

He has also conquer'd the *Grave* by rising out of it himself, and living for ever more; having the Keys of the Grave in his Hands; and will at the last Day oblige it to give up its Dead.

Now this Victory in all its Branches is given by God to Believers; they are made to share in all the Victories of Christ their Head, and are more than Conquerors thro' him; but this is not by Merit, but by Gift, the Gift of God the Father, who gives his Son and all Things with him that are his; and this Gift is a distinguishing one; it is given to *us*, and not to others; and which therefore calls aloud for their Praise, Admiration and Thanksgiving, even in this Life, in the Language of the Apostle, Rom. 8. 33. 34. 37. Who shall lay any Thing to the Charge of God's Elect? It is God that justified: Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right Hand of God, who maketh also Intercession for us. We are more than Conquerors, thro' him that loved *us*. Wherefore 3d.

3d. This Victory of the Saints yields them some Consolation in this Life; and will fill them with Joy, Thanksgiving and Triumph in the Morning of the Resurrection.

Believers thro' Faith, rejoice many Times before hand in the lively Hope and Prospect of this Victory. But when they rise glorious from the Grave, will glory over Death as a vanquished Enemy, and insult this great and terrible Destroyer, O Death where is thy Sting? O Grave where is thy Victory? How glorious will the Resurrection Day be to good Men; and what an Addition may then be expected to their former Happiness! There are many Circumstances that will add to the Solemnity and Glory of it; as the Descent of Christ from Heaven in flaming Fire; the Voice of the Arch-Angel; the Triumph of God, &c. The Restoration of the Body, so changed and exalted, will, no doubt, be a mighty Improvement of the Happiness of the Saints; being raised in Glory.

Some suppose that our Bodies in the Resurrection (as to their Purity, Constitution and Liveliness) will be the same with that of Adam, when it first came out of the Hand of God, with the Stamps of divine Wisdom and Goodness fresh upon it.

Others suppose that our first Parents were as to their Bodies, formed after the Image of the *Shechinah*, 'ight organized in human Shape, as their Ornament and Glory. Hence when after the Fall, 'tis said, they were *naked*, the meaning is, they had lost this Clothing of Light and Glory. Be that as it may, we are assured that the Resurrection Body shall be exceeding glorious, even in Fashion like Christ's glorious Body.

And, oh, what a Day of Glory will it be when all the Saints shall appear thus arrayed; with their Bodies outshining the Sun in the Firmament, with Crowns on their Heads, and
Palms

Palms in their Hands! “ How many Springs of Joy to the
 “ Saints and Thanksgiving to God, are opened by the Resur-
 “ rection, the Sufferings and Conquests of our Redeemer?

“ With what Acclamations will Saints rising from the dead
 “ applaud him? How will the Heaven of Heavens resound
 “ his Praises for ever? Thanks be it to God, will be the
 “ Burden of their Song, and Angels will join in the Chorus,
 “ and declare their Consent with a loud Amen, Hallelujah.

It now remains that we make some Reflections on the sub-
 ject, by way of Application. And,

1. We may hence infer the happy and blessed Condition of
 the Righteous.

Their Happiness may be said to commence on the Day of
 their *new Birth*, when they pass from Death to Life; and are
 made Partakers of the divine Nature. Our Salvation begins
 in Conversion: and we are saved by the washing of Regenera-
 tion, and renewing of the Holy Ghost. They are washed,
 sanctified and justified in the Name of our Lord Jesus, and by
 the spirit of our God. They are now interested in all the ex-
 ceeding great and precious Promises, which are comprehen-
 sive of all the Blessings of Time and Eternity. Therefore are
 truly blessed. And living or dying they are the Lords. And
 tho' the wicked is driven away in his Wickedness, the Right-
 eous hath *Hope* in his Death. Tho' all believers have not full
 Assurance upon a Death-bed, yet they have the Grace of *Hope*
 in them; tho' they have Pain and some dread of Death, yet they
 have *Hope* which is always attended with *Faith*: These two
 Graces go together, being wrought by the same Hand and at the
 same Time in Regeneration; and are more or less exercised
 together; tho' the one may be at sometimes more visible in its
 Exercise than the other; and there may be *Hope* when Faith

is scarcely discernable; yet Faith is at the Bottom, and is the Substance of Things hoped for. And this Hope is founded not upon the absolute Mercy of God, not upon the Merit of the Creature; not upon any outward Acts of Righteousness; or on external Profession of Religion; but upon the Person, Blood, Righteousness and Sacrifice of Christ. This is called the Hope of Salvation, the Hope of Glory, and the Hope of eternal Life, because it assures these Things. This is the good Hope thro' Grace, peculiar to Believers; and is the Anchor of the Soul, sure and stedfast.

