he teaches Timothy how to admoniſh the old and young of both ſexes; mentions the age and character of ſuch widows as were to be employed by the ſociety in ſome peculiar office; and ſubjoins ſome things concerning the reſpect due to elders. In the ſixth chapter he deſcribes the duties which Timothy was to inculcate on ſlaves; condemns trifling controverſies and pernicious diſputes; cenſures the exceſſive love of money, and charges the rich to be rich in good works.

That the ſecond Epiſtle to Timothy was written from Rome is univerſally agreed; but whether it was during his firſt or ſecond impriſonment has been much diſputed That Timothy was at Epheſus or in Aſia Minor when this Epiſtle was ſent to him, appears from the frequent mention in it of perſons reſiding at Ephe­ſus. The apoſtle ſeems to have intended to prepare Ti­mothy for thoſe ſufferings which he foreſaw he would be expoſed to. He exhorts him to conſtancy and perſeverance, and to perform with a good conſcience the duties of the ſacred function.

The falſe teachers, who had before thrown this church into confuſion, grew every day worſe: inſomuch that not only Hymenaeus, but Philetus, another Epheſian heretic, now denied the reſurrection of the dead. They were led into this error by a diſpute about words. At firſt they only annexed various improper ſignifications to the word *reſurrection*, but at laſt they denied it altogether @@(H); pretending that the reſurrection of the dead was only a reſurrection from the death of ſin, and ſo was already paſt. This error was probably deri­ved from the eaſtern philoſophy, which placed the origin of ſin in the body, (chapter ii.) He then forewarns him of the fatal apoſtacy and declenſion that was beginning to appear in the church; and at the ſame time animates him, from his own example and the great motives of Chriſtianity, to the moſt vigorous and reſolute diſcharge of every part of the miniſterial office.

This Epiſtle is addreſſed to Titus, whom Paul had appointed to preſide over the church of Crete. It is difficult to determine either its date or the place from which it was ſent. The apoſtle begins with reminding Titus of the reaſons for which he had left him at Crete; and directs him on what principles he was to act in ordaining Chriſtian paſtors: the qualifications of whom he particularly deſcribes. To ſhow him how cautious he ought to be in ſelecting men for the ſacred office, he reminds him of the arts of the Judaizing teachers, and the bad character of the Cretans, (chap­ter i).

He adviſes him to accommodate his exhortations to the reſpective ages, ſexes, and circumſtances, of thoſe whom it was his duty to inſtruct; and to give the greater weight to his inſtructions, he admoniſhes hint to be an example of what he taught, (chap. ii). He exhorts him alſo to teach obedience to the civil magiſtrate, becauſe the Judaizing Chriſtians affirmed that no obedience was due from the worſhippers of the true God to magiſtrates who were idolaters. He cautions

againſt cenſoriousness and contention, and recommends meekneſs; for even the beſt Chriſtians had formerly been wicked, and all the bleſſings which they enjoyed they derived from the goodneſs of God He then en­joins Titus ſtrenuouſly to inculcate good works, and to avoid uſeleſs controverſies; and concludes with direct­ing him how to proceed with thoſe heretics who at­tempted to ſow diſſenſion in the church.

The Epiſtle to Philemon was written from Rome at the ſame time with the Epiſtles to the Coloſſians and Philippians, about A. D. 62 or 63. The occaſion of the letter was this: Oneſimus, Philemon’s ſlave, had robbed his maſter and fled to Rome; where, happily for him, he met with the apoſtle, who was at that time a priſoner at large, and by his inſtructions and admoni­tions was converted to Chriſtianity, and reclaimed to a ſenſe of his duty. St Paul ſeems to have kept him for ſome conſiderable time under his eye, that he might be ſatisfied of the reality of the change; and, when he had made a ſufficient trial of him, and found that his beha­viour was entirely agreeable to his profeſſion, he would not detain him any longer for his own private conveni­ence, though in a ſituation that rendered ſuch an aſliſtant peculiarly deſirable (compare ver. 13, 14.), but ſent him back to his maſter; and, as a mark of his eſteem, entruſted him, together with Tychicus, with the charge of delivering his Epiſtle to the church at Coloſſe, and giving them a particular account of the ſtate of things at Rome, recommending him to them, at the ſame time, as a faithful and beloved brother, (Col. iv. 9). And as Philemon might well be ſuppoſed to be ſtrongly prejudiced againſt one who had left his ſervice in ſo infamous a manner, he ſends him this letter, in which he employs all his influence to remove his ſuſpicions, and reconcile him to the thoughts of taking Oneſimus into his family again. And whereas St Paul might have exerted that authority which his character as an apoſtle, and the relation in which he ſtood to Philemon as a ſpiritual father, would naturally give him, he chooſes to intreat him as a friend; and with the ſofteſt and moſt inſinuating addreſs urges his ſuit, conjuring him by all the ties of Chriſtian friendſhip that he would not deny him his requeſt: and the more effectually to pre­vail upon him, he repreſents his own peace and happineſs as deeply intereſted in the event; and ſpeaks of Oneſimus in ſuch terms as were beſt adapted to ſoften his prejudices, and diſpoſe him to receive one who was ſo dear to himſelf, not merely as a ſervant, but as a fellow Chriſtian and a friend.

It is impoſſible to read over this admirable Epiſtle, with­out being touched with the delicacy of ſentiment, and the maſterly addreſs that appear in every part of it. We ſee here, in a moſt ſtriking light, how perfectly conſiſtent true politeneſs is, not only with all the warmth and ſincerity of the friend, but even with the dignity of the Chriſtian and the apoſtle. And if this letter were to be conſidered in no other view than as a mere human compoſition, it mull be allowed a maſter-piece in its kind. As an illuſtration of this remark, it may not be

@@@(h) This is by no means uncommon amongſt men; to begin to diſpute about the ſigniſication of words, and to be led gradually to deny the thing ſignified. This appears to have been the cauſe of moſt diſputes, and the general beginnings of ſcepticiſm and infidelity.