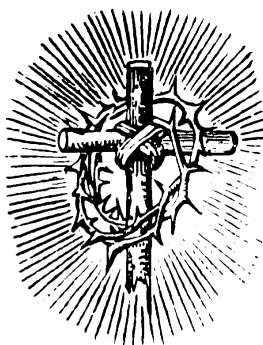




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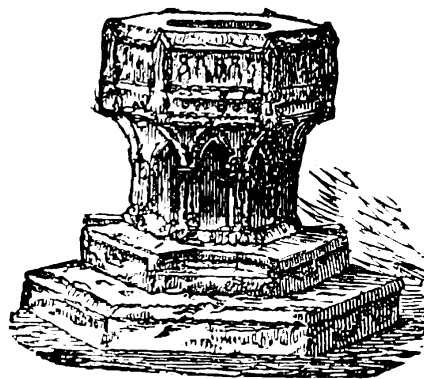
Life of Mrs. Dorothy Lawson,
of St. Anthony's, near New-
castle-upon-Tyne, in Northum-
berland.



NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE :

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both of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. 1851.

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TO

Sir William Lawson,

OF

BROUGH-HALL, CO. YORK, BARONET,

THIS IMPRINT OF THE CONTEMPORARY BIOGRAPHY

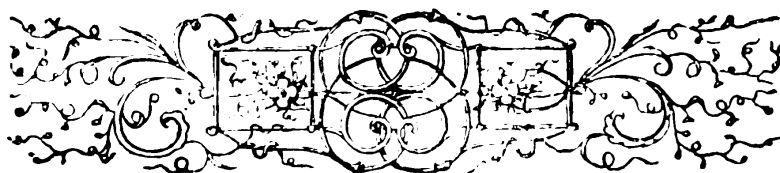
OF A

REVERED ANCESTRESS,

IS DEDICATED.



Manor-house, Byker, Seventeenth century.



Advertisement.



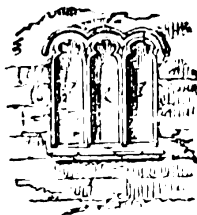
WE are indebted to Sir William Lawson, baronet, for permission to publish the accompanying imprint of a very curious MS. biography of Mrs. Dorothy Lawson, his ancestress through seven generations. The number of her descendants, down to 1798, exceeded two hundred, "including the Lawson family, and through it, the Swinburnes, Tempests, Withams, Traffords, Blundells, Howards of Corby, Petres, Silvertops, Stricklands, Wrights, Westons, and Salvins.

So curious a picture of the life and manners of a past age, seemed to the editor too valuable to remain unpublished. Such observations as he has chosen to

ADVEBTISEMENT.

make on the narrative, he has embodied in his Introduction, in which he trusts he has conveyed some valuable illustrative information, and presents it to the public as an addition to our materials for local history. The foot-notes to the Biography bearing the initials H. L. and W. L., are those of the late and present baronets, Sir Henry and Sir William Lawson.

G. B. R.





Manor-house, Byker.—West end.

Introduction.



NEAR Heaton, on an elevated situation to the east of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, is the ancient village of Byker, which, with its park, was held by Nicholas de Biker, in grand serjeancy in 1234. Robert de Byker died seized of two parts of Byker and Pam-pedon, 15 Edw. I. The Percys had it in Henry the Sixth's time; and Edward IV. granted it to his brother Clarence. The Percys again forfeited it in the reign of Henry VIII., shortly after which James Lawson, a merchant-adventurer of Newcastle, (from whom the Baronets of Brough) became its purchaser from the king. Edmund Lawson

INTRODUCTION.

(son of James) and Margery his wife, 20 July, 1 Edw. VI., conveyed to the mayor and burgesses for 130*l.* the lands and shores east of the Swirle, in Sandgate.^a Ralph Lawson held Byker in 1567,^b and at the close of the century we find the Corporation paying rents and acknowledgements to him for uses :—

Oct. 1597, 'paid Mr. Ralphe Lawson, esquier, for one year's rente for the neathirdshipp of this towne *xxijs. viijd.*'

Oct. 1598, 'paide for one pound of pepper and a bagge for Mr. Ralphe Lawson, esquier, of Brough, for the rente of the Walkenowle-cloase whereon the townes cundittes stands, *vs. ivd.*'^c

The Roman Wall passed on the north side of this village, which with its park, as has been seen, gave name to a resident family. The inhabitants have traditions of the greatness of the place, which present appearances do not altogether corroborate. Its age, however, cannot be doubted, and to this day the place, with its ancient manor-house, the faded

^a Hornby ij. 208-9.

^b Hodgs: Beauties—*vol.* Northd. Local histories inform us that the Pulleins obtained the estate of Heaton by marriage, but in 1568 the manor was the joint property of Ralph Lawson and John Mitford, esqrs. It is also stated that the late Sir Matthew White Ridley increased the estate by purchasing of Sir John Lawson the ground which lies between the hall and the Shields turnpike.—*See post.*

^c Corporation books.

INTRODUCTION.

remains of the village-green, and the disposition of its humbler dwellings, still present the lingering traces of a bye-gone age. The remnants of a cross were extant some sixty or seventy years ago ; ^d and it is ascertained that Edward II. dated letters from Byker, and on the next day from Newcastle. ^e The manor-house with its gabled ends, mullioned windows, stone porch, heavy-lintelled doors, and thick defensible walls, still survives to gladden the eye of the antiquary, and the heart of the traveller, gentle or simple, with a draught of the English beverage, under the sign of the Blue-bell. Its quaint old rooms formerly contained many fine oak carvings, which, will it be believed ? were broken up by the then occupant for firewood ! These Goths, however, spared several pieces of curious tapestry, which still hang in one of the lower rooms, though in a mutilated condition. Holes have been cut through in many places, and we have seen a sconced candle hung up against it, secured by a nail driven through the richly-worked stuff to the wall behind.]

In the interesting tract which we here for the first time place before the public, the residence of Roger and Dorothy Lawson is stated to have been at Heaton, ‘a convenient house and reasonable good seat.’ At first the immediate proximity of the family re-

^d Hornby, iij. 124. ^e Rymer's Fœd.

INTRODUCTION.

sidence at Byker, led us to suppose, that with the reverend biographer at least, the two were convertible terms, for at this day, with the exception of the hall of Heaton, that village does not possess any other building of sufficient importance to render it likely to have been the residence of a person of rank. The fact, however, of Mr. Lawson being described as of Heaton in the parish-register, led us to a further and satisfactory investigation. It is evident that the family must have entered upon Heaton (or built it, but this is not clear) between 1597 and 1601. Sir Ralph Lawson of Brough, who died in 1623, 'desirous to sell it, which he could not doe, without her [Mrs. Lawson's] consent, moves her to condescend to the exigency of his occasions, proffering in lieu of it a place more advantagious for her designs, called St. Antony's.' The present Heaton Hall we have good reason for believing stands upon the site of a mansion the residence of Sir Henry Babington, of the Harnham family, in 1628. It appears to us, therefore, that Sir Ralph must have sold the residence at Heaton to Babington, in the possession of whose family it would seem to have remained until the manor became the property of the Riddleys in the beginning of the succeeding century. The royalty, however, can-

There are family entries in the parish-register of All Saints until the middle of the seventeenth century. *Residence* may then about have ceased, though *ownership* might not. Reference to the Heaton evidences would, in all probability settle the whole question.

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not have been wholly conveyed to the Ridleys with their extensive coal-mines there, for one of Sir Henry's female descendants named Atkinson, a scullion in an inn, recovered a share of Heaton colliery in 1796. A still earlier structure not improbably occupied the site of the Lawson residence here. There was a Castle of Heaton, the possession of Robert de Gaugy, who is stated to have been greatly in the confidence of John. A few hundred yards north of the present hall, and at the outskirts of the wood, are the remains of an old building, commonly called King John's Palace, an appellation common to many ancient structures in which that king had no concern, ^g King John and the devil being the founders to whom the vulgar impute most of the ancient buildings, mounds, or entrenchments, for which they cannot assign any other constructor. This difference, however, is made—to the king are attributed most of the mansions, castles, and other buildings; whilst the devil is supposed to have amused himself chiefly in earthen works, such as his ditch at Newmarket, and the Punch Bowl at Hand-head.^h

“ Who for the devil's worke the vulgar dare avow.”ⁱ

^g “ By what fatality,” says Mr. Wyndham, ‘ speaking of an ancient building at Warnford (Archæol. v. 357), so many ancient edifices came to be attributed to King John, and to bear his name, I am more disposed to wonder at, than to attempt to investigate.” Pandon Hall (according to Brand) seems at one time to have borne this name; as also to this day, the Nag's Head in the Butcher-bank, is stated to have been a residence of King John.

^h Grose.

ⁱ Drayton's Polyolb., song 29.

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We read of a *chapel* at Heaton, which, with the old building in question may not improbably have been part and parcel of the castle of de Gaugy. It is certain that Edward I. attended in the chapel here to hear a *boy-bishop* perform the vespers of St. Nicholas, on which occasion he gave to this clerical phenomenon, and certain boys that came to sing with him, the sum of forty shillings.^k

The visitation of sickness to which Mrs. Lawson refers as breaking out here, must have occurred between her husband's death (1614) and her removal to St. Anthony's (before 1623). We have not in our Newcastle memoranda on that subject any notice of such an epidemic ; but the diary of Thomas Chaytor, of Butterby, near Durham, takes notice of 'mervellous hevie' colds and coughs, attended with 'extreme pain and soreness in the head,' which troubled many during 1615. The year 1616 also witnessed 'a greate generall cough in this countrie, and manie died of few daies sickness. Three or four of the counsell died at York.' In August, Judge Nichols died of a few days' sickness, on circuit, while he was proceeding to Carlisle. 'This yeare a great and perillous sickness in most partes. Many died of few daies sickness,

^k Wardrobe Accounts, 7 Dec. 28 Edw. I. Gibson (Tynemo. i. 121) considers the chapel referred to was probably a temporary one for the use of the court.

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both yong, lustie, and stronge.' The year 1617 was remarkable for a general cough among children which 'extremelie handled' them. Some one of these, possibly that of 1616, may have visited the district north of the Tyne, and be that referred to in the biography. ')

If the MS. under notice has afforded us information as to the earlier domestic history of the old manor-house of Heaton, previous to its occupation by the Babingtons—from it, solely, we derive the intelligence of the existence of a seat of consequence at St. Anthonys, of which in fact we were previously entirely ignorant. [By the narrative we discover, that within the short space of twenty years a house was here built, occupied, and ultimately razed to the to the ground, which seems to have possessed such dimensions, architectural character, and general interest, as to give great cause for regret that so fair a seat should have fallen a victim to the hideous excesses of war. By it we also derive the very curious information that the name of the place has been derived from its being 'dedicated in Catholick times to St. Antony, his picture being decently placed in a tree near the river Tine, for the comfort of seamen.' St. Anthony of Padua was probably the saint in question.

ⁱ Clervaux Archives; extracted by W. Hylton Longstaffe, esq.

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This place, we are told, was incomparably more pleasant [than Heaton], but no house, unless shee would erect one at her own charges, for which shee was ill-provided, her purse ebbing low at present by the discharge of some hundred pound debts contracted by her husband.' 'The seat' we are again informed, referring to the structure just completed, 'was most commodious for pleasure and pleasant for all commodities; the rich and renowned river Tyne ebbing and flowing in such a proportionable distance from the house, that neither the water is inconvenient to it nor does it want the convenience of the water.' Few people, now a days, would venture such a comparison of the two sites, but unhesitatingly pitch upon that which the reverend writer seems to condemn; but at the early day to which he alludes, St. Anthony's could indeed boast of the beautifully green and well-wooded slopes which some of the higher portions of the Tyne yet exhibit to him who would fly for a while the din of machinery, the stench of cinder-ovens, the columns of smoke which, black as night, countless chimnies belch forth continually; the empoisoned atmosphere, and the sickly, deadened vegetation, which scarcely can be said to *clothe* the region through which flows a stream laden with all the impurities of a mighty and enterprising population. A stranger brought up the river by night, without putting his imagination to any very violent

INTRODUCTION.

stretch, might conceive himself sailing up the pitchy river of hell, and making his *entré* to the infernal regions. In whatever direction he may turn his gaze he is met with hideous sights—a score of huge cones belch forth fierce tongues of flame, furnace doors suddenly burst open and disclose what seem vast caverns of liquid fire, great sheets of flame licking the blackened walls which hardly confine them within bounds, or shooting forth aloft into the darkness, doubly dark by contrast. The ear is afflicted by the thunder of the forge, the continual clanging of hammers, and the hideous ringing of huge plates of metal as they are incessantly smitten; the panting of mighty bellows, the fierce roaring of the furnaces, howling and shrieking as they are chafed into whiter heat; the clanking and hissing of machinery, ever and anon varied by the stentorian cries of the workmen—all contending for mastery in this chorus of horrible discords. In the midst are seen dusky forms hurrying to and fro with unearthly looking instruments, stirring up the fires into fiercer flame, and suddenly casting athwart the murky waves huge streaks of light, as if to reveal the astonished voyager to the fiends who seem not ill-prepared to give him a *warm* reception.