These are safe in Death: for being absent from the Body, are present with the Lord.

The interval between Death and the Resurrection is a State of Absence from the Body, during which Time the Soul is in a State of Happiness and Glory, believing and waiting for the Resurrection of the Body, when Both will be united together again.

And being raised up to Glory they shall be openly acknowledged and acquitted; and owned by the King of Saints, as the redeemed and blessed of the Lord, when he shall say unto them, Come ye Blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World. Matt. 25. 34.

The Happiness of the Saints in the other World is here expressed by a *Kingdom*, because of the Glory, Riches, Grandeur and Magnificence of it.

And whatsoever constitutes the Felicity of that State, all that Felicity is *eternal*: At God's right Hand are Pleasure evermore.

But

But how widely different is the State and Condition of the Wicked, which is indeed the very Reverse of the Godly. They have no Foundation for Peace or Comfort, living or dying.

They strive to stifle the Convictions of Conscience and cry Peace, when yet there's no Peace. There is a lurking Fear that often haunts and pursues the Sinner like a murdered Ghost in all Companies, and amidst all Delights. And we have often seen the departing Sinner in great Distress from a Sense of his sinful Condition. And he has been forced to subscribe to the Truth of that Assertion, *The Sting of Death is Sin, and the Strength of Sin is the Law.* These shall come forth out of their Graves to Shame and everlasting Contempt, to the Resurrection of Damnation; as Vessels of Wrath fitted to Destruction; to whom therefore Christ the Judge will say, depart from me ye cursed into everlasting Fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels. These shall go away into everlasting Punishment, but the Righteous into Life eternal.

Then shall we discern between the Righteous and the Wicked; and that the Righteous are indeed the excellent in the Earth; and the Seed which the Lord hath blessed.

2d. Let this give a check to our inordinate Grief for the Death of holy Friends and Relatives. Grace doth at least teach us to moderate our Grief on such Occasions, and forbids us to sorrow as those that are without Hope.

For Death fixes *them* in a State of unchangeable Happiness and everlasting Joy. We should therefore carry as *Sharers* in their Joy, and believing Admirers of their Felicity. And as expecting to meet them in that *better Country*, if we be Followers of those who thro' Faith and Patience inherit the Promises.

And this just Ground of Consolation I am perswaded we have in Reference to that deceased Servant of Christ whose Death gave Occasion to this Discourse.

Her Character we had epitomiz'd in our weekly Paper. And yet I conceive a further public Honour due to a Person of such distinguished Worth, I presume not to attempt her full Character; But having had the Honour and Pleasure of a personal Acquaintance with her for several Years, I am the better able to relate some Things that were commendable and praise worthy in her, and most worthy of our Imitation.

It pleased God to call her by his Grace, while she was yet young; so that she fear'd the Lord from her youth.

She had the highest Esteem and Relish for the *Doctrines of Grace*, as having, in her Esteem, the most apposite Tendency to humble the Pride of human Nature; to exalt the Riches of divine Grace, and the Glory of God in the Salvation of Sinners. †

Books of meer Amusement (Plays, Romances, Novels, &c. she seldom looked into: Esteeming Time too precious to be trifled

† By the Doctrine of Grace, we mean that System of Evangelical truths which is commonly called Calvinistical; as, that God has from all Eternity loved some of the human Race, and has chosen them unto everlasting Salvation, by Jesus Christ; that he has made a Covenant of Grace with his Son on the Behalf of the chosen Ones, which is absolute and unconditional; that Christ in the Fulness of Time assumed human Nature, suffered and died to redeem a special and peculiar People to himself; that by bearing their Sins, and all Punishment due to them, he has made full Satisfaction to the Justice of God; that a Sinner's Justification before God is only by the Righteousness of Christ, imputed to him, without any Consideration of Works done by him; that Pardon of Sin is only through the Blood of Christ, and for his Sake, according to the Riches of his Grace; that God sees no Sin in his justified and pardoned Ones, so as to condemn them for it; that Regeneration and Conversion are by the Powerfull and efficacious Grace of God; and that those who are effectually called by Grace, shall persevere to the End, and be eternally saved.

trifled away in Vanity. She was so mortified to the Vanities of the World as to have little or no Relish of those idle Amusements, and ensnaring Pastimes, and useles frothy Entertainments in Conversation which are the common Guize and Fashion of the Age wherein we live.

