

variety of operations within and without depends on the commensurate proportion of the movements.

16. In the movements of the soul the most important wheel is the will; while the weights are the desires and affections which incline the will this way or that. The escapement is the reason, which measures and determines what, where, and how far anything should be sought after or avoided. The other movements of the soul resemble the less important wheels which depend on the principal one. Wherefore, if too much weight be not given to the desires and affections, and if the escapement, reason, select and exclude properly, it is impossible that the harmony and agreement of virtues should not follow, and this evidently consists of a proper blending of the active and the passive elements.

17. Man, then, is in himself nothing but a harmony, and, as in the case of a clock or of a musical instrument which a skilled artificer has constructed, we do not forthwith pronounce it to be of no further use if it become disorganised and corrupt (for it can be put to rights); thus, with regard to man, we may say that, no matter how disorganised by his fall into sin, he can, through the grace of God and by certain methods, be restored again to harmony.

18. That the roots of piety are present in man is shown by the fact that he is the image of God. For an image implies likeness, and that like rejoices in like, is an immutable law of nature (Eccles. xii. 7). Since, then, man's only equal is He in whose image he has been made, it follows that there is no direction in which he can be more easily carried by his desires than towards the fountain whence he took his origin; provided that he clearly understand the conditions of his existence.

19. The same thing is shown by the example of the moral philosophers, who, instructed by no word of God, but led by the blind instinct of nature, both acknowledged the Deity, venerated Him, and called upon His name, though they erred in the manner in which they put their

religion into practice. "All men have some conception of the gods, and all assign the highest place to a divine being," writes Aristotle (*De Cælo*, i. 3). Seneca also says: "The worship of the gods consists first in believing in them; then in acknowledging their majesty and their goodness, without which no majesty exists; then in recognising that it is they who preside over the world, include everything under their dominion, and act as guardians of the human race" (*Epist.* 96). How closely this resembles what the Apostle says (Hebrews xi. 6): "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him."

20. Plato also says: "God is the highest good, elevated high above all existence and above nature; towards which all creation strives" (*Timæus*). And this is so true (that God is the highest good, which all things seek) that Cicero was able to say: "The first to teach us piety is nature" (*De Natura Deorum*, i.). And this is because (as Lactantius¹⁷ writes, bk. iv. ch. 28): "We receive pardon on condition that we give just and due worship to the God who produced us. Him alone let us know and follow. By this chain of piety we have been bound and linked to God, and it is from this fact that religion derives its name."

21. It must be confessed that the natural desire for God, as the highest good, has been corrupted by the Fall, and has gone astray, so that no man, of his strength alone, could return to the right way. But in those whom God illumines by the Word and by His Spirit it is so renewed, that we find David exclaiming: "Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none on earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever" (Psalm lxxiii. 25, 26).

22. Therefore, while we are seeking for the remedies of corruption, let none cast corruption in our teeth. For God will remove it through His Holy Ghost and by the intervention of natural means. For as Nebuchadnezzar, when human reason was taken from him and the soul of a

beast was his, yet retained the hope of returning to his senses, and to his royal dignity as well, as soon as he acknowledged that heaven was his superior (Daniel iv. 25) so to us, who are trees rooted out of God's Paradise, the roots are left, and these can germinate afresh when the rain and the sun of God's grace are shed upon them. Did not God, soon after the Fall, and after the exile threatened to us (the penalty of death), sow in our hearts the seeds of fresh grace (by the promise of His blessed offspring)? Did He not send His Son to restore us to our former estate?

23. It is base, wicked, and an evident sign of ingratitude, that we continually complain of our corrupt state, but make no effort to reform it; that we bring forward what the old Adam can work in us, but never experience what the new Adam, Christ, can do. The Apostle says in his own name and in that of his Redeemer: "I can do all things through him that strengtheneth me" (Phil. iv. 13). If it be possible for a shoot grafted on a willow, on a thorn, or on any other shrub, to germinate and bear fruit, what would it not do if grafted on a stock similar to itself? See the argument of the Apostle (Romans xi. 24). In addition, if God is able from these stones to raise up children unto Abraham (Matthew iii. 9), why should He not be able to excite to good works man, the son of God from the first creation, adopted anew through Christ, and born again through the Spirit of grace?

24. Ah! let us beware lest we neglect the grace of God, which He is prepared to pour most liberally upon us. For if we, who are made one with Christ through faith, and dedicated to Him through the spirit of adoption, if we, I say, deny that we, with our offspring, are fit for those things which are of the kingdom of God, how was it that Christ said of children that theirs was the kingdom of heaven? or how can He refer us to them, bidding us to become as little children, if we wish to enter into the kingdom of heaven? (Matthew xviii. 3).

How is it that the Apostle pronounces the children of Christians to be sacred (even where one only of the parents

is faithful), and says that they are not unclean (1 Cor. vii. 14). Even of those who have been implicated in the gravest crimes the Apostle dares to affirm: "Such were some of you; but ye were washed, but ye were sanctified, but ye were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor. vi. 11). Can it therefore appear impracticable to any one, when we demand that the children of Christians (not the offspring of the old Adam but of the new, the sons of God, the little brothers and sisters of Christ) may be carefully trained, and declare that they are fit to receive in their hearts the seeds of eternity? We do not indeed demand fruit from a wild olive, but we come to the assistance of grafts freshly grafted on the tree of life, and help them to bear fruit.

25. We see, then, that it is more natural, and, through the grace of the Holy Spirit, easier for a man to become wise, honest, and righteous, than for his progress to be hindered by incidental depravity. For everything returns easily to its own nature, and this it is that the Scriptures say: "Truth is easily seen by those who love her, and can readily be found by those who seek her. She grants herself to the understanding, and those who wait before her door obtain her without trouble" (Wisdom vi. 13, 15). As the poet of Venusia says:

No one is so wild that he cannot be tamed,
If he patiently turn his ear to instruction and knowledge.