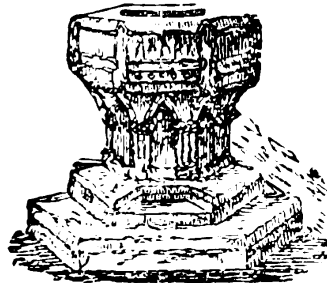
“Hell is empty and all its devils are here.”

Mrs. Lawson's death seems to have taken place on Palm Sunday, 26 Mar. 1632. Her burial register

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states that ceremony to have been performed on the next day. We can hardly add to the picturesque description of her biographer. The respect and consideration shewn to her in life and death seems to have been very considerable ; but it is difficult to reconcile the liberality which was exhibited in the mode of her burial, and the entertainment given to the attendants, with the stringent measures which were at that very period exercised against the profession of the faith which she held and died in. ‘ The finest house in the town,’ in which the banquet is stated to have been given, was probably that afterwards known as Anderson-place, even then, curiously enough, the residence of a family of Anderson, for generations merchants and mayors of Newcastle, as were the then mayor and sheriff, William and Henry Warmouth, members of a family who had for four generations been merchants of the town, and in the two last its chief municipal officers.

G. BOUCHIER RICHARDSON.

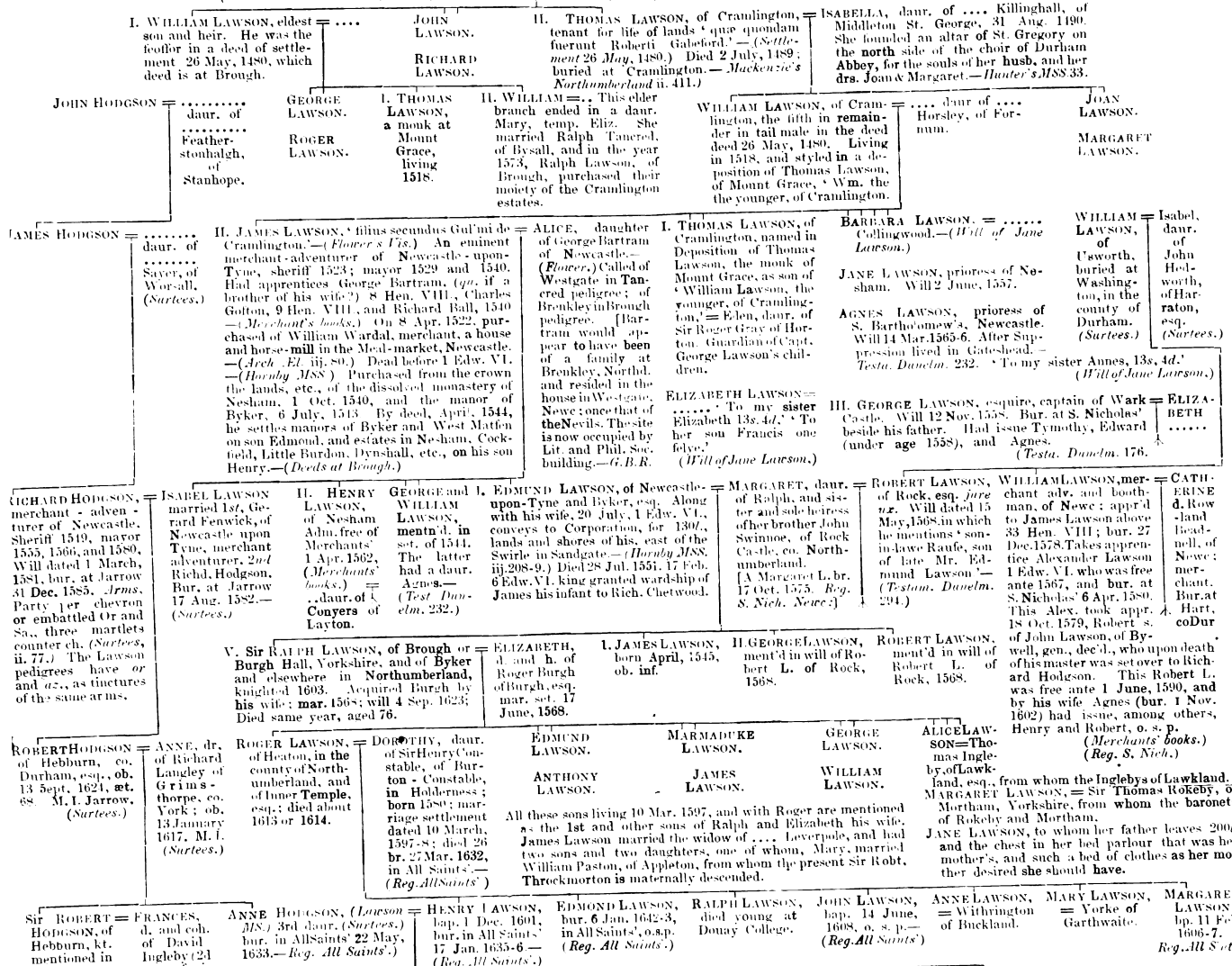


Lawson: the Northumbrian descents.

Arms.—Argent, a chevron inter three martlets sable.

THE Lawsons, of Newcastle, Byker, and Heaton, were derived from the family of that name long seated at Cramlington, in the immediate vicinity. The Lawsons of Usworth, with whom the subject of our memoir appears to have resided for a time, were evidently relatives, for George Lawson, of Usworth, esq., in his will 29 Dec. 1587, leaves 'to cousin Ralphe Lawson, of Loughie, my best horse. To his daughter Alice my bare stoned nagge.' He also gives 'to George Lawson, of Shedes, my gray nagge wh. I bought in Aston moore.' This George Lawson, by will 20 Nov. 1597, mentions his master Mr. Raufe Lawson, and Mr. Edmund Lawson, his son, executors. There is some doubt as to the names and number of the issue of Roger and Dorothy Lawson. Such as are placed below, occur in the family pedigrees and in All Saints' register. The Memoir mentions her having had fifteen (the family pedigree so many as nineteen) children. From other sources of information, we do not find notice of more than seven.

WILLIAM LAWSON, of Cramlington, 3 Hen. VI. 1425. = AGNES, one of the two daughters and coheirresses of William Cramlington, of Cramlington.—(Hodgson's Northumberland, ii. 271.) = (Hodgson's North d. ii. 161.)



S. ANTHONY'S.—Since printing off our Introduction, we have most opportunely met with the following passages relative to Mrs. Lawson's residence at this place. Bishop Neill, writing to the Privy Council 4 June, 1626, 'maketh bold to inform that sir Robert Hodgson's dwelling at Heburn, Anthonye Berrys's and John Davel's at Jarroo, on the south side of Tyne, about the middle way betwixt the Tynewmouth and Newcastle, and one Mistress Lawson's at St. Anthony's, over against them on the north side, they all being convicted recusants, and reputed papisthally in ill offices of concealing, receiving, and harboring of all sorts ill-affected to the state, is very inconvenient and dangerous; the redress whereof, either by removing them from their habitations, and companions to some other places of less opportunity for their evil dispositions and incovert, or otherwise, I humbly leave to your lordship's wisdoms, whose directions I shall most readily and carefully accomplish, resting, your right honourable good lordships most humbly at command.' Perhaps the opinion of Mr. Mayor as to the danger of sir Robert Hodgson's proceedings differed from that of his employers: at least in a very sensible letter to Mr. William Smyth, 19 Nov. 1623, he writes, 'Understanding my lord of Durham desires to be satisfied concerning the danger of sir Robert Hodgson and Mrs. Lawson's houses, and of the intercourse with each other by boats over the river; these are to inform his lordship that I, and the aldermen my brethren, hearing of such reports, made enquiry, and could finde no matter thereof but idle reports, other than their keeping of boats for crossing the river; but he adds, 'he will take order for the delivery of my lord's coles at Durham-house; and concludes with some news concerning the Portugalls and Brasselers, and that 'the ducke of Buckingham is gone to take the Isle of Zeland in caution.'—Your loving brother, THO. LYDDELL.—(Surtees, ij. 73-6.)

By reference to the above Pedigree, it will be observed, that not only were the two families twice connected by marriage, but that in virtue of the clannish feeling kept up even in the most remote connections of our ancient families, many little business and other transactions occur here and there, tending to show that the lapse of generations even, did not materially weaken the ties of consanguinity between the families, while their proximity of residence, above all, their identity of faith, and the grievous system of persecution then prevailing, equally affecting both, would tend to bind still firmer the ties of kindred and friendship.—G. B. R.



Dedication.

MADAME,^a



AD times and a worse pen sute ill to collect and publish what may conduce either to the comfort of the living or honour of the dead. With these two mishaps you meet in receiving my sentiments of the exemplary life of Mrs. Dorothy Lawson; (once my spiritual child, but now I hope my zealous advocate) not only in the way of a civill regard, but as a debt due by many other titles to your ladyship. The writers dulness, I desire her holy intercession may sharpen, and bouldness for appearing under the favour of your protection, your goodness pardon. Three circumstances induce me to present you with this

^a The person to whom this work is dedicated was, I presume, the lady Abbess of the English Benedictine Dames of Gant. At this convent, it seems, some of Mrs. Dorothy Lawson's daughters, and probably too, some of her grand-daughters, received their education.—*Hy. Lawson.*

unpolished relation. One motive, ^{the first,} is sympathie in extraction, both descending from honourable blood; The second, a better relation, which I may stile spiritual affinity, arising from the sweet discretion and discreet sweetness of government in you of your religious family, to be seen in her, as seven years experience taught me, of her charge, to her own merit and their consolation, who had the happiness to live with her; the third, her reverent affection peculiarly devoted to your monastery, whereunto being not able to sacrifice her whole self, she consecrated a considerable part of it in her children, which doubtless will produce the strongest union between you, when by his meritts that begott it on earth you shall meet as twins and embrace in heaven. My motive, (and indeed this attracts with some impulsion) is a second maternity or mother-hood in you to her children and grand-children, with this difference from the first, that by it they receive their infancy and adolescence in nature, by this they shall attain, after the general autumn prefixt by the Author of life and death to nature, a never fading spring of grace and perfection in virtue. Such mothers need not doubt of the benediction promised in the 10th of *Proverbs*, *Filius sapiens lætificat patrem*, wise children rejoice their parents. [One thing I dare boldly promise, that there is not a passage in this history (the place of her birth excepted, whereof the distractions of these times afford

no more than probability), which I may not safely seal and justify by oath. Another likewise I vouch with the same confidence, that if this life had fallen into the hands of a witt, it would have yeilded to few in print.]

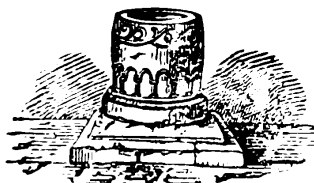
Accept therefore, I beseech you, this cordiall remonstrance from him who will ever wish the prosperity of you and yours: and pray, that as you are a mother of this happy saints children to the second generation, so, if God protract your years with a longer thread, you may premise them as harbingers to prepare their second mother a throne in heaven. These expressions really flow from the heart

Madame,

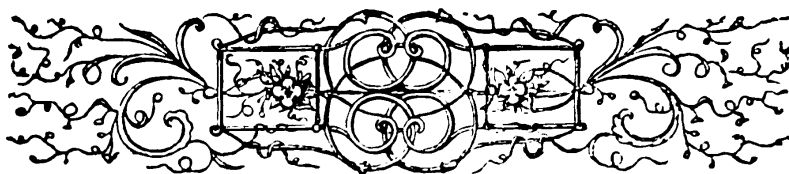
of your most humble servant,

WILLIAM PALMES.^b

^b Dr. Oliver believes this name to be properly Palmer, and that the author was Father William Palmer, S.J., whose life is given by Dr. Oliver in his 'Collectanea S.J., 2nd edition, 1845, p. 155.' From the above valuable work is extracted the following brief notice. "No. 1206, Palmer, William, born at Lindley, in Yorkshire, in 1591, entered an Alumnus of the English College at Rome in 1614, joined the Society at the age of 27, and was admitted to the solemn profession on the 11th of November, 1631. Twenty years later he was apprehended with FF. John Taylor, and Charles Harris, 'ob sacer dotii suspicionem,' and thrown into jail. This venerable man after serving the mission nearly half a century died on the 8th of Jan. 1670."]