She paid a solemn Regard to the holy Sabbath, as a Day of sacred rest to the Lord.

She esteemed it a great Privilege to wait upon God in his Sanctuary, where her Deportment was remarkable *grave* and *serious*, becoming the Solemnity of the Place, and Worship of God who is in Spirit.

She was a Lover of *good Men*, especially of good Ministers of Jesus Christ, of every Denomination; these she honoured as his Ambassadors who bring good Tidings of Peace and publish Salvation. She was meek and humble, and so clothed with Humility, as to entertain low and mean Thoughts of herself, freely acknowledging that all she had or hoped to have, was owing to the *free Grace* of God. She was faithfull in all her *relative Capacities*, therein serving the Lord as well as Men.

And the close of her religious Life was every way suitable to the general Tenor of it.

In her last Sickness God did not leave her comfortless; he was with her to the End of her Life; and gave her that *good Hope through Grace* by which she was supported, and carried above the fears of Death; earnestly desiring if it were the Will of God soon to depart and be with Christ. Still looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of her Faith; and firmly persuaded that God was able to keep that Soul in Safety which he had committed unto him against the day of Recompense.

How happy and blessed are such as die in the Lord; and what

what

what Ground of Consolation have we on their Account ! Wherefore, finally, let us become Followers of those who thro' Faith and Patience do inherit the Promises : for the Work of Righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of Righteousness Quietness and Assurance for ever. And our Labour in the Lord is not in vain, for we are Conquerors, yea, more than Conquerours thro' him that loved us and gave himself for us.

“ Now let my Soul arise,
 “ And tread the Tempter down ;
 “ My *Captain* leads me forth
 “ To Conquest and a Crown.
 “ A feeble Saint
 “ Shall win the Day
 “ Tho' Death and Hell
 „ Obstruct the Way.

Many may with Balaam, wish to dye the Death of the Righteous, and that their latter End might be like his. Let such know, that the only Way to *this* is by living the Life of the Righteous. Which holy living depends upon the implantation of a *holy Principle* ; without which we cannot serve God acceptably with Reverence and godly Fear. And is a necessary Preparation for Glory. *Grace* and *Glory* will he give.

The Grace of God given at Conversion is an immortal and never dying Principle ; is the beginning of a new, divine Life, and Earnest of eternal Life.

When God calls any by his Grace there is a universal Change made in the Temper and Frame of the Mind ; and a new State introduced in the Soul, by which 'tis made *meet* to partake of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light. John 3.

5. Col. 12. 13. Some indeed suppose that *Regeneration* and the new Creature includes no more than what is done for us in Baptism; as a learned Doctor intimated to his Auditory, when in a Discourse on that subject, he pointed to the *Font*, and told them, *There they were all regenerated.*

But let no Man deceive you with vain Words; nor let any Man deceive himself; for unless a Man be *born of Water and of the Spirit*; he cannot see the Kingdom of God.

“ These Words *Water and Spirit* express the same Thing, and signify *the Grace of the Spirit of God*. Nor has Baptism any regenerating Influence in it. Therefore a Person may be baptised, and yet not born again.”

But if we be not regenerated and quickened by the Spirit of God, and don't become new Creatures in Christ, we have no well grounded hope of eternal Life: nor can we die in Peace with God; for we are yet in our Sins. If we have not the Spirit of Christ we are none of his: yea, nothing in God's Esteem; nothing as Christians. True Godliness therefore is the *principal Thing*.

“ It is so, as it is that which recommends us to God, which beautifies the Soul, which enables us to answer the end of our Creation, to live to some good Purpose in the World, and to get to Heaven at last.”

