

banquet, and confusion of these guests. All which arise from the conterminant situation, or, if I may so speak, from the respondent opposition of these two sermons, Wisdom's and Folly's,—that is, God's and Satan's. For this sad sequel is, if not a relative, yet a reductive demonstration of their misery; for after the infection of sin follows that infliction of punishment. The turrets I would lead you by are built and consist of farewells and welcomes; of some things deposed, and some things imposed; positive and privative circumstances; valedictions and maledictions: they take their leaves of temporal and affected joys, and turn upon eternal and cursed sorrows. I will limit these general observations into four.

Obs. 1.—All sinful joys are dammed (if not damned) up with a *but*. They are troubled with a *but*-plague, like a bee with a sting in her tail. They have a worm that crops them, nay, gnaws asunder their very root; though they shoot up more hastily, and spread more spaciouly than Jonah's gourd. There is great preparation of this banquet, procreation to it, participation of it; all is carried with joy and jousance: there is a corrective *but*, a *veruntamen* spoils all in the upshot; a little coliquintida, that embitters the broth; a perilous, a pernicious rock, that splits the ship in the haven. When all the prophecies of ill success have been held as Cassandra's riddles, when all the contrary winds of afflictions, all the threatened storms of God's wrath, could not dishearten the sinner's voyage to these Netherlands, here is a *but* that shipwrecks all; the very mouth of a bottomless pit, not shallower than hell itself.

It is observable that Solomon's proverbial says are so many select aphorisms, containing, for the most part, a pair of cross and thwart sentences, handled rather by collation than relation, whose conjunction is disjunctive. The proverbs are not joined with an *et* but an *at*, with a *but* rather than with an *and*. 'Stolen waters are sweet,' &c.; '*but* he knoweth not,' &c. It stands in the midst, like a rudder or oar, to turn the boat another way. 'Rejoice, O young man,' &c.; '*but* know that for all these things God will bring thee to judgment,' &c., Eccles. xi. 9. All runs smooth, and inclines to the bias of our own affections, till it lights upon this rub. The Babel of iniquity is built up apace, till confusion steps in with a *but*. It is like the sudden clap of a serjeant on a gallant's shoulder. He is following his lusts, full scent and full cry; the arrest strikes him with a *but*, and all is at a loss.

As in a fair summer's morning, when the lark hath called up the sun, and the sun the husbandman; when the earth hath opened her shop of perfumes, and a pleasant wind fans coolness through the air; when every creature is rejoiced at the heart, on a sudden the furious winds burst from their prisons, the thunder rends the clouds, and makes way for the lightning, and the spouts of heaven stream down showers; a hideous tempest sooner damps all the former delight than a man's tongue can well express it. With no less content do these guests of sin pass their life; they eat to eat, drink to drink, often to sleep, always to surfeit; they carol, dance, spend their present joys, and promise themselves infallible supply. On a sudden this *but* comes like an unlooked-for storm, and turns all into mourning, and such mourning as Rachel had for her children, that will not be comforted, because their joys are not.

A wicked man runs headlong in the night of his unwaked security after his wonted sports, and because he keeps his old path, which never interrupted him with any obstacle, he nothing doubts but to speed as he had wont; but his enemy hath digged a pit in his way, and in he topples, even to the depths of hell. Thus wicked joys end with wretched sorrows, and as man hath his

sic, so God hath his *sed*. If we will have our will in sin, it is fit he should have his will in punishing. To this sense, Solomon frequently in his Proverbs. They will pursue wickedness, *but* they shall be plagued. I have forbidden usury, adultery, swearing, malice, as unclean meats; you will feed on them; *but* you shall be punished. There is a reckoning behind, a *butt* they never shot at; but they shot besides the *but* the whiles. God hath prepared them as the miserable marks, Job vii. 20, that shall receive the arrows of his vengeance, till they are drunk with blood. They shall suffer that in passion which Job spake in apprehension: chap. vi. 4, 'The arrows of the Almighty shall be within them, the poison whereof shall drink up their spirits; and the terrors of God shall set themselves in array against them.' So Moses sung in the person of God against the wicked, Deut. xxxii. 42, 'I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall eat flesh,' &c. They forget that when God shall 'rebuke them in his wrath, and chasten them in his hot displeasure, his arrows shall stick fast in them, and his hand shall press them sore,' Ps. xxxviii. 1, 2. This is their sad epilogue, or rather the breaking off their scene in the midst. The banquet of stolen waters and secret bread is pleasant; *but* 'the dead are there, and the guests be in the depths of hell.'

Obs. 2.—The devil doth but cozen the wicked with his cates: as before in the promise of delicacy, so here of perpetuity. He sets the countenance of continuance on them, which indeed are more fallible in their certainty than flourishable in their bravery. Their banqueting-house is very slippery, Ps. lxxiii. 18; and the feast itself a mere dream, ver. 20. Let the guest preserve but reason, and he shall easily make the collection: that if for the present *gaudia plus aloes quam mellis habent*, to the compound of his joys there go more bitter than sweet simples, what will then the end be? Even such a one as at once *consumit delicias, consummat miseras*,—makes an end of their short pleasures, and begins their lasting pains. This my text salutes them as the mason was wont to salute the emperor at his coronation, with a lapful of stones:—

'Elige ab his saxis, ex quo, augustissime Cæsar,
Ipse tibi tumulum me fabricare velis;—'

'Choose, great emperor, out of this whole heap, what stone thou best likest for thine own sepulchre.' You that crown your days with rosebuds, and flatter your hearts with a kingdom over pleasures, think of a low grave for your bodies, and a lower room for your souls. It is the subtlety of our common enemy to conceal this woe from us so long, that we might see it and feel it at once. For if we could but foresee it, we would fear it; if we truly feared it, we would use the means not to feel it.

Our most fortified delights are like the child's castle, done down with a fillip: *οἷα*, nay, *οὐκ ὄντα*, a shadow, the very dream of a shadow; a rotten post, slightly painted; a paper tower, which the least puff overturns.

'Cuncta trahit secum, vertitque volubile tempus;—'

Time whirls about the world, and makes all inferior things to travel and spend themselves together with him. Sinful and earthly delight is well called amiable, fragile, feeble, a thing soon loved, sooner ended; but long, very long, lamented: a rotten nut, fair, but hollow. Though philosophy saith there is no vacuity in *rerum natura*, yet divinity saith there is nothing but vacuity in *naturæ rebus*. Nature, as it is not only corrupt of itself, but made more foul in the evil man's use, hath nothing in it but vanity; and