The Life of Mrs. Dorothy Lawson,
of St. Antony, near Newcastle=
uppon-Tyne, in North=
umberland.

CHAPTER I.



HE glory of children is their parents, says the sage, not only because the same blood runs in their veins which framed their ancestors, but chiefly for that by a peculiar influency or reflection, their glory shines in their posterity, and makes their meritts by a valuable participation and interest theirs, which undeniable testimony of an author inspired by the never-erring spirit of truth, must needs contribute no small addition to the praise of this master-piece of perfection whereoff I am to treat.

She visibly took her first breath at Wing^c in Buckingham-shire, a house belonging to her grandfather Dormer, in the year of our Lord 1580. Her father was sir

^c Wing or rather Winge was obtained by Sir Robert Dormer from the crown in reward of his services, A.D. 1552.—*H. L.*

Henry Constable, lord of Burton Constable, in Holderness,^d a name, in estate and canonicall pedegree, inferiour to none within the vast extent of Yorkshire. The condition of this family might compete for divers ages with any lord in the realme for greatness of state and prerogative, and truly for state it was, till these sad times, so incomparable, that the best younger brother ownd it for a favour to be bred there in quality of a gentleman-waiter. In prerogative it came near the highest, having privilege to make vassals or slaves, and receive homage, as their native prince, with chain and cloth in equipage of sovereignty. Her mother, the lady Margaret Constable,^e a flourishing branch derived from the honourable linage of the earls of Cærnarvon, rarely parted by nature, embellished with singular endowments in the internall, a beauty in the externall, full of majesty, tall in stature, sweet in countenance, fair in complexion, qualified with a proportion of vermillion, of an accomplished gracefullness, and in her whole composition so attractive that she was commonly stiled the Star of the Court, and a Mirrour or looking-glass in the country. From this matchless pair came our divine Dorothy, bearing in her name the gift of God (*Dorothea Donum Dei*), a true daughter of such parents, not only for the essentiall character wherein filiation consists, and cannot be destroyed, but for similitude in perfection,

^d Sir Henry Constable was lord paramount of Holderness, and was the 18th in lineal descent from le Constable, who came over with William the Conqueror in 1066. Sir Henry Constable, brother of the subject of this memoir, was created, in 1620, viscount Dunbar, of Scotland, and in 1645 died at Scarborough of wounds received in the king's cause. The estate of the Constable family were sold by an additional Rump Act, made Aug. 4th, 1652.

^e The brother of lady Margaret Constable, sir Robert Dormer, was created lord Dormer in 1615. His grandson Robert, lord Dormer, was created earl of Cærnarvon in 1626, and was slain on the king's side in the first battle of Newbury, 1643. Sir William Dormer, father of lady Margaret Constable, was made a Knight of the Bath at the coronation of queen Mary. He married a Catesby.—*H. L.*

which sickness and death defac'd, or rather cover'd with a vail to shine at the hour of generall appearance with a fresher verdure.

But what does this conduce to her advantage, for as gold is extracted from earth, and is not earth, so is tinn from silver, and is not silver; what did it empeatch Abraham to descend from Thare, a worshipper of idols, or avail Cam? a graft is known by its own fruit, and if the fruit be, good none will question the stock. I confess I should here lose myself in a dark laborynth if I had not a skilfull guide, and more than a Theseus to unfold Ariadnes's clew. For as St. Ambrose tells me, there is no prerogative in succession or kindred "*nulla in successionem prerogativa;*" so soys the same author "*hoc boni habet nobilitas, ut ab iis a quibus ducunt genus, ducant etiam exemplum;*" this good is to be ascribed to nobility and stemm of progenitors, that children from them may learn to live well, by whom they first began to live, and precepts wholesome or noxious imbib'd in youth, prove by custome a second nature to old age.

[This creature was so lively a piece of her mother, (for that sex universally predominates in female issue) in stature, voice, proportion, comeliness, and all other lineaments drawn by the curious pencill of nature, that they were scarcely by anything but age distinguishable: so that to form a new description of the daughter were to repeat my precedent of the mother. But her best inheritance or part was that which neither wrinckles could blemish, sickness ruin, or death dispoil her off; to witt, her pious mothers excellent virtues; her constancy in religion, for which, like gold refined in the furnace, shee suffered a long imprisonment,^f liberality to good uses, zeal of God's honour, to the emulation of Catholicks and confusion of Hereticks; ever permitting, in times of greatest danger, free access to her chappell; finally, an exact

^f Margaret, lady Constable, was long imprisoned for the Catholic Faith.—H. L.

care in breeding this young lady, so that she might not die as long as she liv'd, and treading in her steps know how to regulate her own.

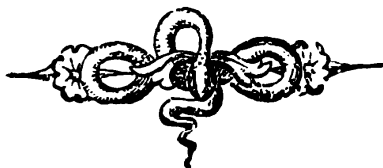
These examples made so deep a stamp in her tender years, that grace and nature might seriously recall for the greatest share. Amidst the distractions of the court shee was retired like a St. Catherine, within the closett of her heart att home; when shee was abroad never less in company than when in company, nor alone than (when?) alone. Notwithstanding, her modesty and other unexampled virtues had a magneticall power, more prevalent to arrest curious eyes than those who were once deservedly deemed bould, and now also by sober judgements are thought more forward than wise, but by corruption of these times are honoured for well-bred ladys. Amongst many eminent for means and quality, Roger Lawson, Esq., son and heire to sir Ral : Lawson, of Brough,^g in Richmondshire, made tender of his respects in a noble way of matrimony; to which her modesty did so little bend, that none but parents could persuade her to appear in his presence, and a virginall blush cast visibly a rosy tincture uppon her face, whensoever shee heard him named in absence. Then our deplorable and desperately distempered kingdome, had not the happiness, as at present it has, of Religious Sanctuaries, suitable to all constitutions, which moved them to meditate and resolve uppon a settlement fit for her birth and fortune; wherefore Mr. Lawson being honourably descended, heire apparent to an estate worth yearly, to my knowledge, three thousand pound sterling, qualified in all points of courtship, well disposed in religion for his intellectual, of a personage without exception, and (which usually pre-

^g Sir Ralph Lawson, of Brough or Burgh Hall, near Catterick, in Yorkshire, was originally of Cramlington, co. Northumberland. He became possessed of Brough, or Burgh, by marrying Elizabeth, sole daughter and heiress of Roger Burgh, of Burgh, esq. Sir Ralph was knighted by king James I., and lived to a great age, surviving his eldest son, Roger. The date of the Lawson baronetage is 6 July, 1665.

ponderers in matters of this nature) giving uncontrollable proofs of his sincere affection; they sweetly persuaded her to anchor in this haven, where, by the government of the chief Pilot and propitious star to all seafarers, I mean Christ and his glorious mother, her ship might safely avoid the present billows of this life, and steer with a prosperous gale to a better calm in the future.

A word of these to her temper, was as much as a thousand to one of another garbe. Having attained to the 17th year of her age, the desired impression was soon wrought in her thoughts, and the virgin modestly replied, that as shee was theirs by nature, so shee hoped by grace to continue, their pleasure should ever be a law to her, and what they pleased to command shee would most willingly embrace as a course inspired by the supernall Providence. She ingeniously acknowledged to me that obedience to her parents was both the prime and sole motive of her consent (tho' in him there wanted nothing to accomplish a perfect object of love) which did not obscurely presage, that his virtue was to conduct her through the whole pilgrimage of her life; wherefore uppon these more than dutifull expressions of her resignation, forthwith ensued the result of marriage,^h which not long after was celebrated with universall acclamations of friends, and splendour in every particular correspondent to their calling.

^h The marriage settlement is dated 10th of March, 1597. (39 Eliz.) The manors of Burgh, co. York, Burn Hall, co. Durham, Byker, Cramlington, Scrimmerston, West Matfen, Camboise and Blythe, with lands in West Slickburne, in the co. Northumberland, were settled. The manor of Burn Hall was given to the subject of this memoir for life, in bar of dower.—*W. L.*





CHAPTER II.

HER VERTUOUS COMPORTMENT FROM THE TIME OF HER MARRIAGE,
WHILEST SHEE LIVD AT BROUGH.



AFTER the celebration of her marriage, she was conducted from Winge to Burton, in externall pomp and shew like a glcrious bride, but if we may credite an humble soul in her praise (which with me counterpoyses amalefactours accusation of himself in his own cause) asweary of such strait as ever shee was of learning her A B C, or needle-work, when a child. Shee rested at Burton untill all Holderness came to congratulate, some as friends and allies, others as servantsand vassals, but all promiscuously pretending tithe to a proportion in the solemnity. From Burton she departed towards Brough with a far larger retinue than before: but it most encreased at Leeman, a village six miles from the end of her journey, where shee was forced to make a halt by Sir. R. Lawson, who at his first approach (which was glorious to envy) with one hundred horse of his attendance, saluted her with the ordinary salute of the kingdom, but vster an extraordinary manner, not permitting her to alight: then he took her from horse himself, imparted his benediction, which she humbly craved on her knees in the dust, and mounted her again on a

[snow white steed he brought for her, caparisoned with crimson velvett, embrodered with swans and martins of perle ;ⁱ thèse the arms of Lawson, those of Brough, whose daughter and heire sir Ralph marry'd. After the performance of those sweet mutual addresses he applyed himself to her father, of whome yet he had not so much as taken notice, and the rest of the honourable train with the highest rhetorick of civill respects, that the sharpness of his witt, improved by the best breeding in England, could advance. Between the two knights, her own father on the right hand, her father-in-law on the left, shee ridd more like an Esther or princess, than a subject or esquire's spouse, till arriving at a fair green before Brough-hall, shee mett with a second encounter or volley of ceremonies given by her mother-in-law, the lady Lawson, who greeted her with the salutation of the welcomest guest that ever her house received, and to make outward demonstration of what inwardly shee resented, herself and her three daughters, the lady Rookby, Mrs. Ingleby, and Miss Ja : Lawson,^j were decked up in white sattine ; the other ladies, great in number and quality, in such attire as each had purposely prepaired for so publick a meeting. In the confluence of these allurements, at-

ⁱ The arms of Lawson, *argent, a chevron between three martlets sable*. The swans were quartered by the Burghs, but were more properly the arms of the Elkintons. The arms of the Burghs were *argent, on a fess sable three bezants*.—*H. L.*

^j By an error of the transcriber of two copies of the MS., the word Miss Ja : Lawson, is transformed into Mrs. James Lawson. Sir Ralph Lawson, in his will dated Sept. 4. 1623, gives "to his daughter Jane £200, and the chest in his bed parlour that was her mothers, and such a bed of clothes as her mother desired she should have." Sir Ralph Lawson was married in 1568, and James Lawson was his fifth son, and probably not his fifth born child, consequently he would be almost too young to have been a married man in 1598 ; besides the MS. speaks of lady Lawson and *her three daughters* ; now knowing as we do, that she *had* a daughter *Jane*, we may safely propose the present emendation.—*W. L.*

tractive to sense, destructive of spiritt, and powerful to distract a well compos'd mind in the spring of youth, shee walked with the presence of God before her eyes, on whome her heart was so firmly fix'd, that neither multiplicity of new acquaintance could transport her, nor difficulty of travaile weare her, nor fondness of husbands (who for the most part serve at first for a fools-paradise to gaze on) to win her thoughts and affection, but that shee stole time before shee repos'd for even song and examen of conscience, which, since shee was capable, shee never as much as once in her whole life omitted.

Whoever wonders how I come to the privaces and knowledge of this secrett, must know that shee held it for a maxim in spiritt, to discover for her better direction as well her virtues as defects to her spirituall Guide; and if he knew me as well, he might more wonder that having enjoy'd for seven yeares together the felicity of her company, I made no more spirituall improvement in myself by her virtuous conversation, and the many examples forcible beyond example, for the advancement of all perfection, and extirpation of sin. Notwithstanding being now depriv'd of that happiness by her egress from the fellowship of sinners to the society of saints; I am not a little solac'd (and this frequently occurs with joy on my behalf) that for the guidance of her soul, all the time of my charge, I cannot bethink myself of anything since her death, which I either have not delivered to her, or would deliver it, if shee were again alive.