Many adorn their Bodies with costly Ornaments and Apparel to attract the Eyes of vain Spectators, and gratify their own Pride; but neglect their sinful *Souls*, that stand in need of more care and adorning than these vile Bodies.

Therefore the Apostle exhorts the *Female Sex*, to beautify and

and adorn their Souls with the Graces and Virtues of Gods holy Spirit, rather than their Bodies with gaudy and rich Attire.

Whose adorning, says he, let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the Hair, and of wearing of Gold; but the hidden Man of the Heart, in that which is incorruptible, viz. a meek and quiet Spirit, which is highly precious in the Sight of God. For thus also the holy Women of old adorn'd themselves. In like manner also, I will that Women adorn themselves with decent Apparel, with Modesty and Sobriety; not with costly drefs, but with what becometh Women professing Godliness, with good Work. 1. Pet. 3. 3. 4. 5. 1. Tim. 2. 9. 10. It is hence evident that the Endowments of the inner Man are the chief Ornaments of a Christian. And Plainness among Christians is a greater Honor than fine Clothing.

“ The outward adorning of the Body is very often sinful and excessive.” For Instance, when it is immoderate and above your Degree and Station in the World; when you are proud of it, and puffed up with it; when you drefs designing to allure and tempt others; when your Apparel is too rich, curious, or superfluous; when the Fashions are Fantastical, imitating the Levity and Vanity of the worst People; and when they are immodest and wanton. But there is no Religion or Irreligion in Drefs provided Pride and Luxury are guarded against, and Modesty and Moderation preserved.

Though, ordinarily, you may read the Vanity of a Person's Mind by the *Gaiety and Gaudiness* of their Habit.”

Internal Grace (called the hidden Man of the Heart) gives a Beauty and Ornament to the Soul far preferable to that which any costly Apparel or outward Adornings can give to the
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the Body. But this is hidden from the Men of the World, they don't know what it is, nor what it means, nor how it is, or can be. And hence they seek not after this Wisdom, which is more precious than Rubies, and all the Things that can be desired art not to be compared unto her. She shall give to thine Head an Ornament of grace, a Crown of Glory shall she deliver to thee.

Grace is, in Scripture compar'd to a *Robe*. And all *real Christians* are clothed with the Garments of Salvation, and covered with the Robe of Righteousness: with the Righteousness both of Justification and Sanctification.

By the Righteousness of Christ they are recommended to God's Favour, and by the Sanctification of the Spirit have God's Image renewed upon them.

The Church triumphs in this inestimable Blessing. Isa 16. 10. I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my Soul shall be joyful in my God, for he hath clothed me with the Garments of Salvation; he hath covered me with the Robe of Righteousness. The Righteousness of Christ like a Robe is upon Believers, but not *in* them: 'Tis theirs by Imputation; and it covers their Persons, and their Nakedness, their naked Souls and all their Sins, so as not to be seen with the Eye of avenging Justice. To cloth and cover with it is God's Act of Imputation, and Christ's Application of it by his Spirit.

When God pardoneth Sin he takes away our *filthy Garments*, and clothes us with Change of Raiment. Zech. 3. 4. He said to Joshua (who represented the Church) Behold, I have caused thine Iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with *Change of Raiment*; that is, the Righteousness of Christ, called the *Raiment of Needle-work, the Raiment of wrought*

wrought Gold, the wedding Garment, the best Robe, and Garment of Salvation; and *this* is called a *Change of Raiment*, for Sin and Guilt which by Nature and Backslidings cover the Soul are called its *filthy Rags*.

Upon the Return of the penitent Prodigal, the Father ordered the *best Robe* to be put upon him, &c.

- “ Take off his Cloaths of Shame and Sin,
- “ (The Father gives Command)
- “ Dress him in Garments white and clean,
- “ With Rings adorn his Hand.

Now Christ hath clothed his Church with the Righteousness both of Justification and Sanctification; for besides this Robe of Righteousness and Garment of Salvation, there is the *Garment of internal Holiness*, the new Man, or new Nature consisting of the several Graces of the Spirit, which is put on as a Garment, and makes Believers all *glorious within*. For he hath clothed them with Salvation as a Garment, and with Righteousness, as with a Robe.