This joyfull time, which continued a week, being expir'd, and occasions of concernment urging her father's-in-law and husband's going to London, shee made a spirituall complaint to my lady Lawson, that whilst her body feasted, her soul fasted: O admirable zeal in so tender age, dangerous times, and variety of mirth and pastimes! her modesty was naturally so bashfull, that shee was observed never to take the boldness to ask her own parents for anything that concerned her body; and uppon ten days acquittance (acquaintance?) shee as-

sumed the confidence to move her mother-in-law for the refectation of her soul. ¶ The good lady was much edified and taken with her querimonious request ; but answered, shee neither knew where to find a priest, nor how (all her servants being conformable to the times) to entertain him. *But it is impossible to keep fire in ones bosome and not to flame.—Prov. 6.* The fervency of her zeal in this point, may be most fitly paralel'd with the course of the sun, which shines, proceeds and encreases to perfect day ; for the coldness of this answer nothing abated the edge of her desire ; not because it is innate to that sex to covet things most that are most difficult, but that a little water sprinkled uppon hot coles makes them hotter ; shee therefore, glowing with divine fire which all inflamed her masculine spiritt, undauntedly reply'd, shee bothe knew how to find one, and with her permission to send for him and entertain him. Note I beseech you how witty true love is, and impregnate with invention for its own designs, when amidst recreations, masks, plays, sports, and disports, invented purely for her sake, then was her recollected heart most where her treasure lay, and her soul moved fastest with holy recollection to her centre.

She secretly treated with Mr. Antony Holtby,^k gentleman-waiter to her own father, and brother to Mr. Richard Holtby,^l Superior of the Society, whose abode was but

^k In April, 1597, a power of attorney was signed by Roger Lawson and Dorothy Constable, to Anthony Holtby, *gentleman*, and another, to take seizin and possession of the manor of Burn Hall, under the settlement of the 10th of Maich, 1597.—*W. L.*

^l Richard Holtby (alias Duckett) was born at Fraiton, in Yorkshire, in 1553. He at first studied at both the Universities, but subsequently renounced the expectations of preferment to embrace the Catholic Faith. He joined the Society of Jesus in 1583. On the removal of F. Henry Garnett, the charge of his brethren in the English Mission devolved upon him. He died in the North of England, on the 25th or 26th of May, N.S., 1640, at the advanced age of 87, fifty-eight years of which he had spent in the service of religion.—*Dr. Oliver's Collectanea*, 1st Ed. p. 103.

four miles from Brough, to stay after her father's departure, and sent him to know if his brother would come thither in case he were invited; who no sooner brought answer that he was at his service, but having three lodgings in that fair house for her own conveniency, shee presently, uppon my lady's consent, prepared one within her own chamber, again sent Mr. Holtby, to be his guide, and kept the gentleman privately for the space of a week, herself, and her woman, who were the only Catholicks among the servants, making ready his chamber and diet.

This gallantry so animated the good lady, that whereas shee formerly went abroad to divine service,^m hereafter,

^m The adjoined curious document will show that the screw was rigorously applied to ensure conformity to the new religion, and that sir Ralph and his family were not exempted from its pressure.

Radulphus Lawson de Burgh, in Com. Ebor., Armiger recognovit se debere Domine nostræ Regine Elizabeth.—C. li.

The condition of this recognizance is such, that if the above bounden Rauff Lawson, and Elizabeth Lawson his wife, do from henceforth orderly and dutifully repaire to their parish church, or other usual and allowed place of common prayer, and there quietly abide and reverently heare divine service and sermons, and thereof bring or shew true certificate to her Majesty's Commissioners for Causes Ecclesiastical within the Province of York, or to three of them, to the citie of York, upon Tuesday next after Michaelmas day next coming: or (in case she his said wife do not repaire to the church before that time), do that Tuesday next after Michaelmas day next, bring or send in his said wife before her Majesty's Commissioners, or three of them: If also in the meane season he do his endeavour to procure Mr. Archdeacon Bird, Mr. Lively, and Mr. Clerk, preachers of the word within Richmondshire, or some of them, to confer with him and his said wife for their better conformity and further resolution in matters of religion established within this realm of England, Then this, etc., etc., to be void, etc.

RA. LAWSON.

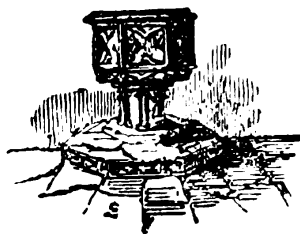
Capt. et recognit primo Junii, 1591, coram Johanne Dno. Archiepiscopo, Rob. Walter Lno. Maiore Civitatis Ebor., Johanne Gibson, Legum Doctore, et aliis Commissariis Regis.

HENRY PROCTER.

during the time of her daughter's abode there, shee had it constantly every month at home.

Nor did the sunshine of her resplendent virtues make a stand at this point, it proceeded by her industry to the conversion of all sir Ralph's children,ⁿ and increased the number of servants to six in the faith of Christ. This happen'd in the reign of queen Elizabeth, when, if the perswaders to that profession were brought to their teste, their punishment was death, by a statute enacted under that princess. Wherefore as persecution was hott, so conversions were rare, and only to be attempted by such as God gave courage to say "love is strong as death" (Cant. 8). But a more temperate calm ensuing by the gracious succeeding princes, Catholicks became more numerous; yet so as liberty in times, creating licentiousness in men and manners, we may, if we doe not, following her holy paths, contract the reins in time, justly dread the application of the holy Prophet—*Thou hast multiplied the nation, but not magnified the gladness.*

ⁿ It is doubtful whether she succeeded at that time in effecting the conversion of her husband, Mr. Roger Lawson, who is shortly after mentioned as conforming to the time. Roger Lawson was, however, undoubtedly reconciled to the Church before his death, and perhaps during his last illness in London, as is related in a subsequent page.—*H. L.*





CHAPTER III.

HER ZEAL ATT HETON FROM HER FIRST COMING THITHER TILL
HER HUSBAND'S DEATH.

BURTON and Winge are remarkable and famous for rare women ; and the all-working hand of God was not here abbreviated, but dilated, heaping store of benedictions uppon her, both temporall and spirituall. Shee produced as a fruitful vine in the side of this house, (for so were her lodgings situated at Brongh)^o so many fair branches as it was neccessary either to enlarge the old habitation or to provide a new. To enlarge it by addition of more roomes did not stand with sir Ralph's greatness ; his house, though of great structure, scarce serving for ordinary resort of friends, wherefore her husband resolv'd uppon Heton, in Northumberland, nigh Newcastle ;^p and because his

^o This was probably a collateral building or wing to the westward, which was pulled down when the house at Brough was almost entirely rebuilt by sir Henry Lawson between the years 1772 and 1780.—*H. L.*

^p By deed 1st June 3rd James I., 1605, between sir Ralph Lawson, knight, dame Eliz : his wife, and Roger Lawson, esq., son and heir apparent of the said sir Ralph, of the one part ; and sir Thomas Fairfax, of Gilling knt., and sir Henry Constable, son and heir of

London occasions did not permit him to give attendance to that affair, he commended the ordering and executing of the business to her discretion and diligence, which shee undertook willingly and performed prudently.

Shee did not (as worldlings do) range temporal respects in the first place of her thoughts, spiritual in the last; but after an exact survey of the whole work, and idea how to make the manner of living sute with the proportion of their present lively-hood, her prime intentions were to prepaire a house for God, which shee did in a decent garbe, and had every month a priest secretly; tho' to cloak the matter for her husband's satisfaction, who comply'd with the times, shee went monthly abroad, as if shee had wanted the conveniencys at home. Her second care and solicitude was to provide Catholick servants: the which shee did so dexterously by little and little, hiering one after another, and never two att once, that her husband, between jest and earnest, tould her, his family was become Papists ere he perceived it. Nevertheless shee was forced to convey the priest into the house by night, and lodged him in a chamber, which, to avoid suspicion, was appointed by grant from her husband only for his children to say their prayers. These children, through her sedulous industry, were all bred Catholicks, solidly instructed in Christian doctrine, or principles of faith, and had the company of a priest so freely, her hus-

sir Henry Constable, of Burton Constable, knt., of the other part; after reciting that since the marriage of Roger Lawson and Dorothy his wife the manor of Burne Hall, assured for the jointure of the said Dorothy Lawson, had been sold; it is witnessed that in recompence of the jointure so alienated, sir Ralph and his wife, and Roger awson, convey one moiety of the manor of Heton, and so much of the manor of Byker as is situate on the east side of one water, called or known by the name of the Ewes Burne, excepting to sir Ralph and his heirs the coal and coal mines, to hold unto said Fairfax and Constable, their executors, administrators, and assigns, for the term of one hundred years, if the said Dorothy should so long live.—*W.L.*

band going more frequently than att first to London about law business, that the landlady where the good man resided, struck with a holy jealousy, feared lest he should forsake her, and remain at Heton.

Among these children her son Ralph was the first touchstone of her virtue. He was a beauty, and so cry'd up for priviledges profusely confer'd by nature, that queen Ann^r, moved with the fame of his excellencies sent for him, set him on her knee, kissed him, honouring the infant with this *motto*, of the finest boy shee ever beheld. Notwithstanding, shee did not, as many foolish mothers do, desire to make him a looking glass, or continuall object for her eyes, but as shee loved him in God, of whome he was only borrowed, so shee gave him freely to God, and as soon as maturity of years serv'd, sent him for better education to Douay, where God accepted her oblation, and after a while spent in learning and virtue, adopted him to a better inheritance. Now began the first combat that ever shee experienc'd between nature and grace; and altho' this sad accident had a naturall product of sense in the tenderness of motherly affection, yet it was perfectly temper'd by an overruling power of grace, as shall clearly appear in the subsequent chapters. A large volume were over little to explain the many changes shee wrought att Heton, I mean in men's souls; where, like the sun within the bowells of the generall parent of mortalls, shee produc'd precious effects of silver, gold, and gemms, dissolving with the warmth of divine fire those that were congealed with the ice of obstinacy, illuminating with celestial rayes the ecclyps'd with ignorance, relieving the neccessitated with alms,

c In a deed dated 28 April, 1597, Roger Lawson is described of th'Inner Temple, gentleman, son and heir apparent of Ralph Lawson, of Burgh Hall, in the county of York, esq. It would appear therefore that he was a member of the Inner Temple and continued in the profession of the law.

, Anne of Denmark, queen of James 1st.

baptizing with her own hand children in danger to miscarry in the birth, and, which the great St. Denys avereth to be of all divine offices superlative, and most pleasing to the Highest Majesty, converting souls to the true faith with success so prosperous that many, above a hundred, were reconciled by her endeavours. All which as a pious mother shee took care privately to nourish with spirituall food abroad, when within her own doors shee could not do it. After divers years thus spent, like a Nicodemus, by night and stealth in the service of God, it pleas'd his supreme goodness to visite her husband with a perillous sickness att London; who fearing it would, as indeed it did, bring him to the universall period of mortallity, sent for her with all speed; and shee, tho' with child, in obedience to his commands, and impregnated with the grace of that spiritt that knows not delays, took journey the next day after the receipt of his message, in a winter season, unreasonable for a woman in those circumstances.

Shee no sooner finish'd that troublesome journey, but after a short passage of some tender greetings upon their first meeting, he desir'd her to procure him a priest, which presently shee went about with incomparable alacrity, not pretending any difficulty or weariness, by her travail brought him that night, who with all the rites and ceremonies of the Catholick Church prepar'd him for a happy passage out of this world into the next. During the time of his extremity, which endur'd a fortnight, shee neither spar'd cost in her purse, nor pains in her body, which was weak, of a tender constitution, and inclining to a consumption; nor never came in bed, but watch'd each night without intervall or rest, but what shee gott in a chair, being overtoil'd and exigented thereunto by debility of nature.

In fine, nothing could be expected from a dutifull loving wife, which shee did not execute for his recovery, with the whole extent of her power. And when God's mercifull hand made him a generall acquittance of those

miseries, her care was answerable to her love and his deserts, in disposing the exequies, burying the corps with that decorum as befitted one of his state, and obtaining prayers for his soul's eternall felicity.^s

Grief and sorrow for the loss of her dearest partner so trench'd on her vitall parts, that shee was constrain'd for some few days after to remain in town, not out of punctilio of state, but to collect and refresh her consum'd spiritts, which, ere shee well recover'd, touch'd with a longing desire to solace her fatherless children, shee hasten'd homeward with all expedition: where shee intended to expend the rest of her life like a solitary sparrow in the holes of a rock, or mourning turtle, that never had mate but one, and vow'd never to know another.

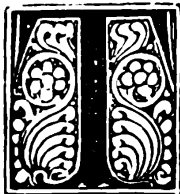
^s The time of Mr. Roger Lawson's death is not mentioned; it probably occurred towards the close of 1613, or early in 1614. By deed, 4th Sept. 1614, sir Ralph Lawson, in consideration of the payment of the debts of Roger Lawson, late son and heir-apparent after said Ralph Lawson, and for providing portions for the younger sons and daughters of the said Roger Lawson, granted certain lands for that purpose, to trustees named in the deed.—*W. L.*





CHAPTER IV.

HOW AFTER HER RETURN HOME, HER ZEAL ENCREASED TOWARDS HER CHILDREN AND NEIGHBOURS.



HE vowe intimated in the end of the precedent chapter to pass the remainder of her life in angellical chastity, was seconded with many gallant resolutions and heroick acts of virtue. Shee was no sooner settled at home, and att her own disposall, but had one of the Society, Legard,¹ in her house, by whose continuall advice and assistance, shee daily improv'd, not only in her own perfection, but became visibly more active towards her children and neighbours. So far was shee from being discomfited or dismaied (though naturally very passive, according to the quallity or constitution), at the success her eldest son had in the seminary att Douay, that wisely praising a life most to be valu'd, which is less loaden with days than meritts, she addressed all the rest of her children, a dozen in number „

¹ Of Father Legard no traces can be found. Many of the Jesuits in those troublesome times went under false names, to avoid the constant search made after them by the royal pursuivants and the magistrates.—*W. L.*

„ Mrs. Lawson seems therefore to have had fifteen children in all, though the family pedigree says nineteen.—*W. L.*

(except the heire, in whom was deservedly planted the hope of perpetuating that ancient stock, and two daughters, one by sickness, the other impeded by immaturity of age), each to colledges and religious houses, appointed for men and women, with sufficient maintenance, according to their several vocations. Nor will it either seem incredible or not meriting belief, that she bestow'd them on God with that facility, if we seriously ponder the exemplary devotion shee constantly used in bringing them into the world; for whereas mothers att that time, according to the byas of nature, are most sensible and fond of infants, shee, eyeing more her spirituall good than her sensuall content, bequeath'd every one to a particular saint, to protect, as patron, from all mishap of infortune, and tender as a sacrifice to his majesty in her name. Verily I never heard (and perchance, I have been over inquisitive in this point), shee ever express'd more passion in parting with so many children, whom she jewell'd and prosecuted with as much dearness as those that cannot endure them from their sight, than by shedding one crystall tear, which in sending one of her twins to Gant, I observed to glide from her right eye; and by the happy progress of that dame, may be compar'd to the celestiall dew that fell on Aron's rod, and in a night brought it to the perfection of a leaf-bearing tree. Some, perhaps, will object, this does not so much magnify the eminency and unspotted integrity of her charity; because it may seem tinged with a mixture of self-love, by a naturall extent to her children's good, who are but parts of herself; and true charity, as the sun shines iudifferently uppon all.

Whereunto I answer, shee is more obliged to her adversaries for this objection, than to my dullness, who owe her most; for, whereas I demonstrate this virtue singly, they make a connection or chain of virtues—to witt, piety and love to her children, in educating them liberally, in proceeding [*qu.* providing] so bounteously for them; mortification or forsaking of her self in leaving them; and which St. Denis teaches to be the light of love, for

powering herself out of herself, when shee parted with so many pledges, or precious parts and pieces, which the co-operation of grace with nature made more dear than a second self.

To this obligatory (as I may say) degree or part of charity, shee added a second of supererogation, so studious of her neighbour's good, that reflecting on saints of foregoing ages, I find it sympathize most with St. Gregory, 'Thaumaturge bishop of Neocæsarea, who being to leave with the world his bishoprick, asked how many infidels were in it, and when it was answered seventeen, he gave thanks to God ; saying " That was the number of the faithfull at my establishment." But when this apostolicall spirit arrived first at Heton, there was but one Catholic family in the parish or circuit ; no church-stuff but hers, which was carried to severall places upon necessity. At her departure from thence (or St. Anthony's, which is all one, because it borders upon it) to heaven, there was not one heretick family, and six altars were erected for divine service. Of this harvest, as next God shee was the seedsman on earth, so assuredly shee reaps the fruit with a plenteous increase in heaven.

I must not here omitt, for the honour of God in his saints, an act of sublime charity, grounded in most sublime and profound humility.

A brother of her husband, (by infection I rather think, than disorder) had contracted a disease so contagious and noisome, that neither friend nor stranger would entertain him. Behold a true Samaritan ! shee took care of him ; accommodated him in her own house, sent for a very knowing physitian, hier'd a skillfull woeman for his attendance, and, with her help only, till he recover'd, which was a complete quarter of a year, did all about himself, his diet, and chamber, without troubling any servant,

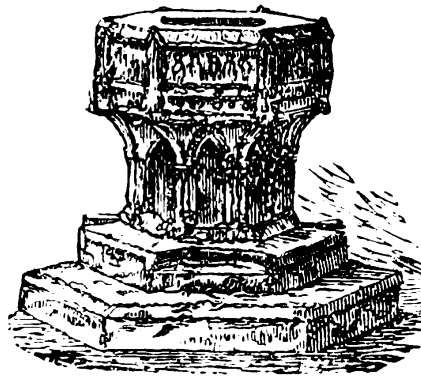
^r By the limitations in the settlement of the 10th of March, 1597, it appears that her husband had five younger brothers, viz., Edmond, Anthony, Marmaduke, James, and William.

commending the success of this difficult enterprise to the assistance of St. Francis Xavier, and St. Catharine of Sienna, by whose example shee was moved to undertake it.

The far-seeing providence of God intending yet to cast this pliable piece of clay (for that's the alpha and omega of all flesh), and mold it into a more sumptuous vessell of honour and sanctity, visited her with a far harder tryal than hitherto, and permitted the plague to fall into the family; att first notice whereof, the words of holy Job occurring to her memory, which used to be actuated with such comfortable thoughts, shee reply'd without hesitation, "As it has pleased our Lord, so it happen'd; his holy name be bless'd. Then her first thoughts were to have the infected persons well accomodated, which shee did not entrust only to the diligence of others, but saw done herself and afterwards removed her goods and family to Usworth, four miles distant from Heton.

During this sad time of sickness, shee was noted to be more chearfull than formerly, sending a servant from Usworth every day to visite them, but every hour her fervorous prayers to God for their recovery. Her devotions were so graciously accepted, by the recommendation, as we may imagine, of his glorious Mother and St. Roch, whome shee elected patrons in this affair, that none died. This was her pious custome in all buisines of consequence, out of diffidence in her own meritts, and confidence in the blessed spiritts, to implore their mediation in offering her humble petitions, whensoever shee desired to obtain good and avert evill from herself or others. And truly her prayers in this or other cases were so effectually, as no doubt but wee may apply to their prevalency the two golden sentences of the master and his schollar, St. Augustine and St. Prosper, "*Fideliter supplicans Deo pro necessitatibus hujus vite misericorditer auditur.*"—"Whoever supplicates God for the necessity's of this life faithfully, is hear'd mercifully." St. Augustin—"Oratio pura Cælos penetrans vacua non redibit." A prayer, simple and

pure from commixtion, does not only penetrate the empyreal heaven, mounting to the throne of the highest in an odour of sweetness, but returns home as a ship under full sail, loaden with treasures of inestimable value. For though the effect be known, which her holy prayers did operate, that is corporeall health in them for whome they were offer'd, yet the favours and graces they impetrated for the offerer, are not to be known and valued by the receiver.





CHAPTER V.

THE BUILDING OF ST. ANTONY'S, AND MANY TRYALLS OF HER PATIENCE
SOON AFTER SHEE REMOV'D THETHER.



ST. PAUL teaches that tribulation generates patience ; patience, probation ; probation, hope ; hope does not confound, because charity enlarges the heart, etc. A man may rightly affirm that patience, hope, and charity, were the scenes acted upon the theatre of her whole life, or three sisters which went along with her, sometimes one, sometimes another leading her by the hand, thro' the black desert of temporall afflictions. Divers probations and tryalls ensued after her return from Usworth to Heton. When shee had again made her house fitt for the service of God, and use of her children, Sir Ralph Lawson, desirous to sell it, which he could not doe without her consent, moves her to condescend to the exigency of his occasions, preferring in lieu of it a place more advantagious for her designs called St. Antony's. Observe, I beseech, the motions of the three sisters. Approbation was offer'd in moving her to exchange a convenient house and reasonable good seat, for I confess a seat incomparably more pleasant, but no house, unless shee would erect one att her own charges, for

which shee was ill provided, her purse ebbing low at present by the discharge of an [some?] hundred pound debts contracted by her husband. Notwithstanding patience granted without passion an assent; hope and confidence in God, who hitherto so mercifully assisted her, gave courage to commence a new building, and charity, which opens and dilates the heart to God and our neighbour, facilitated the work: first, because the place was holy, dedicated in Catholick times to St. Antony, his picture being decently plac'd in a tree near the river Tine, for the comfort of seamen; secondly, for that it was more private than Heton, and free to frequent her chappell. In this juncture of sisters, charity, the mistress and sovereign of all virtues, so oversway'd, that shee presently put hand to work, and bestow'd upon the building above five hundred pound sterling, which because shee intended chiefly for spirituall uses, shee invited Mr. Holtby, Superior of the Society, to lay the first stone. Att the end of the house opposite to the water, shee caused to be made the sacred name of JESUS, large in proportion, and accurate for art, that it might serve the mariners instead of St. Antony's picture: and when the fabric was ended, shee dedicated the whole to St. Michael and St. Antony, and each room (the chappell excepted, which was consecrated to the Mother of God) was nominated and publicly known by the name of some particular saint.

This seat was most commodious for pleasure, and pleasant for all commoditys; the rich and renownd river Tine ebbing and flowing in such a proportionable distance from the house, that neither the water is inconvenient to it nor does it want the convenience of the water. The vast confluence of ships which it brings to Newcastle for coles (and this is looked upon as one of the greatest sorts of trafic in the kingdom) pass under the full view of the house, and, notwithstanding, Catholicks may resort thither with such privacy, that they are not expos'd to the aspect of any. The name of Jesus shee caus'd to be drawn so publick for two reasons. The first, her own safeguard and

protection, esteeming herself ever safest under that standard, especially when shee had greatest frequent of priests. And verily it so prov'd, for whereas others thought these remarkable ensigns would but provoke the enemy and foment malice, hatred, danger, and some insolent attempts, it was to this little hermitage, the letter TAU in time of severest persecution. All Catholick houses were severely search'd, this mercifully escap'd, and when, in harder times, almost all were demolish'd by disaster and war, this was daily visited in way of curiosity by soldiers of all ranks without impeachment, till the king's men (not out of spleen but fear) conceiving it a fit place for the Scott to make a garrison, made it, as I am informed, by fire even with the ground.—The second reason, that sea-fairing men of other nations might know it to be a Catholick house, and fly thither as truly they did in swarms for their spirituall refection.

This shee stil'd her terrestrial paradise; for the content shee took therein shee fear'd would prolonge her purgatory. But as the never-failing wisdom of God had chosen her for a vessell to carry his name before nations, so he seasoned her with a mixtion of myrrh and frankincense, tempering sweet with sower, and thwarting by two sore counter-buffs the height of her felicity. The one was the death of her ghostly father, who shee rather desired might bury her: and this shee acknowledg'd troubl'd her more and was more spinie to her heart than the above mention'd tribulations, which, as we have seen, were neither few nor small if they had been all poys'd the same time in one ballance. Mr. Holtby, who honour'd her as shee deserv'd, endeavour'd to qualify this corrosive by sending Mr. Henry Morse to supply his place, who after he had spent about a year in that residence (behold another touchstone of patience) by misfortune was apprehended and imprison'd at Newcastle.^w This contributed

^w The author of this memoir, F. Wm. Palmer, states that he was chaplain to Mrs. Lawson for seven years, consequently he must have been appointed to St. Anthony's in 1625, and it would appear that

a new addition to the old sore, scarce perfectly cured, or rather lanc'd it by incision to the bone. Wherefore a third of the same order was out of hand dispatch'd, who (Oh strange and inscrutable course of God's providence, trying his friends by the furnace) before he set foot on shore, was boarded by the searchers and committed to the same jayle.^x

The heathen here will say, fortune has turned her wheel, and clouded the smoothness of her brow with wrinkles; the heretick, that all is stear'd by a fatal necessity; the novice or unbrac'd in the anfractious meanders of perfection, that heaven is highly offended with her,

the Rev. Henry Morse, and father John Robinson, were both arrested in that year. Father Legard must therefore have died in 1623 or 1624, for the text tells us that father Morse, who was sent to supply his place, spent about a year in the above named residence.

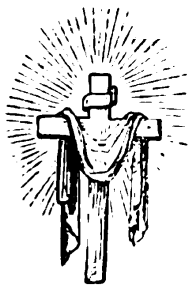
Father Henry Morse (alias Cuthbert Claxton) was born in Norfolk, in 1585. During the great plague in London, in 1636, he was most assiduous in his attentions to the sick and dying, and caught at length the infection thrice, but recovered. He was shortly after apprehended, tried, and condemned to death as a priest, but at the mediation of the queen was banished in 1641. He returned however to England in 1643, when the northern Counties were the scene of his labours till he was apprehended and sent by sea from Newcastle to London for trial, or rather for confirmation of the former sentence pronounced against him. His brother, an eminent protestant lawyer, tried every exertion to save him, but in vain, and father Morse was hanged at Tyburn on the 1st of February, 1645. A full narrative of his life and death was published at Antwerp in the same year that he suffered.