- “ 'Tis God adorn'd my naked Soul,
- “ And made Salvation mine;
- “ Upon a poor polluted Worm
- “ He makes his Graces shine.
- “ And left the Shadow of a Spot
- “ Should on my Soul be found,
- “ He took the Robe the Saviour wrought,
- “ And cast it all around.
- “ How far the heavenly Robe exceeds
- “ What earthly Princes wear!
- “ The Ornaments, how bright they shine!
- “ How white the Garments are!

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The Bride (Rev. 19.) is described as making her Appearance, not in the *gay and gaudy* Dress of the Mother of Harlots, but in *fine Linnen, clean and white*, which is the Righteousness of Saints.

Because Sin is like to *filthy Garments* Righteousness is like to *Garments beautiful and white.*

And unless we are thus clothed and adorned with Righteousness, there is no Safety of appearing at the Day of Judgment. For such being arraigned, shall be convicted and condemned by their own Conscience. And the King shall say to the Servants bind him Hand and Foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer Darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of Teeth. Matt. 22. 11. 12. 13.

Many are excessively fond of being in the Fashion tho' ever so indecent and ridiculous: And will spare no Cost or Pains for that Purpose; tho' God has threatened to punish all such as are clothed with *strange Apparel*, probably for their Pride and Vanity in affecting to appear in the Fashion of other Nations. Zech. 1. 8.

And the Prophet Isaiah exposes the Sin and Folly of the Daughters of Zion, for that Pride and vain Curiosity that appeared in their Dress, and great Variety of fine Cloaths: And shews the Punishments threatened for the same. Isa. 3. 16.—26. which I desire may be read out of your own Bible.

It were to be wished that more would follow the Example of those good Women who adorned themselves with decent Apparel, being clothed with Humility. And hearken to the Counsel which Christ gives to such as are not clothed with the Garments of Salvation, nor covered with the Robe

of Righteousness. I Counsel thee to buy of me Gold tried in the Fire, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the Shame of thy Nakedness may not appear, &c. Rev. 3. 18.

In these Words we are directed to come to him for Grace, Life and Salvation; for Pardon, Peace and Righteousness; which are to be *bought* of him.

Now to buy, here signifies to receive by such Ways and Means, as God has directed, those spiritual Blessings, which are freely offered in the Gospel, even Christ and all his Benefits. All these are to be *bought* of Christ, to be had of him *freely*, without Money and without Price; for Christ and his Grace are given *freely*. He doth not, in a proper Sense, *sell* these Benefits, but he gives them to those that come to him, for them, and desire to have them, and are willing to part with all, so they may but enjoy them.

These are the Conditions, and the only Conditions on which they are to be had and enjoyed.

Who then that is wise, would rest contented without this *inward adorning!* this *Garment of Salvation* and *Robe of Righteousness* for the Soul, so absolutely necessary to secure Peace and Comfort here, and everlasting Happiness in the Kingdom of Heaven! O taste and see that the Lord is good..

“ Ye perishing and naked Poor,
“ Who work with mighty Pain,
“ To weave a Garment of your own;
“ That will not hide your Sin;

“ Come

“ Come naked, and adorn your Souls
“ In Robes prepared by God,
“ Wrought by the Labours of his Son,
“ And dy'd in his own Blood. §

To conclude, let us seek *first* the Kingdom of God, and his Righteousness; without which there will be no Admission into it. And fear lest a Promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of us should even *seem* to come short of it.

Therefore, endeavour to make your Calling and Election sure, that when your great Change by Death shall come, you may fear no Evil; but knowing your Election of God, you may be able thro' Grace to triumph over Death as a vanquished Enemy, saying, Thanks be to God who giveth us the Victory thro' our Lord Jesus Christ.

A M E N.

§ While Women professing Godliness are adorning their Bodies, they might thence take Occasion, naturally enough to reflect thus with themselves; I am adorning this vile Body at great Expence, which must soon return to the Grave and Corruption; but is my Soul clothed with the Garments of Salvation, and covered with the Robe of Righteousness? Have I *bought* of Christ *white Raiment* to hide the Shame of my Nakedness? What then shall I do when God riseth up? And when he visiteth, and shall say, How comest thou hither not having a wedding Garment, what shall I answer him? Surely I shall be exposed to Shame and everlasting Contempt; and be banished the Kingdom of Glory forever, &c.