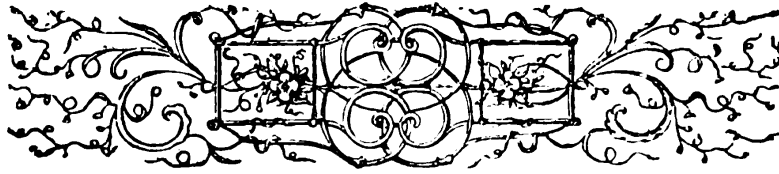
^x It is probable that this was father John Robinson, but from the life of father Henry Morse it seems that the *latter* was apprehended immediately upon landing at Newcastle on his first visit to England, which would be about 1625. Father Robinson was not professed as a Jesuit till 1644 (April 17th). A little later on (Chap. VI.) Mr. John Robinson is mentioned as "her departed ghostly father then lying in Newgate (Newcastle) a designed martyr." We cannot reconcile these contradictions but by believing that there were two Jesuits of this name. The famous father John Robinson died at Watten in 1669, æt. 81.

since this little sanctuary which shee built for a temple of God, and support or staff of her drooping age, is become the rendezvous of war and miserys.

But the charity of her understanding admitted no such vapours, nor was the seraphycall fire of her will consistent with resolutions so dull and tepid ; and her faithful memory represented species more noble and generous of God's infallible promise : for the Father chastises the child most he loves best, and happy are they that suffer persecution for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. They are her sentiments, not my conception, and I deliver them in the very words that fell from her mouth.

These three crosses, one in the neck of another, resemble the messengers hastening to Job with semblable tydings, and her patience his, who, what shee felt inwardly is best known to herself, this I doe boldly affirm that outwardly shee did no more than he, offend with her lips. And whoever knew as I doe the sharpness of these thorny aggrivances, and the infinite respects, equally mingl'd with love and reverence wherewith shee regarded her spirituall guide, might not amiss compair her sense in the inferiour part, to a considerable martyrdom, and without exaggeration pronounce her conformity to the superiour to meritt a weighty poyze of eternall glory.





CHAPTER VI.

HER STUDY OF PERFECTION FOR AS MUCH AS CONCEARNS THE INTERNALL,
OR CONTEMPLATIVE WAY.



I fell to my lott to bring up the reare in this catastrophe ; and the lott more happy for that it light on mee by order of holy obedience : in which task or burden, over heavy

I confess for my shoulders, God sent a second comfort, by the holy prayers of her deputed ghostly father Mr. John Robinson, a designed martyr then in Newgate, and Mr. Henry Morse in the same prison, afterwards a real witness of the true faith by shedding his blood att London,^y who, for her many deserts to them, were sedulous intercessours to almighty God for her, and her family, whereof I was now an unworthy member. And truly I stood in need uppon my entering to this charge of such assistance, meeting att first with a greater difficulty than I encountered in all the subsequent process.

^y The mention of the death of father Henry Morse fixes the date of this memoir as after 1645, when that father suffered at Tyburn, and in another place the writer speaks of his fourteen years silence, which, reckoning from 1632, the year of Mrs. Dorothy Lawson's death, will bring it up to 1646.

Shee had an earnest desire to be like a solitary turtle in the desert, and soaring above herself with new wings of contemplation, to make her point in religious solitude. In which important business the source of all goodness infused so much temper into my thoughts, as not to precipitate; but after a serious discussion of her motives, to take along with me the advice of maturer judgements than my own, especially Mr. Holtby, who knew her intimately from her first coming into these parts by a most candid correspondency she ever held with him: and wee, after due consultation with God, and dispute among ourselves, ballancing in one scale her years and want of health, in the other, the great good which would be neglected if shee solely attended to her own soul, resolv'd in our Lord to be more advantagious for his glory, and her crown, to persevere as shee had begun, not only in the study of her own perfection, but also in the pursuance and acquisition of others. I was afraid, being but a stranger, to deliver the result of our conference, but Mr. Holtby warranted me by the character he gave of her: which was, that shee excell'd all of his acquaintance (and he was jubilated with fifty years experience) for carrying the cross of Christ, and a reverential regard to her ghostly fathers. Arm'd then with this confidence above my experimental knowledge att that time of her virtues, I gave obscurely a hint of our opinion, which, as shee was of a very lively and spirited apprehension, shee perceived at the first overture, and embrac'd, as sent by an angell from the oracle of truth, saying shee was fully satisfied; and since she was not worthy to enjoy the sweetness of Mary's part, shee would strive better than heretofore to make it acceptable to his divine will by the conjunction of Martha.

I here most cordially wish I had the creditt to borrow for the surplus of this history, the quill of Cicero, or rather the witt of Augustin, the eloquence of Chrysologue, and mouth of Chrysostome. For now I set uppon an account of her virtues during the time of my apprenticeship, which I so call, because tho' obedience appointed me for seven

years a pilott to her, yet the difference of abilities might have made her a manuctour to me.

This lively patterne then of true virtue and sanctity understanding the interiour to give force and effective power to the exterior, resolv'd uppon a new webbe of perfection, and to weave it with a finer thread, takes an exact measure of the state of her soul, by a serious inspection into her conscience, which every half-year shee prepar'd for a general expiation with three days retirement and meditations accommodated to that purpose. I dare be depos'd that in fourteen half-years confessions, and three of her whole life, (all which shee performed with as much acurateness as if each one was to have been her last) I never heard anything that did bear the tincture or resemblance of a mortall sin: so that I may assuredly say, shee wore the stole wherewith shee was invested in baptism without spott or staine to extreme-unction.

Shee confessed, and received the most blessed Body of our Lord every Sunday, and feast, unless it were next day to Sunday, then shee intermitted the one. For her better preparation to these sacraments shee premis'd the night before a chapter of the golden treatise, intitl'd the 'Imitation of Christ,' treating of the devotion and reverence wherewith we ought to receive the life-giving food; which shee perused with such attention and diligence, that shee rather seem'd to make a meditation than a spirituall lesson: and being asked why shee read so leasurely, shee gave a solid reason by a couple of familiar examples. The one, of a hen who breaks with her bill the meat of her chickens, but eats none herself; the other, of a nourse who converts the meat into her own substance to breed milk, and feed her little one; so said shee, in reading a treatise of such concearnement, we must imitate a wise nurse, not the simplicity of a foolish hen.

Shee was singularly devoted to the service of the Blessed Virgin, and zealous to advance her glory, by herself, her children, her servants, and her neighbours. Her-self was a sodalis of the all-immaculate conception, in honour

whereoff shee fasted every Saturday to one meal, and each month read the rules of the Sodality, observing them in every particular most punctually. Shee caus'd all her children, as soon as they were ripe in years; to be enroll'd in the same sodality, and often read the rules herself to them. Such servants and neighbours as shee found capable of that devotion shee commended to her ghostly father to be admitted. In fine shee had so high an esteem of the Virgin Mother's power and prerogative with her Son, and graciousness towards sinners, that I have heard her often say shee thought scarce any perished that had once been under the wings of her protection. Shee was exceedingly taken with mentall prayer, and was wont to compare it to the star that conducted the sages to the crib of Christ, not so much by a conceite grounded in sacred writers, as by her own experience, affirming that it serv'd her for a guide in every day's journey, and that the regulating, or well ordering of her actions, depended much of the success thereof. Allthough the infirmity or weakness of her constitution would permitt her to spend but half-an-hour every day in meditation; notwithstanding shee bestow'd much more time ruminating in the afternoon, as shee walk'd solitary in the house or garden, the heavenly manna or fruit shee had gather'd in the morning. This was apparently known partly by the ardent aspirations shee was frequently heard to breath by others, in another room or walk; partly by the diversity of her postures, which they perceived when they came unexpected to speak with her, as sometimes walking, sometimes standing, and sometimes kneeling upon a sudden, according, as wee may believe, to the gust and variety of celestiall dainties which then shee tasted.

Her method in prayer was that which is usually observ'd in the Society; the matter, the life of our Saviour taken from points, answering to the time of the year, which I did read every night after Litanies, and upon festivall days I gave her one of the feast. Shee made her prayer solitary in her closset, with all the preparatives and pre-

ambles prescribed in the Introduction or Instruction to Meditation.

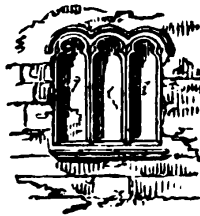
After my coming, shee added to the generall examin of conscience which shee made twice a day, the particular touching the pursuit of some virtue, or conquest of some defect. In this I know not whether I should admire more her industry or humility. Industry for not only finding and gathering out of the garden of her soul the weeds of most abstruse and least imperfections, but for engrafting allso various plants of virtue so artificially, that shee seem'd like the angells uppon the steps of Jacob's Ladder, to ascend by degrees from the lowest to the highest. Humility for her candour in communicating to her ghostly father what difficulty soever shee mett with in performing it: and though she knew to a hair the length of her own foot, and uppon what matter was most needfull for her to ponder, yet would shee never adventure uppon the election of any without his approbation. As soon as shee awaked shee made an oblation to God of her thoughts, words, and deeds, from morning till dinner; att dinner, another till even-song; att even-song, the third, till litanies; the fourth, till the next morning; in honour of the journey our Saviour took when he came from his father into the world, left the world, and return'd again to his father. This is not my conception or gloss, but her continuall practice formalized with these intentions.

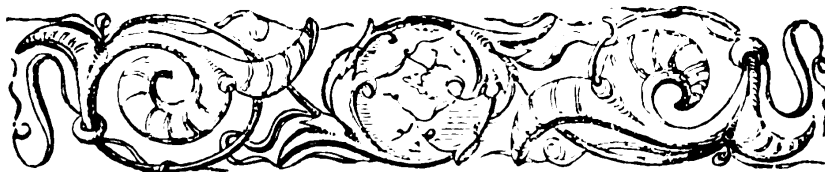
Besides this constant exercise, whereby all her vitall motions did continually journey from earth to heaven, shee often renew'd her intention in particular actions, like a considerate archer, who takes his aim deliberately before he shoots; after discoursing of the necessity and utility of this virtue, sometimes calling it the eye of her soul, which guides the faculties in their operations; sometimes the hand by which shee embraces good, and repells evil; sometimes the feet which help her to walk in darkness: conformable to the similitude by which St. Gregory, in his second of moralls, declares the necessity of a right intention, "*Sicut fabrica columnis, columnæ basibus innitun-*

tur, ita vita nostra in virtutibus, virtutes in intima intentione subsistant.”—As the fabric cannot stand without pillars, the pillars without foundations, so doth our life and livlihood consist in virtues, and virtues receive their consistency from an internall intention.

By these symptoms that appeared, we may form an imperfect conjecture of that the all-searching eye of God could only penetrate, and undoubtedly conclude that as shee contemplated him by virtue of this intention, whilst the interposition of mortallity impeded a better finition, so those obstacles being remov'd, shee now enjoys him in a very eminent degree or intension of beatifical vision.

Even as the Spouse who thro' dimm clouds wounded her belov'd but with one eye, or the eagle that in a density of mist cannot clearly discover the sun, but when that obscurity is dispell'd, shee wounds with both, and the eagle beholds that bright body of light with undazled eyes.





CHAPTER VII.

OF HER PERFECTION IN THE EXTERIOUR.



O her mentall devotions shee added a world of vocall, and by frequent renovation of intentions, so spiritualiz'd her outward actions, that they seem'd in a manner nothing but emanations of interiour holyness, and a continual prayer. From the substance and virtue of the internall was derived a strong influency, power, and majesty, to the externall, and in these shee ever lean'd uppon the counsell of her spirituall directour, affirming that God by him taught her his will, not only in things spirituall, but allso temporall. Which pious custome, tis evident by the successfull effects, the Holy Ghost inspired, a tract of above thirty years establishe'd, and shee as a legacy to her children most efficaciously inculcated. Shee said shee always found the best success in following his directions, tho' opposite to common sense and judgement of others more knowing in such affairs. In this shee was so resolute, that myself being consulted in business of husbandry and the like, wherein I needed not blush to

appear a novice, I was many times forc'd, knowing her garb peremptory in that point, to desire time to deliberate, to confer with some vers'd in those matters, that we might not both do amiss, and as they resolved, deliver my opinion.

For the composure of her family, or rather externall structure of her spirituall building, shee edify'd with astonishment, and mov'd to imitation. Her chappell was neat and rich; the altar stood vested with various habilments, according to the fashion in Catholick countrys. Mass in the morning; even song in the afternoon, about four of the clock, with the litanies of Loretto to recommend to the Sacred Virgin's custody the safety of her house, and a '*de profundis*' for the faithfull departed; between eight and nine att night, Litanies of Saints, att which all her servants were present. On festivall days, they also heard mass and even song, and when there was not a sermon in the morning, there was usually a catechisme in the afternoon, to which her neighbours' children were call'd with her own household, and herself never absent, delighting much to hear them examined, and distributing medalls and *Angus Dei's* to those that answer'd best.

In the holy week shee had performed in that chappell all the ceremonies appropriated to that blessed time.

On Wednesday, towards evening, began *tenebræ*, with the misterious candlestick of fifteen lights, fourteen of them representing, by the extinguishing, the apostles and disciples when they forsak'd Christ, the fifteenth on the top, which use'd not to be putt out, his dear Mother, who from the conception to the crib, and from the crib to the cross, was not sever'd from him. On Thursday a sepulcher, deck'd with sumptuous jewells, and reverently attended day and night by her family and neighbours. On Friday creeping to the cross, which in kissing, shee bath'd with tears. On Saturday shee caus'd to be extinguish'd every fire in the house, and kindled again with hallow'd fire; then ensued the Bene-

diction of the Paschall, and the rest of divine ceremonies, till mass. Att mass, as soon as the priest pronounc'd *Gloria in excelsis*, a cloth was suddenly snatch'd away, which vail'd a glorious altar, and many little bells, prepair'd for that purpose, rung in imitation of what is done with greater solemnity in Catholic countries. On Sunday, after divine service, a benediction was given to divers sorts of meat, and in remembrance of the Lamb sacrificed two days before on the cross, there was always blessed a proportion of lamb; finally, those that repar'd that day for their Easter communion, which were sometimes nigh a hundred, were all invited (according to our phrase) to break Lent's neck with her, in honour of Christ's joyful and glorious resurrection.

The nativity of Christ shee solemniz'd in both kinds, feasting her tenants and neighbours corporally and spiritually, nor did her recollection abstract or sequester her from any society which might redound to their good: yea, I know some won by the sweetness of her affability to the true faith, whome schollars could not gain by learning and subtilty of arguments. Shee spent the eve of this festivity, from eight all night till two in the morning, in prayer; litanies began punctually at eight; immediately after, confessions, which, with a sermon, lasted till twelve; att twelve were celebrated three masses, which being ended, all broak their fast with a Christmass pye, and departed to their own houses.

In this time of mirth and joy for his birth who is the sole engine and spring of true comfort, shee unbent the stiffness of her bow a little, and dispens'd with her accustomed rigour in so small a relaxation, that I want a diminutive to explain it; unless I deem it that in quantity which phylosophers call atoms or indivisibles in quality. For whereas at other times, shee never play'd att any game for money, but for prayers, for an hour after dinner and supper; in Christmass shee allow'd herself every day two hours after each meal, and a shilling to spend among her friends to make them merry. This

was properly a recreation, for if shee lost, it was not a considerable value to trouble her, and if shee won, shee kept it in a purse to bestow after the holydays on the poor over and besides her accustom'd alms.

Shee had in a room near the chappell, a crib with musick to honour that joyfull mystery, and all Christmas musicians in her hall and dining chamber to recreate her friends and servants. Shee lov'd to see them dance, and said that if shee were present, greater care would be taken of modesty in their songs and dances.

When any was to be reconcil'd there-about, shee played the catechist, so as I had no other share in the work but to take their confessions. When any fell into travail or sickness, no occasion of business, weather, or time, were it night or day, detain'd her: yea, shee often went sick and return'd sound, in so much that it passed for a proverb amongst us, we never took care for her in those cases. To women in travail shee never went without comfort of both sorts: relics for the soul, and, if they were poor, cordialls for the body. For these offices, shee gained so much on the opinion of neighbours, that they would generally say, they feared not if Mrs. Lawson were with them.

If any pretend this was but a conceit or apprehension of woemen, to which that sex is precipitately, if not superstitiously prone, I may answer with truth, that as long as I lived, which, alas! was but seven years, with her (for then she died), none of her parish, man or woeman, departed this life without help, or infant without baptism.

I cannot omitt a pretty feat or prank of the devill, as she was riding to an ancient servant falne from his faith, and by sickness call'd to his last account. Shee was struck, as all conceive, by the commune enemy of charitable works, from her horse in very even way, gott up again, converted the miserable apostate, and after shee returned home, found her little finger out of joint, which for the space of six hours spent with him shee never perceived.

Her liberallity did bountifully extend to the poor, both by vow and necessity ; these shee hourly relieved, feeding the hungry, cloathing the naked, and because she was a widdow herself, she kept a purse of twopences for widdows. To them, I mean, that made religious vows of voluntary poverty, and hazzarded their selves for the conversion of souls, shee needed a bridle, not a spur. The two prisoners in Newcastle above mentioned, she furnish'd with church-stuff, washed their linnen, provided with all necessary's for cloths and victualls, and though Mr. Mors[e] was known to belong to her, nevertheless preferring his conveniency before her own safety, shee adventur'd to visite him in the jayle, and suted the magistrate he might enjoy the liberty of the town for his health. To her ghostly father nothing was wanting fitt for the condition of a religious man. He was accommodated with a good chamber and library, with all things belonging to himself in a genteel and plentiful way ; and according to the custome of colledges, shee gave him a viaticum when he went abroad, the remainder of which he restor'd when he return'd home. I dare avouch, that for the space of seaven years, I neither knew what was in my purse when I took journey, nor shee what I expended out of it, when I gave it to her att my returne. Moreover, shee yearly bestow'd ten pounds uponn the Superior of the Society for pious uses, and the tyths of a salmon fishiug.

My discourse of this virtue might swell to a large treatise, and because I would rather dwell with herself in heaven, than in lands on earth, I will end her endless bounty with a brief relation of one passage wherein shee received such content and pleasure, that shee often said it would protract and lengthen her life.

Half a dozen of the Society made each year the spirituall exercise in her house for eight days with collegiall form and discipline ; for which she provided gowns, a refectory, glasses for bear, dishes for antipasts, portions. and postpasses, cutting them out with her own hand, and

sending, like a solicitous and devout Martha, to the table, and like a recollected Magdallen (to whose surpassed [office?] nature had more addicted her), hearing every day all the masses. She so jewell'd this devotion, wherein, by reason of danger and charge, shee was more admired than imitated, that being ask'd by me, if it were not over troublesome, shee reply'd, I could not enjoy a greater mortification than to deprive her of that comfort. Truly shee was so far from deeming it any trouble, that shee own'd it a greater favour if they would stay with her another day for recreation after their retirement, and permitt her to dine with them in the refectory, which was granted, with the same formallity of reading and service they us'd, except a glass of wine each one had for himself. Att night shee made a feast for the whole house, and the next morning they departed with the apostolical salutation or farewell, '*Pax huic domui.*'—Peace be to this house.

In the government of her family, her authority, prudence, sweetness, and gravity, was such, that every one lov'd her with fear, and fear'd her with love. Shee gave her servants more than was due in temporalls as a bountifull mistress, and all aide and satisfaction as their companion and equall in spiritualls, often relating Saints lives to her maids, and reading pious books in their company. A retainer to her father-in-law tould me that he was converted to the Catholick religion by the many stories she recounted out of the Old Testament, as he rid before her out of Northumberland into Holderness, and added, he never had before, or since, such content in any journey. In journeying shee was so carefull of devotion, that if shee took but a walk for recreation shee premized the Littanies of Loretto, which were said publicly if the liberty of company permitted, if not, shee said them privately herself.

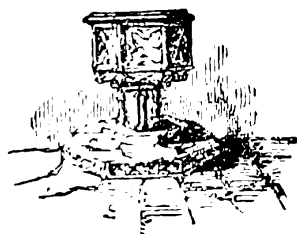
You must pardon this digression, it proceeds from the weakness of my memory overwhelm'd with advenient species of new perfections, which, the more I dive into

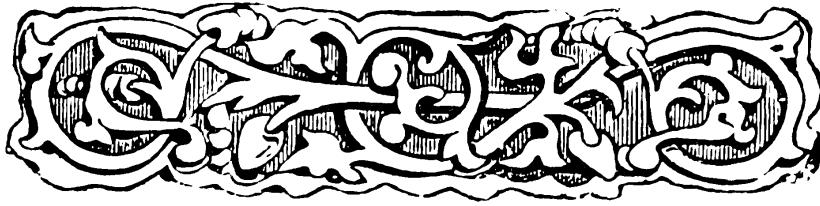
her life, occur like a strong current damm'd in by above fourteen years silence. Let us then regress and look awhile upon the manner of government. Shee kept all her servants and children in excellent order. Her children, till they came to maturity, had a schoolmaster for humanity, a priest for Christian doctrine. Her servants were neither overcharg'd with multiplicity of affairs, nor wanted employments suitable to every ones abilities, taking frequently an account of them, and often visiting their offices. Every night shee conferr'd with him that had care in chief of her husbandry, knowing what he had done that day, and what he was to take in hand the next. To the servant who had charge over marketting shee delivered her commands over-night, that without impediment he might take his best time in the morning. And that God might not only confer a blessing to her particular designs, first in the morning, and last att night, shee commended her house jointly with herself to the glorious Virgin uppon her knees, imploring her benediction promiscuously for all, with this short but patheticall prayer ; " The blessed Virgin with her pious Son bless us this day, or this night. Amen.

I keep for a reserve her devotion to her patrons as the crown and compliment of her vocall prayers, or rather a mixt exercise compos'd of mentall and vocall.

That shee might perform her daily actions with more alacrity and fervour, and purchase more abundantly the grace, assistance, and protection of those happy spirits, att that instant on which eternity finally depends, against the assaults of the universall enemy, (who then is wont to shew his utmost extent of mallice, and use his strongest engins when man is weakest) shee consecrated to them in generall her whole life, in particular, every day in the week, craving her propitious invocations with the Antiphon and Collect proper to their feasts, for the better performance of that day's business, and begging some virtue through their gracious intercession. Sunday, to the three Divine Persons ; desiring of them promptitude and

perseverance in faith. Monday, to St. Ignatius, founder of the holy Society of Jesus, and glorious St. Teresa; obedience to her spirituall superiours. Tuesday, to her Angell Guardian; (in honour of whome allso shee said every day the little office) purity of soul and body. Wednesday, to St. Fr: Xaverius, and St. Monica; zeal of souls, especially her children. Thursday, to St. John Baptist, and St. Dorothy; devotion to the blessed Sacrament. Fryday, to St. Peter, and St. Mary Magdalen; a desire to suffer for Christ. Saturday, to St. Joseph and his Virgin Spouse; (to whom likewise shee said every day the office of her conception) humility. The reason why shee undertook this virtuous exercise was, that her naturall deficiency might be suppli'd by a holy change of daily devotions: experience teaching that nothing is more pleasing or prevalent than novelty in the state of corrupt nature. For tho' God, by whome we are created to serve and honour in this life that we may enjoy him in the next, be no changling but allways the same, and alike to be serv'd without vicissitude on his part, and interruption or remissness on ours; notwithstanding we are so desperately gone in a lethergy of dullness, inclining to an absolute decay, that without new fomentation the fervour of our devotion will be in time quench'd, or suffer a notable impeachment in the primary perfection.





CHAPTER VIII.

HER SICKNESS AND DEATH.



ER many and great deservings of the Society ty'd me in gratfullness to study for some requittall, wherefore I mov'd the superiour to impart (according to the laudable custome of religious orders to their speciall benefactours) the priviledges of the Society, and make her by communication partaker of their works, as if shee were a member thereof, which he most willingly condescended to with the whole latitude of his prerogative.

When I brought these unexpected tidings, her eyes were filled with tears, distilling from joy, her mouth considerate and sparing of speech utter'd the canticle of old Simeon "NOW DISMISS O LORD THY SERVANT IN PEACE;" and I shall speak within compass of modesty, if I compare the change, or new luster in her countenance, with the known effects of alacrity and cheerfulness the Sun at the dawning begetts in the universe, or sovereign ointment that fell on Aaron's beard, and diffus'd a generall perfume to the rest of his body. Shee prosecuted all religious institutes with love and reverence, but was peculiarly devoted to the Society of Jesus, and so overjoy'd att the receipt of this favour,

that, for a perpetuall acknowledgement, shee desir'd her eldest son to whome St. Antony's fell after her decease, that it might be as freely att their service as it was in her life. Shee tould her other children it was for their sake shee gave no more to that body, whereunto shee was so much oblig'd, wishing them to perpetuate her respects in their acknowledgements; for the portion they gott by a natural obligation were due by little of gratitude, and to[o] little for those from whome shee received this benefitt.

After seaven years passed in this divine manner, under my conduct, God seeing her more ripe in fruit than years, visited her with such a sickness as, if we may credit Gregorius the great, was an uncontrollable argument of his love, and her predestination. Our Lord comes, quoth the doctor, when he hastens to judgement; he knocks when he intimates the approach of death by sickness; we open the door when we receive him, "*Venit Dominus, &c.*," which is literally verified in her lingering disease and happy egress out of this world. Our Lord came not to her suddainly, or att unawares, (much less unprovided) he knock'd and gave her above six months warning by a languishing consumption or cough of the lungs, and shee, expecting his coming with the resign'd patience of Judith, and undefatigable love of Jacob, open'd willingly the garden door of her soul, that he might enter and reap the fruit he planted.

I do not without ground explain her love and patience by the memory of this painless couple, for when she perceiv'd that we, after the application of human industry, as if her recovery had been set at a rate, sought it without effect by prayers, pilgrimages, pennance, and alms, shee out of a perfect conformity of her will to God's reply'd "we must not like the Bethulians tempt God, or prefix a time for his designs, but think with Jacob all we suffer to little for our celestial spouse.

Now her virtues began in troops to display their colours, and become more illustrious drawing near the end

of combat and palm of triumph; even as a ship that having prosperously accomplished a dangerous viage, enters the haven with her sails swelling and flags flying, or in remonstrance of thanksgiving to heaven, or in defiance of enemys by water and land. Her humility a strong and rocky foundation of the rest made her stoop so low in the valuation of her self alive and dead, that shee did not only esteem whatsoever was minister'd for health over good and costley, but enjoyn'd me allso to have a speciall care to moderate her funerall expenses.

Her patience was try'd to the quick in taking without sign of trouble (tho' shee had a sharp taste and delicate stomach) an infinity of distastfull ingrediencies all which shee sugar'd with the sweet and wholesome preparative of a foregoing intention, by virtue whereoff shee took each deliberately in honour of some particular mystery of Christs Passion.

Her resignation is best prov'd by her own words, which I often heard fall from her mouth and were these "O Lord dispose of me as thou pleasest, put me where thou wilt, so I may not offend thee;" Whereuppon twice I ask'd her "What if he put you in hell?" shee reply'd "Yea, Sr., in hell so I may not offend him."

Her obedience admirable, and physitions that understood the nature of her infirmity likewise afflrme it miraculous. I say it is admirable and scarce to be follow'd, for all the seaven years I convers'd with her, and was consulted in her affairs spirituall and temporal, great and little, I never needed advise one thing twice, except the distribution of her personall estate by will, wherein I thought shee took too much from her children for her soul, and to moderate this I spoak twice, and so did I never in anything before or after. Physicians and Doctors those times and parts afforded, avow that which I will relate of her obedience miraculous, and far surpassing any strain of nature. The whole time of her six months sickness I was but one morning absent, and constantly visited her about four o'clock, and wish'd her, out of the honour and affection shee

allways bore to holy obedience, to compose herself to sleep, and in obeying her spirituall guide endeavour to exercise an act of this virtue, which in these circumstances was very expedient both for body and soul: the soul whilst imprison'd in the entanglement of flesh and blood, being not able to operate vigourously without sufficient strength in the body. O admirable force of obedience, shee no sooner receiv'd this councill, which to her serv'd for a precept but forthwith shee slept a good while, whether shee had rested well or ill in the night, and miss'd but the very day before shee died. By merit of this virtue all are of opinion shee liv'd a day longer than was possible by course of nature: not that shee delighted in longitude of life, but we expected her death on Palm Sunday, the hour glass (to our thinking) being run out to the last grain of sand, shee begg'd life or respite for that day, to obey the commandments of the church, which about that time prescribe annuall communion, and departed the next. Her charity, cedar-like surmounted the rest bowing nothing from the top of sublimity to the depth of her neighbours' misery, for shee took care of all her children, providing them with competent livelihood, care of her servants and neighbours, bequeathing large legacies; care of her own soul, distributing to the value of two hundred pound in pious uses; lastly, care of those that are out of the true church, with a zeal so compassionately ardent, that she maintained many long and vehement encounters in matters of religion, when she was hardly able to utter one word about her temporall occasions.

In the exercise of these virtues on her death, shee may seem to reflect and pitch at a mellifluous discourse of St. Bernard; adorning with the same the standard of Christ, With humility, the feet; obedience, the right hand; patience, the left; and charity, as a most rich crown and diadem, the top.

Now must I make my approach to her death (a precious death in the eyes of God), wishing rather shee had pay'd me that debt, if her life had been at so low a price

as the forfeiture of mine. I annoy'd her six days before shee expired, and fearing shee might pass when we least suspected, as it ordinarily happens in that disease, I convers'd with her all that time, night and day, almost without intermission.

As soon as shee received extreme unction, shee made an inflam'd speech to her children, friends, and servants, and my unworthy self; exhorting all to the love of God and fraternal charity; craving pardon for all her offences; pardoning with her whole heart those that had trespass'd against her; giving her children as freely to God as he gave them to her; counselling them to take religious courses if they had callings; if not, to make choice of houses for their abode, where those of the Society resid-ed. These and innumerable other wholesome documents, salied like fiery darts from her all-fiery tongue, to their mollified hearts, dissolv'd in an ocean of tears, and prepared as pliable as melted wax for any impression. And verily all were so ambitious not to lose a word of those which were likely to be her last words, that sighs were suppress'd with silence, tears with attention, and not a syllable fell from her pale lips which did not imprint a perfect sense in the whole auditory. The last word was not sooner compleated of this emphatical sermon, but every one's grief forced a vent with an eruption so violent, that I being more marble-like than the rest, was constrain'd for her ease to intreat their absence. After this mourning pageant was passed, I mean on our part, not hers, for shee exceedingly rejoyc'd when I brought news of administring the sacraments, shee submissively desir'd during the small remainder of her life, leave to receive him to whom she hasten'd. Wherein I had no reason to make difficulty, knowing her purity, and that no hart pursued to death ever more earnestly sought after the soil, or soldier parch'd with the sun in a toilsome march to refresh his thirst, than shee to bathe in the fountain of life. I gave her for twelve days together the blessed sacrament, about one in the morning, and we that

watch'd with her observ'd that though shee could not take any rest before, presently after shee receiv'd, shee rested without any motion for the space of an hour, in a natural or supernatural (God only knows) contemplation or sleep.

Shee used when shee communicated to commend these intentions in her holy thoughts; the Catholick Church, her spirituall directors alive and dead, her children, servants, benefactors, friends, and enemies of which I never knew her have any but those that held opposition to the orthodoxall faith.

On Palm Sunday on the night, which that year fell upon the Anuntiation of our Blessed Lady, the messenger of death deliverd his final summons, with such strong passions as if her spouse had prepared a new combat, I rais'd the house, and shee was so far from dying suddenly, that God hearing her former prayers (to witt, that her ghostly father might be present at her death) preserv'd her life till twelve at noon, her children, servants, friends, and an other priest beside myself kneeling, with dewy eyes at her bedside, knowing her perfection and holiness above the ordinary strain compos'd a peculiar directory for her comfort, involving all in the ordinary with divine additions. Oh how many strange things acted shee yet before her departure. The feeble hand which could not lift for some days before a spoonfull of broth, held a crucifix for the space of four hours without interruption, and lifted it up without help at least forty times to her mouth, as if either there had been some abstruse virtue in the crucifix, to elevate it to her mouth; or virtue more than magneticall in her mouth of heavenly fire to attract the crucifix. Shee wish'd the remainder of her sufferings might be as absynthious and full of acrimony as any martyrdom, not out of hope or fear of retribution or punishment, but a more noble motive, and as gallant as ever shee had to resemble and represent Christ when (he) overbought the redemption of mankind. Now shee said, shee assuredly believed (though in health somewhat scrupulous in that particular) the confessions of her life were valid, shee perceiv'd her soul re-

plenish'd with a tyde of divine visitations, overflowing the measure shee suffer'd of terrene afflictions; shee receiv'd assistances from her patrons with sensible guests as if shee had seen them (and we verily thought shee did) especially the Queen Mother of God, whom from the first glimmerings of reason next to God shee honour'd. Finally to prefix a seal to this history which deserves to be writt with a pen of adamant in the temple of eternity; when shee was arriv'd at the last period of her journey speechless, and not able to our thinking to make a sign, I no sooner propos'd any goodness but shee cast up her hands and open'd her eyes as if shee had been like a corp renew'd or rather rais'd from death to life. Verily I can't nominate any vertue, (and in my directory I compris'd almost all) which in that condition shee did not exercise, at least in preparation of mind, and made it by some visible tokens appear. When we thought her epilogue had been ended, and was about to draw the curtain, or going to close her eyes, to our amazement she elevated her hand, and imparted her benediction in the form of a large cross; then pronouncing or rather repeating the life-giving name of JESUS to gain the pardon of the sin last committed, as in manner of jubily, with JESUS in her mouth and a jubily in her soul, shee sweetly departed about twelve of the clock, in the year of our Lord 1632, and of her own age fifty-two. "Precious in the sight of our Lord is the death of his saints."

Her private exequies were celebrated that night about eleven o'clock in the place where shee died with the presence of hundred Catholicks who spiritually depended of her. Her eldest son, whose life, like a phœnix born of her ashes, deserves also to appear in public, sparing no cost caused her to be honorably interr'd in the Church of All Saints', at Newcastle, alledging that he did not by that solemnity, infringe her commands to me, since itt should be his purse, and not hers, that defrayed the charges. I was with joy satisfied, and the burial perform'd in the manner following.



CHAPTER IX.

HER FUNERALL.



HER son contriv'd the funerall in a proportion correspondent to her quality, and his love and honour to so dear a mother. The next day after her death all the gentry thereabouts were invited and a dinner was prepared for them. The poor of that and the bordering parishes were serv'd that day with meat; the next with money. Divers boats full of people came in the afternoon from Newcastle, all plentifully entertain'd with a banquet; and when their civill respects were ended, we carried the corps in the evening to Newcastle, in her own boat, accompanied with at least twenty other boats and barges, and above twice as many horse, planting them on both sides of the shore, till their arrival at the city. They found the streets shining with tapers, as light as if it had been noon. The magistrates and aldermen, with the whole glory of the towne, which for state is second only to London, attended att the landing place to wait on the coffin, which they received cover'd with a fine black velvet cloth, and

a white satin cross, and carried it but to the church door, where with a ceremony of such civility as astonish'd all (none, out of love off her, and fearing of them, daring to oppose itt), they deliver'd it to the Catholicks only, who with another priest (for I was not worthy of the honour), laid it with Catholick ceremonies in the grave. In the interim, a gentleman was appointed to conduct the ladies and magistrates to a sumptuous banquet in the finest house in the town, where they expected enlarging themselves in discourses upon her praises, till all was ended in the church. Then her son waited on them, and with more tears than courtship (unless it be a point of courtship for ceremony at such a time to swim in tears), rendered many thanks for their noble civilities.

Presently after her death, I heard most melodious musick, like that of the Franciscan friars at St. Omers, but now sweetly singing the office of the dead; and when one told me it was nothing but want of sleep, which, being overtoil'd with watching, made me think the noise upon the water musick, I answered, "No, I plainly distinguished that noise upon the river from the musick, and that I could not compare it to any so well as that of those holy friars at St. Omers, which I had often heard from the convent to the English seminary." It is a strange circumstance, and very remarkable to persuade the credibility of this miracle, that the species or representation of that musick should occur, which for the least of eighteen years I had not heard. Nor can I alledge any publick reason hereof, except the peculiar devotion wherewith she honoured the seraphicall patriarch and founder of that institute, on whose feast she did constantly communicate. It seems God would entertain her with musick voices, as He did her vertuous and dear sister, the Lady Fairfax, of Gilling,^z with instruments. For Mr. John

^z Sir Thomas Fairfax, of Gilling Castle, Yorkshire was created Viscount Fairfax, of Ireland, 1628; he married Catherine, daughter of Sir Henry Constable, of Burton Constable, sister of Mrs. Dorothy Lawson.—*H. L.*

Cresswell, an ear-witness, and a gentlemen of unblemish'd reputation, faithfully and often asked, assured me that immediately after her death, he distinctly heard musick, which he thought could be no other instrument than a lute, and after a diligent enquiry over the whole house, he found that by them no such instrument was used at present, nor any ways near that chamber, but sighs and tears for the loss of so worthy a lady.

Now I must conclude in words, but my thoughts shall be endless in admiring her incomparable virtues. And since the extremity of times and uncertainty of my own condition, has bereav'd me of what I reserv'd as monuments of her sanctity, I can only reverence the vestiges of her happy memory in dust, and submissively beg for myself and hers, her mediation in heaven.

Laus Deo Semper.

